



# Sustainability Newsletter

November 2016

## What happens after the recycling depot?

Many materials that are used to package your favourite consumer products can be recycled again and again. Here's the low down on what happens with some of the most frequently recycled materials.



**Aluminum cans:** These are eventually baled, melted and are back on the shelf again as a can within as little as six weeks. This saves a tremendous amount of raw material, plus it takes 95% less energy to manufacture a can from recycled aluminum compared to making it from brand new material.

**Paper products:** Mixed paper and newsprint are de-inked and returned to a pulp form, ultimately to be remade into recycled newsprint and other paper products. Cardboard is remade into cardboard and boxboard.



**Plastics:** Plastic packaging is used in household goods, packaging and building material. Plastic beverage containers are used for new bottles, jugs, buckets and more. Recycling plastics uses about 1/3 less energy than manufacturing new plastic.

**Glass:** Glass bottles are reused an average of 15 times. They are then recycled into new glass bottles and other glass products. Glass can be ground down into small pieces called "cullet" and are used in the manufacturing of a variety of things such as fiberglass insulation, sandblasting material and sand for golf-course sand traps. Ground glass is also added to asphalt in the making of new road.



Check out the BC Recycles Handbook at [www.bcrecycles.ca](http://www.bcrecycles.ca) for more great info! Remember the 3 r's: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. By cutting back on the amount of things you bring into your home, reusing as many of them as possible and then recycling whatever you can, it will help to cut down on the amount of waste generated each and every day!!

This newsletter can be viewed online at: [www.rdbn.bc.ca/environmentalservices/recycling/sustainability-newsletter](http://www.rdbn.bc.ca/environmentalservices/recycling/sustainability-newsletter)

If you have any questions about the content of this newsletter, please contact Elaine Wiebe, Environmental Services Assistant, Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako at 250-692-3195, toll free: 1-800-320-3339, email: [elaine.wiebe@rdbn.bc.ca](mailto:elaine.wiebe@rdbn.bc.ca).

# To Flush or Not to Flush

Sewer systems can't handle a lot of the things that we put down our pipes. When grease, wipes and other items are flushed or put down the drain, they can cause problems for your home and the sewer system you are connected to.



Wipes

## Disposable wipes: Put them in the garbage

This includes baby wipes, personal hygiene wipes, paper towels, cleaning cloths, mop cloths and mop pads. Even many products labeled as "flushable" may cause clogs.

## Cooking grease: Put it in the garbage

Grease becomes hard in sewer pipes, causing them to block and overflow sewage into the environment. Wipe up small amounts of grease with a paper towel and throw it away. If you have larger amounts, pour grease into a tin can or milk carton and let it harden before putting it in the garbage.

## Food scraps: Compost it



Use a backyard composter or vermicomposting to keep food waste out of our landfills. You will get wonderful "black gold" (finished compost) for your efforts.

## Paint, oil and other chemicals: Find a take-back program

In B.C., ReGeneration ([www.regeneration.ca](http://www.regeneration.ca)) operates more than 200 collection sites across the province where consumers may return leftover paint, including 90 where flammables, gasoline and pesticides can also be disposed of. There is no charge to drop off leftovers that are accepted by the program.

## Personal hygiene items: Put them in the garbage

Includes pads, tampons (and applicators), dental floss and condoms.

## Hair: Put it in the garbage

Hair is one of the top clogging agents in our sewers. Who knew?

## Medication: Take it back!



Medication

Under the British Columbia Medications Return Program, all prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications in oral dosage form (including pills/liquids) and natural health products in oral dosage form can be returned to a pharmacy in your community. When you flush them down the toilet, this may have potential harmful effects on the environment. Disposal via the toilet will take your drugs into the local sewage system. Modern water treatment plants are not fully designed to deal with medication disposal. Experts say drugs can leach into the local water table, eventually coming out somewhere like a nearby lake or stream or even worse, out onto your own property, where pets, livestock or wildlife could be at risk.

**So what can you flush? The list is short: only flush human waste and toilet paper.**



Tampons

# Get Crafty for the Holidays

Try out these homemade craft options for gifts this year. Make them in advance so you are not rushed when December 25th rolls around!



## Coconut Oil Lotion Bar

You will need:

- 1 part coconut oil
- 1 part pure beeswax
- Essential oils (optional)
- Lotion bar molds or muffin tins

Directions:

1. Heat coconut oil and beeswax together in a saucepan over low heat. It helps if you break up the beeswax into small chunks because it takes a while for the wax to melt.
2. Once the beeswax and coconut oil are melted, add essential oils. Vanilla and lavender are nice. If you are sensitive to strong fragrances, only add a few drops.
3. Pour melted coconut oil and beeswax into lotion bar molds or muffin tins.
4. Let them sit until cool. You can also place them into the refrigerator if you need to speed up the process.
5. To use, rub the bar until it's warm and then apply it on your skin like lotion.

## Homemade Bath Bombs

You will need:

- 1 cup baking soda
- 1/2 cup citric acid
- 1/2 cup Epsom salts
- 2 teaspoons liquid coconut oil or almond oil
- 3 teaspoons witch hazel (or pomegranate juice if you'd like colored bombs)
- 1 drop each: chamomile, tea tree, ginger and lavender essential oils



Directions:

1. In a large bowl, stir together baking soda, citric acid, and Epsom salt.
2. In a small bowl, stir together coconut oil, witch hazel, and essential oils.
3. Quickly add the wet ingredients to dry ingredients, stirring to incorporate. The mixture will start to hold together when squeezed firmly. Add a half-teaspoon of water, as needed, until the mixture reaches this consistency.
4. Press mixture into silicone molds (or greased muffin tins or plastic Easter eggs or bath bomb molds). Allow to dry for 24-48 hours.
5. To use: drop into warm water and enjoy!

## Peppermint Sugar Scrub



You will need:

- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup coconut oil
- 15 drops peppermint essential oil
- Wide mouth pint-sized mason jar

Directions:

1. Mix sugar and melted coconut oil together in a large bowl.
2. Add peppermint essential oils and mix well with a spoon.
3. Place it in a small glass jar or container.
4. Tie a little ribbon or baker's twine around your lid and add a candy cane and rosemary or evergreen sprig for an extra special touch!

# Pumpkin season

Whether you've carved a jack-o-lantern or grown your own pumpkins, fall is a time that calls for loads of pumpkin goodness! Below are some tasty recipes you might like to try.

## Pumpkin Carrot Muffins with Vanilla Frosting



### Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup golden yellow sugar
- 2 large eggs at room temperature
- 1 cup pure pumpkin puree
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 1 cup finely grated carrot

### For the frosting:

- 1/4 cup 2% milk
- 1 Tbsp 2% milk
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter
- Icing sugar, sifted (3-4 cups)
- 1 tsp vanilla bean paste
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F and grease or line with paper cups 24 muffin cups.
2. Cream butter and sugars until evenly combined. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition.
3. Stir in pumpkin, sour cream and vanilla.
4. In separate bowl, sift flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and spices. Stir into pumpkin mixture, then stir in grated carrots.
5. Spoon into prepared tins and bake for about 25 minutes, until a tester inserted in the centre of the muffin comes out clean. Cool for 15 minutes in the tin before removing to cool completely.

### Frosting:

1. Beat butter with electric beaters until fluffy. Add 2 cups of icing sugar, plus milk and vanilla and beat for 3 minutes on high speed until fluffy. Add remaining 1 to 2 cups icing sugar until frosting is a fluffy, spreadable consistency. Spread frosting generously onto each muffin.

## No-bake Pumpkin Cheesecake

### Ingredients

- 1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 1 tub (8 oz.) whipped topping
- 1 ready-to-use graham cracker crumb crust (6 oz.)

### Directions

1. Beat cream cheese, pumpkin, sugar and pumpkin pie spice with mixer until blended. Gently stir in 2 1/2 cups whipped topping.
2. Spoon into crust.
3. Refrigerate 3 hours or until firm.
4. Serve topped with remaining whipped topping.

