GET IN THE ZERO WASTE SPIRIT
THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

This holiday season will be a lean one for many of us. The upside is we can do more with less. We can ease the burden on our wallet, while helping those in need, the environment, and the planet.

Christmas is a time of joy, and one of the most wasteful. According to Annie Leonard’s documentary “The Story of Stuff” (www.storyofstuff.com), more than 95% of what we buy ends up in the garbage after six months.

Taking a Zero Waste approach to the holidays won’t make it any less of a celebration. It just takes thinking a little outside the garbage can and the blue box. Even the Grinch realized that maybe Christmas doesn’t come from a store, and that perhaps it means just a little more.

LIGHTEN YOUR SPIRITS AND ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

Producing the goods we consume at Christmas puts a heavy demand on renewable and non-renewable resources such as oil and other fossil fuels. As well, wastes such as greenhouse gases are emitted in making, distributing and disposing of those goods.

Those wastes eventually end up in the ocean, land and atmospheric ecosystems that we depend on for our survival.

Here are some ways to use the 3Rs to make the holidays a more sustainable time of year.

Reduce

- Instead of buying a gift, make a donation to a charity or environmental organization in the person’s name.
- Consider giving your time or service to someone instead of a material gift. This could involve helping an elderly friend or relative or taking the family or friends to a local concert or holiday event.
- Packaging makes up half the volume and one-third the waste going into our landfill. If possible, avoid gifts that are over-packaged and replace them with green gifts, such as rechargeable batteries and chargers or backyard composters.
- Support environmentally sound transportation and healthy activities. Consider giving bus tickets, bicycle accessories, swimming or skating passes or signing someone up for a recreational activity they would enjoy.
- When buying gifts consider products made here first such as locally grown food, clothing or crafts that sustain our region’s economy.

Reuse

- Solve the problem of recycling or disposing of post Christmas gift wrap. Make or buy locally made cloth gift bags for your family that can become part of a tradition and are easily stored for next season. Wrap a gift in a gift such as a cookbook in a new tea towel. Save wrapping paper, bows and gift wrap.
- Consider gifts such as used books, bikes, gardening equipment or camping gear.
- If your gift replaces a working computer or other household goods, donate the old item to a local charity.
- Make your party or celebration waste-wise by using reusable plates, cutlery, glasses and cloth napkins.

Recycle

- Almost anything made of paper can be recycled at the curbside, except paper containing foil, metal or plastic.
- Use your Blue Box, Yellow and Blue Bags to their full extent to recycle newspaper, household paper, cardboard and metal and glass containers. Please see the detailed guide on the back of this newsletter.
HOLIDAY WASTE REDUCTION RESOURCES ON THE WEB

There are hundreds of Internet sites with helpful information on ways to reduce our impact on the environment and the landfill during the holiday season. Here’s a few sample sites:

- Check the top ten list of holiday waste reduction tips at www.resourceconservation.mb.ca/wrw/wrw07/top10_holiday.html
- Visit the environmentally-friendly section of www.christmaslightsanddecorations.com to learn how to reuse & recycle wrapping paper and cards.
- Where can I buy eco-friendly gifts? Check out the green business, green Christmas shopping in Canada section of www.ecoshherpa.com for helpful suggestions and ideas.

CHECK YOUR SCHEDULE FOR GARBAGE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION HOLIDAY CHANGES

Remember, after a statutory holiday your garbage and recycling pick-ups advance by one day. Over Christmas this means your collection moves ahead by two working days, with an additional jump the next week because of New Year’s Day. For some customers on bi-weekly garbage routes this means extra garbage. Collection crews will work to ensure your extra garbage is collected. Please check your schedules for details.

Need a new schedule? Visit the RDN Website to download a new one or call the Zero Waste hotline at 1-866-999-8227 to have one mailed to you.

Don’t forget, your current schedule is good until March 31, 2009. New schedules for April 2009 will be mailed closer to the date.

RDN EXPLORES YARD WASTE COLLECTION OPTIONS

The RDN will issue a new tender for residential garbage and recycling collection in December 2008. The tender call will include a request for bids on providing various levels of yard waste collection to households in the area served by the RDN.

Backyard burning bans have made yard and garden waste disposal a concern for many residents in the region. In some cases this has led to illegal dumping of yard waste, which encourages other types of illegal dumping.

This past November, Area H (Bowser, Deep Bay, Shaw Hill and Qualicum Bay) residents participated in a trial yard waste drop-off program in their community. The trial was conducted because of the 35 km distance to the yard waste drop-off facility at the Church Road Transfer Station.

Participation in the two day drop-off was low due to weather and because most area residents had already completed their fall clean ups. The concept of user-funded staffed drop-off yard and garden waste bins will be considered as a part of an overall strategy to address the needs of residents receiving RDN Garbage & Recycling Collection Service.

SERVICE CHANGES FROM SNOW OR ADVERSE WEATHER

Your garbage and recycling contractor may need to temporarily cancel pick-ups because of snowy or icy conditions or roads blocked by downed trees or powerlines.

In most cases, every effort will be made to collect garbage the following day. Garbage collection is the first priority. Recycling collection may be delayed until your next regularly scheduled pick-up. For more information, please call Waste Services Inc. at 1-866-999-8227.
REGION-WIDE CURBSIDE FOOD WASTE RECYCLING ON THE WAY
Curbside collection of food waste and food soiled paper will be added to what is collected at the curbside in 2010. The Region’s households will join those in Ladysmith, Victoria and municipalities across Canada who are recycling their food waste.

In September 2008, the Regional Board approved adding food waste collection to the upcoming tender for the RDN’s Garbage & Recycling Collection Service. The decision followed a successful pilot project involving 2,000 households on three collection routes throughout the region.

With food waste collection, project participants are diverting on average 64% of their household waste from the landfill.

The tonnage collected exceeded initial estimates by more than 40%. Surveys of the pilot project participants showed that 98% of respondents supported extending the program region-wide. The survey also showed that 31% of respondents noticed an increase in the amount of other recyclables they take to the curb.

"Region-wide collection of food waste is an exciting step forward in finding sustainable solutions to managing our solid waste," says RDN Chairperson Joe Stanhope.

"Businesses and food services organizations throughout the region have been recycling their food waste since 2005. Now it’s time to bring our residential customers on board. Feeding the land with compost made from food waste, saves landfill space, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and returns nutrients to the soil."

IMPROVEMENTS COMING TO CHURCH ROAD TRANSFER STATION
Plans are now underway for a major expansion and upgrading at the Church Road Transfer Station.

The improvements will include a dedicated food waste transfer facility, improved traffic flow, and adding a new scale station. Site users will appreciate easier access to tipping floors and a recycling layout that is safer and more compact.

The Church Road Transfer Station upgrading will incorporate LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold Standard specifications. The LEED system certifies the energy efficiency of commercial buildings and ensures that any environmental impacts of its construction and operation are minimized.

WANTED: YOUR INPUT INTO YOUR ZERO WASTE NEWSLETTER
The RDN Zero Waste newsletter’s goal is to provide customers with timely information about their program and news about waste reduction, reuse, and recycling opportunities.

We’re asking households to complete a brief on-line survey to tell us what they like and don’t like about the newsletter and how it could be improved.

To complete the survey:
1) Point your Web browser to rdn.bc.ca
2) Click on the Zero Waste newsletter survey link banner at the top of the RDN Web site home page or click on Solid Waste under Environmental and click on the survey link in the Zero Waste Programs section.

Deadline: Completed surveys must be received by January 5, 2009.
### Holiday Recycling Opportunities at a Glance

(See Curbside Recycling Guide on the back of your schedule/calendar for Preparation Instructions.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accepted in the Yellow Bag</th>
<th>Not Accepted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christmas cards, envelopes</td>
<td>Foil or plastic laminated paper, bows, ribbons etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrapping paper</td>
<td>Foil or plastic laminated paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxboard – gift boxes, packaging</td>
<td>Foil or plastic laminated paper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Accepted in the Blue Bag**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accepted in the Blue Box</th>
<th>Accepted in the Blue Box</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christmas flyers</td>
<td>Books, soiled newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas magazines, catalogues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass and metal food containers (non refundable)</td>
<td>Paper laminated with foil, metal pots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean aluminum foil</td>
<td>Food soiled foil, tinsel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household holiday plastic containers</td>
<td>Styrofoam, spray nozzle heads</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Beside Your Blue Box**

| Cardboard packing boxes, liquor boxes | Waxed or coated boxes, soiled pizza boxes |

### Other Christmas Recycling Opportunities in the Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Where</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computers, computer equipment, TVs</td>
<td>Parksville Bottle &amp; Recycling Depot, Mostar Recycling Depot, Nanaimo Recycling Exchange, Fremont Rd Bottle Depot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refundable beverage containers, Tetrapak juice boxes, waxed Egg Nog milk and juice containers</td>
<td>Parksville Bottle &amp; Recycling Depot, Qualicum Bottle &amp; Recycling Depot, Mostar Recycling Depot, Nanaimo Recycling Exchange, Fremont Rd Bottle Depot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rechargeable batteries (Call store to confirm participation)</td>
<td>Canadian Tire, London Drugs, The Source by Circuit City, Home Depot, Nanaimo Recycling Exchange, Staples Business Depot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used household goods – Clothing, books, reusable household items</td>
<td>Society of Organized Services, Canadian Diabetes Association, Salvation Army, Friends of Haven House, Gabriola Island Recycling Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Trees</td>
<td>Watch your local paper for details on Christmas tree drop-off or collection information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Recyclable Materials</td>
<td>RDN On-Line Recycling Directory – Go to <a href="http://www.rdn.bc.ca">www.rdn.bc.ca</a>, click on Environmental Services/Solid Waste Services and click on RDN Recycling Directory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### RCBC Recycling Hotline

| RCBC Recycling Hotline 1-800-667-4321 or visit [www.rcbc.bc.ca](http://www.rcbc.bc.ca) |

### Other Christmas Recycling Opportunities

- **Christmas cards, envelopes**: Foil or plastic laminated paper, bows, ribbons etc.
- **Wrapping paper**: Foil or plastic laminated paper
- **Boxboard – gift boxes, packaging**: Foil or plastic laminated paper
- **Christmas flyers**: Books, soiled newspaper
- **Christmas magazines, catalogues**: Books, soiled newspaper
- **Glass and metal food containers (non refundable)**: Paper laminated with foil, metal pots
- **Clean aluminum foil**: Food soiled foil, tinsel
- **Household holiday plastic containers**: Styrofoam, spray nozzle heads
- **Cardboard packing boxes, liquor boxes**: Waxed or coated boxes, soiled pizza boxes

### Zero Waste printed on paper from sustainable sources

The paper used to print the Zero Waste contains 100% post-consumer fibre. It is chlorine free, is certified by independent agencies and manufactured using a biogas energy chlorine free process. Compared with virgin paper, each tonne of Enviro100 Print paper reduces our ecological footprint by saving 17 mature trees, 1,081 lbs. of solid waste, 10,196 gallons of water and 2,098 lb. of air emissions. When you have finished with Zero Waste please recycle at the curbside in your Yellow Bag.