

January Eco-Newsletter

100,000 Gallons of Latex Paint Recycled!

A monumental environmental achievement occurred this past month: over 100,000 gallons of latex paint have now been recycled for reuse at the Johnson County Household Hazardous Materials Program located in Mission, Kansas!

This represents 16 years of dedicated service by Johnson County Environmental staff and volunteers.

Betsy Betros, who was instrumental in launching the operation in 1993, and Betsy Livingston, HHMP Program Manager, will be the first to complement everyone involved in the successful program and tout its many benefits to the community. All the recycled paint has been given away to various groups and individuals, with Operation Brightside taking the majority.



100,000 gallons of recycled paint covers nearly 35 million square feet of surface area. This is roughly equivalent to 729 football fields (not including the end zones) or about 25,000 homes.

Buckets and cans of used paint are dropped off for free at the Household Hazardous Waste site by residents of Johnson County that have made an appointment. The paint is then screened, filtered twice, and mixed in large vats before being decanted into new 5-gallon containers based on color type. The end result of the recycled paint varies in color and includes shades of beige, white, reddish brown, and blue-green.

To participate in the county's HHMP, please call the Johnson County Environmental Department at 913-715-6900 to set up an appointment for your hazardous materials disposal. Let's continue to be stewards of the environment and Hop-to-It when it comes to recycling and reuse.

Christmas Tree Recycling by Johnson County Park and Recreation



In 2008, more than 4,000 trees were recycled or reused through the Johnson County Parks and Recreation District (JCPRD) tree collection program. They will again be accepting post-holiday contributions of discarded natural Christmas trees at three locations.

Some of the trees will be mulched for use on trails and in landscaping while others will be used to improve fish habitat in Shawnee Mission Lake. There is no charge for the disposal of trees. This program is funded in part by the proceeds from a JCPRD employee recycling program.

Trees will be collected from Dec. 26 and through Jan. 18 during regular park hours, 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Collection sites are:

1. Shawnee Mission Park Marina parking lot, 7900 Renner Rd. at the NE corner
2. Heritage Park Marina parking lot, 16050 Pflumm Road, Olathe.
3. Kill Creek Park Marina parking lot, 11670 Homestead Lane, Olathe.

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No yard waste will be accepted - only Christmas trees. Wrappers should be removed from the discarded trees as well as any remaining decorations; particularly "icicles" and decorations made from mylar, shiny plastic, or aluminum.

For additional information, call District Forester Kevin Smith at (913)441-8669.

January Challenge

Remember your pets, plants, and the environment when considering your de-icing options this winter. Reduce the amount of salt needed by shoveling as soon as possible and using sand for traction. Buy more eco-friendly de-icers, instead of salt (Sodium Chloride), and apply de-icers (and salt) early, before ice has accumulated.

Shovel snow before it can accumulate. De-icers are more effective with less snow in the way.

Buy the least toxic de-icer you can afford. The best choice is Calcium-Magnesium Acetate (CMA), however, this can be pricey, but research has shown it to have the least impact on pets, plants and streams. Other options are Potassium Acetate (KA) or Calcium Chloride, which is still a salt, but requires less to be effective and has shown to have less of an impact on the environment.

Use sand for traction. Use sand for traction in icy areas but remember to sweep sand up after use as it can also cause problems in stormwater runoff.

Apply de-icers at the right time and with restraint. "Anti-icing" is necessary with CMA and good practice with salt too. Do not use more than the recommended amount, you will not get better or quicker results.

Protect your dog's paws. If your dog's paws have been exposed to de-icers on a winter walk, wash them when you return home. This is recommended to keep the paws in good condition and to also avoid any accidental ingestion of de-icers through licking.