



THE HPWBANA NEWS

Volume 13, Number 2

February 2017

www.hpwbana.org

LETTUCE RECYCLE!

by Dena Houston

WHAT'S WRONG WITH MORE LANDFILLS? WHY DO WE NEED TO RECYCLE?

My father-in-law worked for the Texas Health Department in landfill permitting. He tells a story about a small town in Texas whose landfill was at capacity. All of the town's garbage trucks were lined up to dump their contents, but could not because the landfill was too full. The mayor of this small town had a solution – BUY MORE GARBAGE TRUCKS! This story reflects a rather old fashioned way of dealing with landfill issues.

Trash generation in the United States has almost tripled since 1960. Trash is handled in various ways. Currently in the U.S., about 32.5% of the trash is recycled or composted, 12.5% is burned, and 55% is buried in landfills [source: EPA]. The amount of trash buried in landfills has doubled since 1960.

WHY WE DON'T WANT MORE LANDFILLS

Landfills are very costly. They are designed to bury trash rather than convert and reuse it. When a landfill closes, it must be maintained for at least 30 years to prevent pollution of soil and ground water. It is very costly to protect our natural resources from landfill contamination.

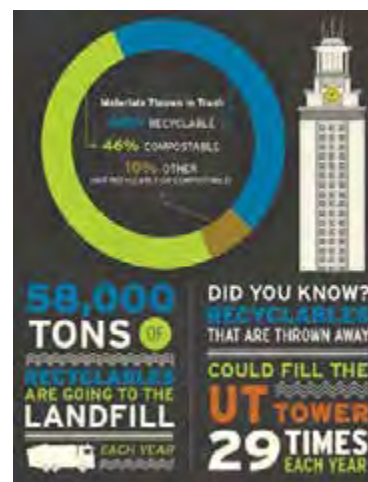
No one wants a landfill in his/her backyard. Landfills are very large and unsightly; Austin's landfill is 2000 acres. Also, there is lots of noise and odor associated with a landfill (garbage trucks going in and out).

Below is a list of how long it takes for items to decompose in a landfill:

- Plastic bags - 10 to 20 years
- Glass bottle – 1 million years
- Plastic Bottles – 500+ years
- Wool socks – 1 to 5 years
- Leather shoes - 25 to 40 years
- Nylon fabric – 30 to 40 years
- Styrofoam cup - 100 years

(Source: UK Department of the Environment)

ALL OF THE ABOVE ITEMS CAN BE RECYCLED IN AUSTIN!



**WE NEED TO RECYCLE
– TOO MUCH IS GOING
TO OUR LANDFILL!**

The poster above is shocking. Too many things that are filling up our landfill can be recycled.

**WE SHOULD ALL MAKE A
NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION
TO HELP MAKE AUSTIN'S
LANDFILL A THING OF
THE PAST!**

(Continued on Page 3)

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The HPWBANA Board meets on the first Monday of each month except December. Please go to HPWBANA.org for our current meeting location or contact president@HPWBANA.org.

HWPBANA is bordered on the north by 2222, on the south by 35th St., on the west by Mt. Bonnell Rd., and on the east by MoPac and by Bull Creek Rd. between Hancock Dr. and 45th St. Mail your membership dues to HPWBANA, P.O. Box 26101, Austin, Texas 78755

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(Continued from Cover)

QUESTIONS FROM OUR READERS:

HOW DO I RECYCLE MAILING ENVELOPES WITH A BUBBLE WRAP LINING? These are not recyclable because there are two layers of materials that cannot be separated. Bubble wrap by itself can be recycled in the plastic collection bins located at most grocery stores.

WHAT DO I DO IF SIMPLE RECYCLING DOES NOT PICK UP MY GREEN BAG? Call 866-835-5068. Leave a message with your address. If you have a Friday recycling pick up date, they will come back the following Monday to pick up your items because they are closed on the weekend. Be sure your green bag is visible. Do not place it between your trash cart and recycling bin; the truck driver may not see it.

HOW DO I GET MORE GREEN BAGS FROM SIMPLE RECYCLING? When you use a bag, the truck driver will leave a new one on the handle of your blue recycling bin or on your front porch. You can email <info@simplerecycling.com> to request more bags. You can also email me at <recycling@hpwbana.org>. As a Recycling Block Leader, I have been given extra bags.

Here is a very informative City of Austin recycling website:
<<http://www.austintexas.gov/what-do-i-do>>.

Stay tuned for future tips that will include creative ways to recycle or reuse. If you have any questions or recycling ideas, please send them to:
<recycling@hpwbana.org>.



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HPWBANA RESIDENTIAL HOME SALES TRENDS

by Rebecca Wolfe Spratlin

Another year has rolled by and once again, it is time to look at how homes in our neighborhood have been performing during the past five years. These years have been exceptional for growth in the Austin economy and have strengthened our residential real estate market. In the accompanying graphs, we see the trends for Net Sold Prices, Net Sold Prices per Square Foot and Days on Market for homes in the Highland Park West, Balcones Park and Area Neighborhoods.

The Net Sold Price (sold price minus repairs and closing costs paid by the seller for the buyer) trends continued upward from 2012 through 2016 with a slight peek in average and median Net Sold Prices in 2015. There was a very wide range of net sale prices in our neighborhoods. The highest priced home sold during the past five years was sold in 2012 for \$7,000,000, while the lowest priced home sold during that time was also sold in 2012 for \$151,100. Both average and median statistics are meaningful, but since the median statistics knock out the extremes of highs and lows, these are the numbers that tell a clearer story.

The Net Sold Price per Square Foot trends have been going up during this period, as well. The median Net Sold Price Per Square Foot did dip a bit in 2016 compared to 2015, moving from \$322 in 2015 to \$307 in 2016. This shows a softening of the market toward the end of last year that is expected to continue into 2017 as interest rates trend upward.

The Days on the Market mark the time between when properties were listed on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) and the time the properties went under contracts that eventually closed. The average Days on Market during 2016 were 79 and the median number of days were 57. These were the longest periods for home sales in our neighborhoods during the past five years. 2015 was unusually low with an average of 44 days and median of 22 days. Keep in mind that after homes go under contract, they generally take about 35 days to close, so to get a clear read on the time from the MLS listing date to the closing and funding date, add 35 days onto the Days on the Market.

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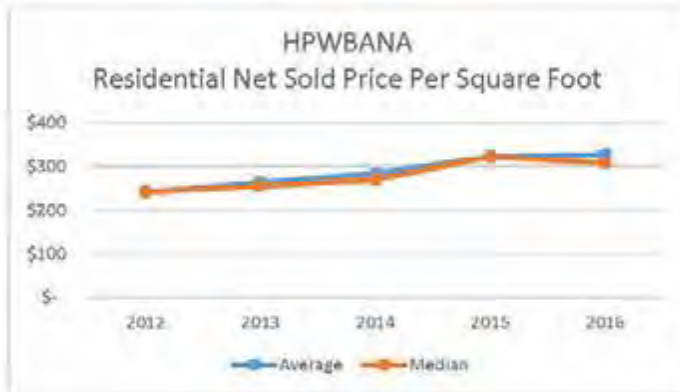
**GO GREEN
GO PAPERLESS**



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Highland Park West Balcones Area

(Continued from Page 3)



The Bathroom Re-do

By Benny Rowe, *The Homeowners' Advisor*

It's time for a change. Your bathroom is a place where both cleanliness and comfort are prime considerations - yours is not working so well, and you're thinking: Remodel.

So, here are some things to take into consideration:

- Do you need more room?
- Do the tub and/or shower operate like you want?
- Are the cabinets adequate?
- Are the floors both durable and attractive?
- Are the lighting and mirrors good enough for those close-up inspections?
- Is this space easy to clean?

Quite a list! Nonetheless, if you're contemplating a remodel, these are questions you should ask yourself, because when it comes to such an undertaking, if you're in for a penny, you might as well be in for a pound. Be rigorously honest - you'll thank yourself later.

It comes down to a matter of three things - need (or desire), money, and time. There are ways to get what you want without spending a fortune - through good planning and flexibility. It's imperative that you decide what you really want to do - go ahead - plan big... but prioritize, and be prepared to scale back your dreams to a manageable undertaking.

First, decide whether you need more space, because that will determine your next course of action. If you really don't, and it's just making what you already have more functional, then you should consider consulting a bathroom specialist - someone who can advise you on how to best configure the area you have, to accomplish what you want. As with hiring any professional, try to get a reference from a friend or colleague, but in any case check their credentials carefully, and don't commit until you have.

If you need more space, there are basically 2 options: moving walls, or adding on. While both are often legit options, some homes might fare better with one than the other. For instance: sometimes

(Continued on Page 5)



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(Continued from Page 4)

there's not really enough space within the existing structure to move walls – you'll have to sacrifice too much somewhere else to expand, so consider an addition. Conversely, perhaps the addition you want will put the new structure too close to the lot line (many cities have set-back ordinances), or maybe there are other reasons not to add on – so consider both possibilities.

It's important to do independent research, and you might consider talking to an owner's advocate – someone with experience, but no interest other than sound advice, and the consultation is usually free.

All right then... in summary:

1. Decide that it's time to make a change.
2. Develop and write down your ideas.
3. Get professional advice, but don't be pressured.
4. Remain flexible.
5. Maintain balance between momentum and control.
6. Move when it's the right time.
7. Think about contacting an owner's advocate.

There are of course many other considerations, but this should give you some information to help get you started.

Happy building!

With over 35 years in the industry, The Homeowners' Advisor is ready and able to assist you in your home or commercial building efforts. This service enables both residential and commercial property owners to take control of their construction projects in a totally unique way. We will advocate for and advise you... from concept to completion.

B **Balcones Books**

We now have our own bookstore, Balcones Books, in the Highland Park Center immediately east of Russell's Bakery. It caters to bibliophiles searching for fine firsts, autographed books, out-of-print, vintage and otherwise collectible in addition to having bargain great reads. Major sections include fiction, Americana, Texana, children and young readers, cookbooks, religion, philosophy, foreign policy and war, political economy, poetry, short story, drama, essay, books on books, lit crit, art and architecture. The book inventory is the paring down of a huge collection amassed over the past 30 years by Erwin McGee, a local attorney and now proprietor.

Please note that there is a problem with getting a new awning (which now reads "Cross/Recek Architects") five doors east of Russell's. Store hours: Wed. thru Sun. 11 - 7.

"When you're in a book you're never bored." Mary Beth McGee (1918-2015)

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Common Structural Termites

There are three main types of termites that can cause problems for homeowners in Texas- native subterranean termites, formosan subterranean termites and drywood termites.

Native subterranean termites have nests in the soil and must maintain contact with soil or an above-ground moisture source to survive. If native subterranean termites move to areas above ground they make shelter (mud) tubes of fecal material, saliva and soil to protect themselves.



Native subterranean termite workers and soldiers.

Formosan termites are a more voracious type of subterranean termite. These termites have been spread throughout Texas through transport of infested material or soil. Formosan termites build carton nests that allow them to survive above ground without contact with the soil. Nests are often located in hollow spaces, such as wall voids.



Formosan subterranean termite workers and soldiers.

Formosan termites feed on a wider variety of cellulose than other subterranean termites, including live plants (and can be found living and feeding on trees), consuming both spring and summer growth wood whereas native subterranean termites feed only on spring growth. Formosan termites have also been known to chew through non-cellulose materials such as soft metals, plaster or plastic.

Drywood termites do not need contact with soil and reside in sound, dry wood. These termites obtain moisture from the wood they digest. Drywood termites create a dry fecal pellet that can be used as an identifying characteristic. They have smaller colonies- around 1,000 termites- than subterranean termites; they also do not build shelter tubes.



Drywood termite fecal pellets.

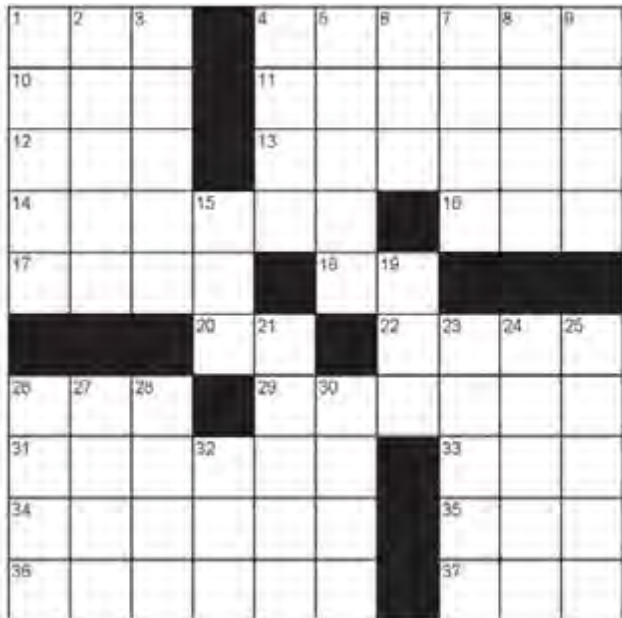
If you are concerned that you may have termites, call a pest management professional to inspect your home for termites.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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1. Belong
4. Elevator alternative
10. Fire remains
11. Short guy, hairy feet
12. Manipulate
13. Indoor
14. Coaxing
16. Condensation
17. Adolescent
18. South Carolina (abbr.)
20. New Jersey (abbr.)
22. Hornet
26. Rock
29. Loves
31. Demonstrate
33. Government agency
34. Subordinate
35. Cause of sickness
36. Elapse (2 wds.)
37. Surface to air missile

DOWN

1. Finds _
2. Make available
3. Not here
4. Tibia
5. Fire iron
6. Abdominal muscles (abbr.)
7. As previously cited
8. Cycle
9. Soup
15. Hotel
19. Cash with order (abr.)
21. Rachel's husband
23. Regions
24. Reddish brown
25. Sacred song
26. Pearls
27. Vile
28. Brief
30. Refuse to believe
32. Pinch

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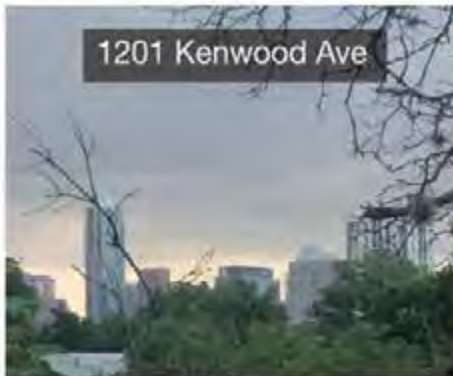
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