



Sustainability Newsletter

Composter Rebate Program—Coming Soon!

April 2017

Did you know that RDBN residents throw out more than an estimated 500kg of waste **per person** every year? Approximately 166kg of that waste is compostable organic material (food scraps and yard waste), which is about a bathtub full!

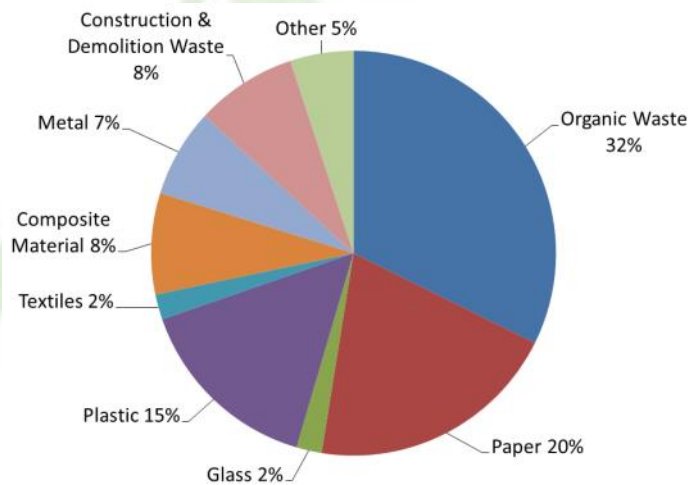
Composting your food scraps and yard waste can not only reduce your overall waste generation, but can decrease the smelliness of your garbage (and less trips out to the garbage can!). Composting will reduce greenhouse gas emissions created from decomposing organic matter in the landfill and will produce an incredibly nutritious supplement for your garden, eliminating the need for store bought fertilizer.

This spring, the RDBN will be continuing to promote backyard composting by offering the opportunity to receive a rebate if you purchase a composter at one of our local retailers. Keep an eye out for more information as it becomes available! Contact Elaine Wiebe, Environmental Services Assistant for more info (1-800-320-3339 or 250-692-3195 or elaine.wiebe@rdbn.bc.ca).

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Household Waste Composition in the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako



**Stay tuned for Compost Program
launch dates and details!**



**Details will be announced on
our Facebook page
"Sustainable RDBN".**



This newsletter can be viewed online at:

www.rdbn.bc.ca/environmentalservices/recycling/sustainability-newsletter

Compost Demonstration — Burns Lake

The Burns Lake Community Garden Society is hosting a Compost Demonstration and Chat on May 13, 2017 at 1:00 pm at the Community Garden, located at 296 Nault Lane in Burns Lake. They will be discussing and demonstrating how to use the following composters: barrel, wire mesh, triple bin, tire tower and the African keyhole garden with compost digester. They will also demonstrate composting with worms and talk about how to put together an easy DIY worm bin. They will also chat about how to make compost tea for feeding plants, as well as other compost related topics. Everyone will be encouraged to ask questions and share their know-how.



For more information about the Compost Demonstration or the BLCG and other upcoming events, please check out their website at www.burnslakecommunitygarden.weebly.com.

Backyard composting do's and don'ts

Composting is cheap, easy and it turns a good portion of your garbage into plant food! Try raking it over your grass and spreading it around shrubs, trees and flowers. Or dig it into the soil of vegetable beds before you plant.

Do's

Alternate layers of nitrogen-rich greens and carbon-rich browns.

Great Greens:

- Vegetable peelings
- Rotten fruit
- Coffee grounds
- Tea leaves

Best Browns:

- Dry leaves
- Shredded newsprint (non-toxics only) or brown paper (e.g. paper bags)
- Cut-up cardboard (recycle large pieces)
- Other paper (unbleached paper towels, napkins, etc. (wet is okay, not greasy))

Also Add:

- Rinsed, crushed eggshells
- Pet hair, to help discourage rodents

Don'ts

Avoid adding

—Oils and fats, bread products, rice and pasta, sauces, dairy products, nuts, fish and meat or bones. These will cause odour problems and attract pests.

—Dog or cat feces, kitty litter and human waste. Meat-eating animals may carry disease and kitty litter may contain chemicals.

—Weeds with mature seeds. When you spread the compost, you'll spread the weeds too.

—Treated wood products. These may contain harmful chemicals.



Make the Switch from Disposable to Reusable

The average person generates 1.37 kilograms of waste every day and well over half this waste ends up in a landfill. Not only is this rate of trash production terrible for the planet, it wastes a lot of your hard-earned money. Save money AND be kind to the planet, by switching to one of these cost-effective reusable replacements instead.



Rechargeable Batteries

While rechargeable batteries cost more initially they can be reused hundreds of times and last for years, if used properly. At the end of their life cycle rechargeable batteries can be recycled to keep toxic chemicals out of the landfill.



Water Bottles

Bottled water is 10,000 times more expensive than tap water and despite what the industry says, bottled water isn't any cleaner or healthier than tap water. The production of one plastic bottle uses more water to produce than is actually put into the bottle for drinking! Skip the scam and carry tap water in a non-BPA water bottle instead.

Permanent Coffee Filter

Still using bleached paper coffee filters to brew your morning java? Save lots of money with a permanent, reusable coffee filter instead. When dirty, simply run it through the dishwasher.

Dryer Balls

Fabric softener and dryer sheets are an expensive way (and costly to the environment!) to get the soft, clean-smelling clothes that you want. Save time, money and energy with wool dryer balls instead. You can find them to purchase or make them yourself (See the next page!).



Paper Plates and Plastic Utensils

Whether you're planning a picnic (or simply packing a lunch) strive to use traditional metal cutlery that can be washed repeatedly. Really need a disposable option? Try compostable alternatives made from corn or bamboo.

Toothbrush



Toothbrush bristles wear out quickly, so to maintain a healthy smile, they've got to be replaced. This doesn't mean the entire toothbrush needs to end up in the trash, however. You can reduce 93% of toothbrush waste by using toothbrush handles with replaceable heads. Or go a different route and try a bamboo toothbrush instead of your regular plastic.

Vacuum Bags

Vacuums that require disposable bags are, well, vintage to say the least. If you have to replace yours, upgrade to a vacuum that features an easy-to-empty canister and washable air filter and never waste money on vacuum bags again.

DIY Dryer Balls

Wool dryer balls will save you time and money, soften and fluff without toxic chemicals and reduce static. Get busy crafting!!



You will need:

- * A skein of 100% wool yarn (NOT wool labeled “superwash” or “machine washable”)
- * Scissors
- * Nylons or knee-high stockings
- * Blunt-tipped needle or crochet hook
- * String or cotton/acrylic yarn (to secure the wool balls in the pantyhose)



Directions:

1. Begin wrapping your wool yarn around your first two fingers about 10 times.
2. Pinch the bundle of yarn in the middle and pull off your fingers. Wrap more yarn around the middle of this bundle.



3. Wrap yarn around the entire bundle until you have the beginning of a ball.

4. Continue wrapping tightly until your ball is the desired size. (Soft-ball sized helps to cut drying time more, but tennis ball or baseball-sized will help save money on yarn.)



5. Use a blunt-tipped yarn needle or crochet hook to tuck the end of the thread under several layers of yarn. Pull it through and cut the end.



6. Repeat these steps with more yarn until you have 4-6 balls.
7. Cut the leg off an old pair of nylons or use knee-high stockings. Put balls into the toe of the nylons, tying tightly in between each one with string, or cotton/acrylic yarn (just don't use the wool yarn or it will felt around the nylons!). Tie off the end.
8. Throw the entire yarn caterpillar into the wash with towels (or a load of jeans).
9. Wash in a HOT wash cycle with a COLD water rinse cycle. Dry your yarn caterpillar

with your laundry, using the hottest dryer setting.



10. Remove balls from nylons and check for felting. Some types of wool yarn will not felt well on the first try. You may need to repeat the washing and drying cycles up to 3 or 4 times. You'll know felting has occurred when you can gently scrape your fingernail over the ball and strands do not separate.



11. You're ready to use them! Throw them in the dryer with your freshly washed clothes and let them do their work!

12. If you find they lose their effectiveness, put them back in the nylons or stockings and re-felt them. It may help to reduce static to put several safety pins in each.