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THE HPWBANA NEWS

Lettuce Recycle!

by Dena Houston

WHY WE DON'T RECYCLE – Part I



We are a “recycling-minded neighborhood” and, yet, there are certain aspects of recycling each of us finds difficult to do. Maybe it’s washing that peanut butter or mayonnaise jar before it goes into the blue bin, or maybe it’s trying to figure out a place to store plastic bags before they go to the grocery store’s plastic collection bin.

There are many reasons people don’t recycle or don’t recycle certain items. It’s important to know why and also to understand the recycling challenges in order to help Austin achieve its goal of Zero Waste by 2040.

In this and the next several issues of the HPWBANA newsletter, I will explore these reasons, demystify recycling, and encourage my neighbors to recycle more and recycle correctly.

REASON 1 - RECYCLING IS SO CONFUSING!

Here are some examples of items that confuse us:

CUPS – The paper cup that coffee is served in at coffee shops is not recyclable because it is made from several layers of paper and polyethylene to provide insulation. However, the cardboard sleeve around the cup and the plastic lid are both recyclable and can be placed in the blue curbside bin, as can clear plastic cups and the solid color or translucent plastic “Solo Cups”. Styrofoam cups are recyclable if they are clean and dry, but they cannot be placed in the blue bin. They need to be taken to the Recycle & Reuse Drop-Off Center, where the Styrofoam is melted down and transported to a recycling facility.

COAT HANGERS – Do not put metal coat hangers into the blue recycling bin. They damage the sorting machinery at the recycling sorting facility. They must go into your trash cart or be taken to a local dry cleaner to be reused. However, plastic coat hangers may go into the blue recycling bin.

PIZZA BOXES – Cardboard pizza boxes do not



go into the blue curbside bin, even if they seem free from food product. Grease from hot pizza compromises the cardboard and its ability to be recycled. **HOWEVER**, all pizza boxes can go into the green curbside compost bins where they will become compost.

IMPORTANT RULE ABOUT RECYCLING

When in doubt, throw it out! That may seem counter-intuitive to those of us who are passionate about recycling, but it is much better to put something in the landfill rather than contaminate the recycling stream.

The City of Austin has many educational resources. The most comprehensive is the “What do I do with” website - <http://www.austintexas.gov/what-do-i-do>. Just type in the name of the item to find out how to recycle it. You can always email me your recycling question. I will research it and email an answer back to you. I can be reached at recycling@hpwbana.org.

QUESTIONS FROM OUR READERS (AND THE ANSWERS):

I HAVE NOTICED A LOT OF INSTACART SHOPPERS AT MY LOCAL GROCERY STORE. WHEN THEY CHECK OUT, THE CART IS FULL OF THE REUSEABLE PLASTIC BAGS YOU HAVE TO BUY FROM THE GROCERY STORE. DOES INSTACART REUSE THESE BAGS? No, they do not. There is not a system in place with Instacart to collect bags and reuse them. **HOWEVER**, HEB’s new curbside pick up system allows the person picking up to provide his/her own bags. The groceries ordered online are brought to the car and loaded into personal grocery bags.

I’M CURIOUS TO KNOW IF THE CITY PULLS OUT AND RECYCLES THE RECYCLABLE ITEMS IT PICKS UP ON BULK ITEM COLLECTION DAYS, OR DOES IT ALL GO STRAIGHT TO THE LANDFILL. All items picked up by the City during bulk item collection go to the landfill. There is not a sorting process in place to retrieve recyclable items. My advice is to look carefully at the items set out for this collection that

(Continued on Page 2)

Highland Park West Balcones Area

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

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Social Services (during work hours) 211
Wildlife Rescue 24 Hour Hot Line 210-698-1709
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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)

are not picked up by the entrepreneurs. Please consider donating them to a local charity or recycling them.

Here is a new City of Austin website to help link you to most of the charity shops in Austin. It is called the Austin Reuse Directory. <http://austineconetwork.com/austin-reuse-directory/>.

RESPONSES FROM READERS:

Loved your "Lettuce Recycle" column. After reading your article about coffee bags and other non-recyclable bags, I had an idea for using all those Ruta Maya bags I stowed away to use "someday". Thanks for making me think.

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

COST OF SELLING YOUR HOME

by Rebecca Wolfe Spratlin

When homeowners are considering selling their homes, it is important for them to understand the total financial calculations that determine the final NET Proceeds. Most people have a pretty good idea of the equity they have in their homes, but they usually do not understand the actual costs involved in selling their homes and the basis of those expenses. These are important so sellers can determine the amount of money they will walk away with after closing and funding. Many sellers with whom I have spoken think closing costs are going to be about 10% of the sale price, but in reality they are almost always around 7.5% of the sale price. To help understand the costs involved with the sale of a single family home (costs are different for condos, townhomes and other types of residential dwellings), see the chart and notes below.

Estimated NET Proceeds		
Estimated Closing Costs		Contract Price
Real Estate Commission - Listing Agent (negotiable with Realtor)	Approx. 3% of Contract Price	
Real Estate Commission - Buyer's Agent	Approx. 3% of Contract Price	
Document Preparation - by Title Company's contracted attorney	Approx. \$ 75.00	
Portion of Title Policy Paid by Seller	Approx. 0.45% - 0.62% of Contract Price	
"Shortages in Area" Amendment to Title Policy (negotiable with Buyer)	0.5% of Title Policy (above)	
Escrow Fee	Approx. \$ 250.00	
Guaranty Assessment Recoupment Fee	Approx. \$ 4.50	
Courier/Overnight Fees	Approx. \$ 30.00	
Tax Certificate	Approx. \$ 43.30	
Option Fee Credit (negotiable with Buyer)	Approx. \$100 - \$500	
One-Year Home Warranty for Buyer (negotiable with Buyer)	Approx. \$575-\$875	
Seller Paid Buyer's Closing Cost (negotiable with Buyer)	Based on amount agreed upon in Contract	
Seller Paid Survey (usually paid by Buyer, but negotiable)	Approx. \$500 - \$800	
TOTAL Closing Costs		
Estimated Expenses that Have to be Paid at Closing		
Repair Expense (negotiable with Buyer)	Totally dependent upon Negotiations	
Property Taxes	Taxes accrued between January 1 and Closing Date	
Payoff of Liens/Mortgage	Sum of all outstanding Liens/Mortgages on Property	
TOTAL Expenses Paid at Closing		
NET Proceeds		NET Proceeds = Contract Price - Closing Costs - Expenses Paid at Closing

Commission can be higher or lower, based on knowledge, experience and services provided by your Listing Realtor.
These are charges from the Title Company. Note that Title Insurance Premiums are set by the state and do not vary from company to company.
This fee does not reflect a reduction in NET Proceeds, but is a credit to the Buyer for this pre-paid fee.
These items are all negotiated when the contract is being negotiated and are not always paid by the Seller.
Although these expenses are paid at closing, they are not Closing Costs. These are expenses the Sellers would incur even if they did not sell their homes.

Once you determine the estimated sale price, you can calculate Estimated Net Proceeds with placeholders for the variables that will be negotiated with the Seller. Once under contract, and after any repair costs are finalized, another Estimated Net Proceeds can be calculated with all the known variables filled in. A day or so before closing, the title company will provide a Closing Document showing all credits and debits and the final NET Proceeds for the Seller. This document is reviewed for accuracy and all parties sign it at the closing table.



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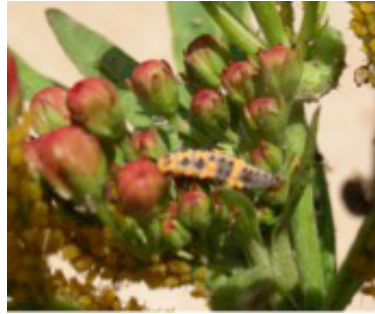
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LADYBIRD BEETLES



Ladybug eggs



Ladybug larva



Ladybug Pupa



Ladybug adult

Ladybird beetles, also known as ladybugs, are beneficial insects that can help eat pests in the landscape. While they help to control various soft-bodied insect pests, they are best known for eating aphids in the adult and larval stage. One ladybug can eat up to 5,000 aphids during its lifetime. Ladybugs may supplement their diet with flower nectar and honeydew in times when prey is scarce.

Ladybugs have a complete life cycle with four life stages- egg,

larva, pupa, and adult. Adults come in a variety of sizes and colors. They are oval with a domed body shape, are brightly colored, and have contrasting markings. After mating, female adults lay eggs in clusters on plants, usually near aphids, mealybugs, or scale insects. The eggs are yellowish-orange and look like footballs sitting up on end. Larvae emerge from eggs to feed on the insects that are found nearby. Larvae are alligator-shaped, and often greyish-black with bright markings.

(Continued on Page 5)



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(Continued from Page 4)

Larvae feed on insect prey for several weeks before pupating on the plant. The pupae are non-feeding, non-moving, and are unprotected by a cocoon.

To conserve the ladybugs that you find in your landscape, learn to recognize all stages of the beetles. Make wise pesticide choices and target use to specific areas. Add plants that can provide pollen and nectar for the beetles to supplement their diet.

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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Highland Park West Balcones Area

THE MINIMALIST GARDENER

By Flint Sage



Vegetables: Warm weather has arrived, so plant summer plants as soon as possible. Plant okra. It is a star performer here. You will need only a few plants...maybe five for a family. The plants are about two feet wide and grow to six feet or so. You will learn to pick them when less than 3" long. Battered and deep-fried: delicious!

Include sweet potatoes. They grow well and provide excellent color to the garden.

Add some fertilizer for most plants this month.

Perennials and Annuals: Divide clumps and remove old growth now. Plant warm season perennials and annuals. Plant bulbs. Unless you are looking for a showy yard, minimize annuals and maximize perennials to save money.

Trees, Shrubs, and Vines: Those trees, shrubs, and vines that have been dormant have awakened for their spring, summer, and fall show. Lightly prune if required. Oaks probably shouldn't be pruned this month because of the potential for disease transmission.

Fertilize trees with inexpensive pure nitrogen such as ammonium sulfate. Water deeply after fertilizing: 1 inch of water to drive the nitrogen down to the roots. Don't forget that trees in lawns compete with the grass. Professionals use separate bubblers for trees to assure they get enough water.

April is the peak season for roses. When the rose flowers fade, do a light pruning (deadheading) to remove the old blooms. Add ¼ cup fertilizer to each plant soon after to encourage new growth.


Lawns: Healthy grass is your best defense against weeds. Apply lawn fertilizer after the second mowing and monthly after that during the growing season. Consider using straight nitrogen (such as 12-0-0) lawn fertilizer now. Make sure you are getting sufficient water to those areas which tend to grow weeds rather than grass. If it doesn't rain, you will need to irrigate your lawn, trees, and other plants.

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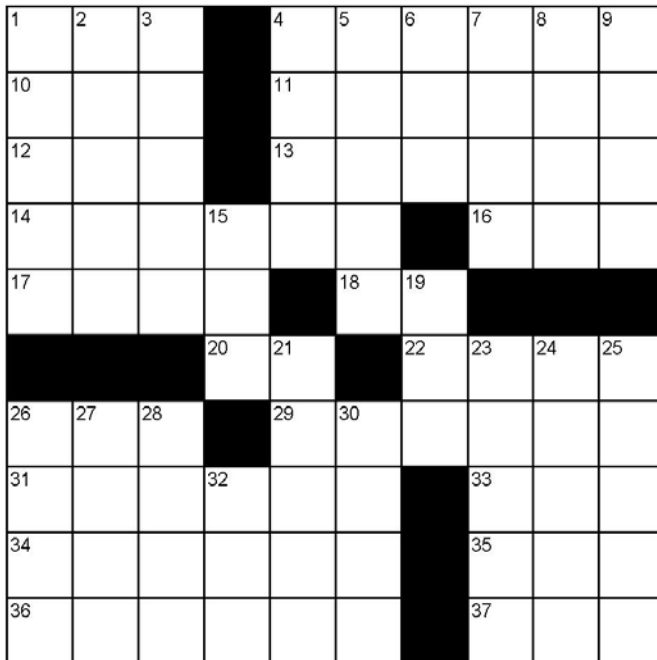
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1. Owns
4. Short people
10. Grain
11. In the air
12. Single
13. Nun's headwear
14. Musician (3 wds.)
16. Homesick
17. Booty
18. Horsepower (abbr.)
20. Cincinnati locale
22. Hasten
26. Mountain Standard Time
29. Eras
31. Cover
33. Eccentric
34. Beaches
35. Vane direction
36. Hug upon greeting
37. Danish krone (abbr.)

DOWN

1. Coat hangers
2. Root beer brand (3 wds.)
3. Stone
4. Aurora
5. Ponder
6. Build up
7. Holes
8. Syllables used in songs (2 wds.)
9. Sledge
15. Gone by
19. Not against
21. Cycles per second
23. Pimpled
24. Glob
25. Organic compound
26. Soft mineral
27. Prig
28. Tyrant
30. Mexican money
32. North American country

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COOKIES

Note: This was the original Nestle cookie recipe. An updated version on verybestbaking.com shows this as a cookie bar recipe known as White Chip Blondes. The recipe is the same, but the baking results in bars rather than cookies.



INGREDIENTS:

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup packed light brown sugar
1/3 cup butter or margarine, softened
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 large egg
1 cup (6 oz.) NESTLÉ® TOLL HOUSE® Premier White Morsels
1/2 cup coarsely chopped macadamia nuts
1/2 cup toasted coconut

METHOD:

PREHEAT oven to 375° F.

COMBINE flour, baking powder and salt in medium bowl. Beat sugar, butter and vanilla extract in large mixer bowl until creamy. Beat in egg. Gradually beat in flour mixture. Stir in morsels, nuts and coconut. Drop by rounded tablespoons onto ungreased cookie sheet.

BAKE for 8 to 11 minutes or until edges are lightly brown. Cool two minutes on baking pan then to wire racks to cool completely.



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PILLBUGS By Wizzie Brown

Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist



Pillbugs, sow-bugs, or roly-polys are crustaceans, more closely related to crayfish and shrimp than insects. Crustaceans usually live in aquatic environments, but pillbugs are terrestrial. Even though they live on land, they still require moist environments for survival. Pillbugs do not bite, sting, transmit diseases,

or cause physical damage to the home or its contents.

Pillbugs are ¼- ½" with dark grey coloring. Their oval bodies are convex above and either flat or concave underneath. Pillbugs have seven pairs of legs and two pairs of antennae and roll up into a ball when disturbed.

Pillbugs are scavengers, feeding mainly on decaying organic matter. They may occasionally feed on young, tender plants, but damage is typically not significant. They can be found under mulch, leaf litter, flower pots, compost, stones or other items resting on the ground.

Pillbugs may invade crawl spaces and homes at ground level with

common points of entry being door thresholds and expansion joints. When these pests are seen indoors, there is usually a large population breeding outside of the home near the foundation. Since pillbugs require moisture, they do not survive indoors for more than a few days unless there are very moist or damp conditions.

To manage infestations inside the home, rely on sanitation and exclusion techniques. Repair or replace door thresholds and seal expansion joints where pillbugs may be entering the structure. Pesticides are not usually needed indoors to manage these occasional invaders. They soon die on their own from lack of moisture and can be swept up using a broom and dustpan or a vacuum.

Outdoors, move any piles of debris away from the foundation of the home. If there are high numbers in and around landscape beds, turn the mulch to allow it dry out which makes the area uninhabitable. Any leaky faucets or irrigation lines as well as leaking air conditioning units should be repaired to eliminate moisture buildup. You may choose a pesticide to treat mulched areas or other areas that are harboring large pillbug populations. Look for products labeled for pillbugs, sowbugs, or isopods.

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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YEARLY MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

	Monthly	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Check fire extinguishers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Test smoke & carbon monoxide	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Run citrus peels or ice through garbage disposal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Run hot water & baking soda through drains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clean faucet aerators & shower heads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Run water & flush toilets in unused	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Twice a Year												
Flush hot water tank & clean sediment from bottom	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Vacuum lint from dryer & hose attachments	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Check water softener and add salt if needed	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Replace batteries - smoke/carbon monoxide detectors	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Clear gutters & drains	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Make sure downspouts direct water away from home	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Check home exterior for evidence of	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Inspect porches & decks for loose flooring or rails	<input type="checkbox"/>												
	Yearly												
Check window & door seals													
Have heating system serviced													
Have fireplaces cleaned													
Have air conditioning system serviced	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Review fire emergency plan	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Review insurance coverage	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Drain exterior faucets, hoses & sprinkler systems													
Cover faucets with styrofoam covers													
Trim back vegetation so it does not touch the home													
Check siding & repaint or caulk where necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>												
	Every 1 to 3 Years												
Clean air ducts	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Reseal tile grout	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Pump septic system	<input type="checkbox"/>												

These recommendations are not meant to replace expert advice. Please use your best judgment, and consult professionals when necessary.