

# Old Saybrook Conservation Circular

Vol. 3 / Spring 2016

## Don't Waste It!

**T**he issue of waste and recycling affects us all at every level - from individual households to the practices of local businesses to town management to the state, the nation and the globe - both environmentally and economically. Happily, this is also one environmental problem on which every one of us can have a positive impact. The five thousand residences in Old Saybrook that use the Waste Transfer Station to take our trash and recyclables may take "the dump" for granted but its efficiency depends on our using it well.

We think of recycling as a generally virtuous act, as well as being required by Connecticut law; it's not widely understood that it is also a factor in the town budget. The removal of trash and garbage costs the town \$64 per ton, and removal of the contents of the bulky box (couches, building materials, etc.) costs \$94 per ton, while removing recyclables costs nearly nothing and in some cases earns the town money. All of us should therefore be conscientious about keeping as much as possible of our waste out of the trash hopper. The table where reusable goods may be left for anyone to pick up saves nearly ten tons per

week from going into the trash. Recently the Station adopted "single stream recycling" which allows all recyclable materials to be put into any of the special hoppers. (Trash cannot, however, be mixed in with recyclables, and nothing liquid should go into any recycling hopper.) The guidelines for what can and cannot be recycled are posted in several places at the Station, but it can be useful to consult them before loading the car, too: see <[www.ctmira.org](http://www.ctmira.org)> for the full chart. Notice that plastic bags should not be recycled; if they go into the hopper for glass and plastic containers they have to be removed by hand. It's easy enough to dump the containers out of the plastic bags and to stuff the bags into the trash container standing next to the hopper.

Waste food - peels, spoiled food, unused leftovers - probably accounts for a small percentage of our trash by bulk, but it is a serious issue in its own right. Waste food rots in our landfills, raising the level of methane gas in the atmosphere. (See below, Useful Information, for books offering guidelines on avoiding this waste.) Furthermore, when mixed with trash it slows the burning, in state incineration facilities, that produces

### What do I do with . . . ?

More information is available on the website of DEEP, the State's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection: from the home page <<http://www.ct.gov/deep>> select Recycling from the row of orange buttons along the bottom of the page. The menu to the left includes a page called "What do I do with ...?" which gives detailed (and interesting) information on recycling and disposing of a long list of items.

energy. Household waste food (but not meat or dairy) can go into our own compost piles along with leaves and garden trimmings, making the most efficient and effective fertilizer for our gardens, containers, even lawns. New composting initiatives on the community level are reported in DEEP's newsletter Pollution Prevention View; several towns

continued...

### HOW TO SUBSCRIBE:

To receive each issue of the Circular as email, go to <http://tinyurl.com/OSCCNews> and sign up.

## Donating

Donate unwanted goods instead of dumping them! Books in good condition can be donated to Acton Public Library for its twice-yearly book sales, raising funds for Library programs and acquisitions. The Estuary Senior Center Thrift Shop accepts clothing, small furniture, kitchen and dining goods (but no electric items or baby goods), and shopping there is delightful. The Middlesex Habitat for Humanity ReStore accepts furniture and will sometimes even pick it up: <http://www.habitat.org/restores/donate-goods>. Find other suggestions at <http://the-e-list.com/2015/09/purging/>.

## Don't Waste It! continued...



Selectman Carl Fortuna recycles!

in northwestern Connecticut now collect food waste, and future commercial composting facilities throughout the state will allow more towns to do so. Hopefully Old Saybrook will be able to join this trend. In 2014 the state passed a law setting a goal of recycling or reusing sixty percent of the state's trash by 2024, and it plans to develop modern systems for recycling, composting, and bio-energy to reduce incineration. Although the location of the proposed new facilities is controversial, the goal of reducing trash is not.

Nina Garrett

## Announcements

**Dates for collection of  
Household Hazardous Waste  
Essex - Route 9, Exit 4  
9:00-1:00**

**June 4 and June 25  
July 16  
August 20**

### Conservation Commission Members

Richard Esty, Chair  
Walter Smith, Vice-Chair  
Nina Garrett, Secretary  
Jerry Brophy  
Kacey Constable  
Bob Fish  
Emily Grochowski

Two positions on the Conservation Commission are opening: anyone interested should notify Richard Esty ([northtraveler56@yahoo.com](mailto:northtraveler56@yahoo.com)) and send a resumé to the Selectman's Office.

### Advice from a Woodland

\*\* Start from the ground up \*\* Stretch your limbs \*\* Branch out  
\*\* Root for others \*\*

\*\* Make room for new growth \*\* Find your path \*\* Recycle, recycle, recycle! \*\*

Ilan Shamir (c) ilan shamir [yourtruenature.com](http://yourtruenature.com)

## Useful Information

**Don't Waste Food!** Forty percent of the food produced in this country goes to waste, and nationally we throw away 25 percent of what we buy (Arrive Magazine, March/April 2016). This is a tremendous waste of the resources needed to feed the hungry and of our money. Two recent books offer guidelines on food storage, freezing and recipes: *Waste-free Kitchen Handbook: A Guide to Eating Well and Saving Money by Wasting Less Food* (Gunders) and *Waste-Free Kitchen: Save Money, Stay Organized, & Reduce Waste* (Anderson).

The documentary *Trashed* (2012), narrated by acclaimed British actor Jeremy Irons, shows how the enormous amount of garbage generated by the human race has affected the environment and what efforts are being made to repair the extensive damage.

### HOW TO SUBSCRIBE:

To receive each issue of the Circular as email, go to <http://tinyurl.com/OSCCNews> and sign up.