

What Shade of Green are You?

2008

Teachers, this is an informational and motivational workshop. You may wish to tailor the material to fit your audience and the time allowed.

There are notes to teachers in *italics* throughout this packet to help your audience participate in the learning experience.

Buy or make a sturdy shopping bag. Buy a store's bag. Make or buy a net produce bag and add a pocket for reusing plastic produce bags.

Visit local fabric and yarn stores for samples of eco-friendly fabrics. Ask yarn stores if they have any pieces you might borrow or have at low cost.

Check out a kitchen store for eco-friendly linens and clothing stores for eco-friendly outfits. Eco-friendly = organic or natural fibers.

For a week or two, collect all the thin plastic bags that come into your home – as sleeves on newspapers, produce and shopping bags, or your clean used sandwich and bread bags.

Call your recycling center or garbage company to see what they take and what they do with your plastic, glass, magazines etc. Do they take oil products and anti-freeze?

Have large sheets of paper or a flip chart available if you choose to jot down audience's ideas.

Sources for Oregon FCE workshop "What Shade of Green are You?"

1. NAFCE Hearthfire series #43 "Someone's in the World . . . Being Green"
2. www.greenbag.info
3. Win-Co grocery store chain and Safeway, Greg Parks, Dir. Industrial Engineering
4. NPR – "For Empty Water Bottles, There's an Afterlife"
5. [www.bottledwaterblues.com/Bottled Water Fact.cfm](http://www.bottledwaterblues.com/Bottled_Water_Fact.cfm)
6. Ramon Cruz, Senior Policy Analyst for Living Cities at Environmental Defense Fund.
7. Oregon Department of Energy www.oregon.gov/energy
8. Home Depot "Ask about Energy Star" 2008 insert
9. Oregonian "A Beast of a Machine" August 1, 2008
10. Parade.com "Smart Ways to Save on Gas" July 6, 2008
11. DEQ, state of Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
12. ORRCO, Oil Re-refining Company, 4150 N Shuttle Road, Portland OR 97217
800-367-8894 www.orrco.biz
11. Extension bulletin, EC1614 "Living Sustainable: Your Choice" OSU 2008
13. www.MyHainCelestial.com "Recycling: Decoding the Numbers"
14. Oregonian "Rounding up Vagrant Plastic" September 19, 2008
15. Oregonian, Margie Boule August 10, 2008 column. Reprinted by permission
16. NAFCE workshop "Being Green" July 2008
17. Jan Andrea's cloth bag – www.sleepingbaby.net/jan/Baby/clothbags.html

What Shade of Green Are You?

Being green means doing things in our daily lives, no matter how small, that help the environment stay green and healthy.

Becoming a deeper shade of green is appealing because it is socially, environmentally and economically responsible.

You are never too young or too mature to make changes in the way you shop, manage your home, and garden. You are never too young or too mature to look at how your actions affect your neighbors, community and world.

The springboard for this lesson was National FCE's newest Hearth Fire series #43 titled "Someone's in the World . . . Being Green". Your Oregon FCE teachers have added more statewide ideas and information.

Choice, Choices When We Shop

Raise your hand if you take your own cloth bags when you go shopping? Did you buy the store's bags? Most store bags are non woven polypropylene (4). You can make your own sturdy bags or find them at garage sales or thrift shops. Directions for making a simple cloth bag and a Rug Bag for big or lightweight objects are in this packet. Do you decline an offer for a bag when you buy just one or two items? (*Teachers, show samples.*)

Average number of bags used by family of four in a year (www.greenbag.com)

1000 plastic bags	400 paper bags
\$15 store cost	\$24 store cost

500 average families, one year = \$7,500 for plastic bags, \$12,000 for paper bags

Do you have a shopping bag with a pocket? Stuff the pocket with your used dry produce bags. They're fine to reuse for produce that will be scrubbed or peeled. When they are no longer usable, put them in the recycle bin by your grocery store's entrance. They will take all thin plastic bags. Now what happens to those plastic bags you put in that store's bin?

As one major Oregon grocery chain unloads plastic wrapped pallets of goods the cardboard and plastic are put in separate large sacks. They along with your plastic bags are trucked to the store's distribution center in Woodburn, bundled and the plastic is shipped to Nevada. The grocery store is reimbursed and your sacks are turned into plastic lumber for decks or fences.

Do you buy bottled water? You know those small plastic bottles that are so convenient? The plastic is made of natural gas and petroleum nicknamed PET. There are no regulations or requirements that bottled water be any higher in quality than tap water. The top two soda seller's bottled water is processed tap water. Read labels. The design of the bottles is such that it is hard to disinfect and the plastic may leach carcinogens after more than one use. The plastic is easily recycled to make new bottles or fibers yet only 20 to 23% is recycled. How many states have a water bottle deposit law? Just three, and January 1, 2009 Oregon will be the fourth. (*Teachers, ask how many states have a container deposit bill like Oregon's 1971 law? Only 11.*) We have a 90% return rate. Think about buying a reusable, washable, even dishwasher safe, water bottle.

Eco Friendly Fabrics and Clothing

When you shop have you asked about eco friendly clothing? Or if you are a sewer, check your favorite fabric stores for organic materials like cotton, silk, hemp, linen, ramie, seaweed or soy? Plant fiber fabrics available are abaca, banana, and pineapple. (*Teachers, show samples*)

Hair fiber materials include angora, llama, vicuna, cashmere, mohair, and wool. (*Teachers, visit a yarn store for interesting blends using soy, crab shells, and corn fibers.*) Manufactured fibers made from natural materials are acetate, rayon, lyocell, and corn polymer. You may need to relearn how to iron. Some consider it a lost art. Just think of it as great exercise!

Quilters can be green too. Look for unique batting made from 50% bamboo and 50% cotton. It's environmentally friendly, breathable, very soft and is naturally antibacterial.

You may be able to find hemp computer paper which can be recycled more times than wood-based paper. Because of the low lignin count, hemp can be pulped using fewer chemicals.

Our Babies

Check out "g-Diapers", a two part diaper system that prevents diaper rash and doesn't fill up landfills. They come with a flushable inner refill, fitted into a colorful pair of "g-pants". When the inner refill is soiled, flush it down the toilet and replace with a fresh one. The lining is biodegradable and breaks down in the water sewage treatment processing. G-Diaper starter kit is \$30 and includes 3 colorful cloth shells. For \$52 you can buy 160 flushable inserts.

Look for toys made from organic materials and toxic-free dyes. Toys made from solid wood such as building blocks, cars, tree houses, doll houses and doll furniture are long lasting as well as eco-friendly. Check craft fairs for handmade wooden toys or www.oregonwoodentoy.com.

Our Homes

If you want to save money and use less energy in the face of rising energy cost, make approved updates to your home. You may be eligible to receive a tax credit under The Energy Tax Incentives Act of 2005. Categories include insulation, replacing windows or doors, furnaces or central A/C units or water heaters. Visit www.energystar.gov to learn more.

Call you utility company to ask if they offer a low-cost or free energy audit. Ask about their financial incentives for replacing older heating systems, adding more attic insulation or for weatherproofing. (*Teachers, ask how many participants have called their utility company about energy saving rebates.*) Check out information about heat pumps which in the winter extract heat out of outside air to warm your home. Then in the summer the heat pump extracts cool out of the air to provide air-conditioning for your home at low cost.

Look for new home appliances that have the Oregon Tax Credit Qualified round sticker on them. They are more efficient than those labeled Energy Star. A residential energy tax credit is applied dollar-for-dollar against your Oregon income taxes owed. For more information call the Oregon Department of Energy at 1-800-221-8035 or see their website at www.oregon.gov/energy.

If you are building or remodeling your bathroom, look for faucets, toilets and showerheads that are labeled "WaterSense". WaterSense is an EPA program identifying water efficiency.

Check out Hearthfire #43 for cleaning products that are environmental friendly using vinegar, baking soda, ammonia and cream of tartar.

Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs. They last longer and use less electricity. Unbroken used cf bulbs can be recycled at some big-box stores or recycle centers.

Use a solar power clothes dryer (clothesline). Nothing beats the smell of sheets dried outside. Close neighbors? Hang wet laundry like they do in Japan – be modest by placing a kitchen dish towel over your underwear.

Houseplants are Green Air Filters

NASA has sponsored studies to see how plants and the environment interact and to identify plants that are successful in removing toxic materials from the air. As much as 87% of a toxic gas may be removed in 24 hours under ideal conditions. Use one houseplant for every 100 square feet of living space.

To remove *formaldehyde* out-gassed from foam insulation, plywood, carpeting and furniture use Philodendron, bamboo palm, Pothos, corn plant and mother-in-law's tongue. To get rid of benzene from tobacco smoke, plastics, use English ivy, chrysanthemums or Gerbera daisies. The best overall plant to use is the common spider plant, with the green version doing a better job

Old TVs and New TVs laws

Nov. 1, 2008 – Energy Star will incorporate power use when TV is on instead of only when it's off Must be 30% more efficient than similar-sized models.

Jan. 1, 2009 – Oregon law requiring manufacturers cover recycling costs of TVs, computers and monitors to keep them out of landfills.

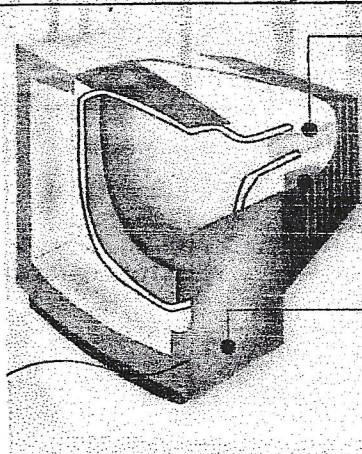
Feb. 18, 2009 – National conversion from Analog to all-digital broadcast signals. TVs using cable or satellite dish not affected. If you use an antennae, you will need a converter box.

Jan1, 2010 – It will be illegal for anyone in Oregon to toss a TV.

Televisions compared			
	Liquid crystal display	Plasma	Cathode ray tube
Average energy use	193 watts	328 watts	146 watts
Top green challenge	Inaccessible mercury bulbs	High energy use	Lots of lead
Market outlook	Dominating for now	Hoping to catch up	On a gurney
Green future	Lower power use, mercury	Power use down significantly	Leaded glass may be hard to recycle

Sources: EPEAT; CNET analysis; 2008 King County, Wash., study

The hazards inside your TV



- Cathode ray tube**
The heavy glass picture tube contains from 1 pound of lead for an 8-inch screen to 11.2 pounds for a 35-inch screen. Tossed into a landfill, the neurotoxin can leach out and be a serious health hazard.
- Circuit boards and wiring**
Contain lead solder, copper, cadmium, mercury, fire retardants – all linked to brain and kidney damage.
- Plastic housing**
Contains harmful brominated fire retardants; if incinerated, polyvinyl chloride, a popular plastic, may release harmful dioxins.

AMY OLDING/THE OREGONIAN

Our Gardens

Plan a Xeriscaping garden – one that requires low maintenance and minimal use of water. Group plants together with similar water needs. Checkout native plants as they’re accustomed to Oregon’s dry summers. (Directions for turning old hose into watering wand in lesson.)

Create an organic lawn – mow high and water deep when it looks stressed. Use an electric lawn mower and edger. (A gasoline powered lawnmower pollutes as much in one hour as a car does driving for 350 miles.) Reduce the size of your lawn. If you have weeds, mow twice as often.

For starting seeds use peat pots, a cardboard egg carton or make your own newspaper pots. **(Take quarter sheet of newsprint, fold in half lengthwise, and turn folded lengthwise edge down to within 1 inch of bottom edge. Roll paper around soup can, leaving enough of bottom edge hanging off can to fold over can to form bottom of pot, tape, pull off can).** When sprouted, plant directly into the ground and “pot” disintegrates. Use an egg shell as a seedling pot then scrunch shell as it’s planted. The egg shell adds calcium to the soil.

Compost, compost, compost! Turn yard clippings (no pesticides) and kitchen garbage (no protein) into “black gold” nourishment for your garden.

Our cars, how to drive smarter and save

For your next car, consider a hybrid or a car with high gas mileage (www.fueleconomy.gov).

- Curb** road rage – speeding, jackrabbit starts, rapid braking.
- Map** out the most efficient routes for your errands. Time trips to avoid congestion.
- Control** your speed. Each 5 mph over 60 mph is like paying an additional 20 cents per gallon.
- Ditch** the junk in the trunk! An extra 100 pounds cuts fuel economy by up to 2%.
- Avoid** idling. If traffic or drive thru is at a stand still, turn off car, 1 hour of idling = 1 gallon.
- Maintain** proper tire pressure – too soft uses more gas, too much messes with car’s handling.
- Tune** up car, clean spark plugs, replace clogged air filter. Ignore additives that boost mileage.
- Look** for businesses or garages that use Green products or re-refined oil products.
- Roll** up windows, turn on A/C on highway. Open windows create drag at higher speeds.

Re-refining Used Oil and Antifreeze

Ask your recycler what happens to the used oil products they collect! Do they take antifreeze?

Burning used oil releases toxic waste – heavy metals, lead, mercury and greenhouse gases. Improper dumping of antifreeze is dangerous and toxic if ingested. It tastes sweet to animals.

The EPA and Department of Energy prefers the option of re-refining used oil products, oil filters and antifreeze to remove impurities and prolong the life of these resources by keeping them in the recycling loop. Used oils never wear out, it just gets dirty! *(Now, repeat that phrase.)*

ORRCO is the only northwest re-refinery with processing facilities in Portland and Klamath Falls, and collection terminals in Eugene and Medford, and associated collectors in Coos Bay and Bend. (www.orcco.biz)

R. R. R. R. R. R. u B.

Reduce – Pass on your stuff to others in your community. *(Teachers, take a moment to think up groups or places in your community that would love your extra items.)*

(Teachers, see how close your audience can guess the numbers for the following two questions.)
The American Moving and Storage Association say the average American family has how many pounds of belongings? 9,918 pounds. Is this low?

In 1950, the average American house size was how many square feet? 983 square feet.

In 2005, it was 2,414 square feet. Now people cram storage lockers and pay monthly rent.

Included in this packet is Oregonian columnist Margie Boule's article "Clinging to unused stuff? Someone really needs it" which is reprinted by permission.

Reuse – Buy used clothing or household items. Alter an item to make it something else.

(Teachers, if time ask your audience for examples of places in community to buy used things.)

Recycle – Read some of the enclosed page "Recycling: Decoding the Numbers". Try to recycle household plastics and know how to properly dispose of toxic materials. Bug your garbage or recycling haulers on what they accept. There are Master Recycler Plastic Roundups in the Metro area, call 503-234-3000. The plastic is then trucked to Agi-Plas in Brooks.

Hold a garage sale or donate to a charity sale. Try www.Freecycle where you give away items.

Repair – Can you fix it? How many know how to mend clothing, furniture and other items?

Refuse – Don't take or buy something you don't really need or want just because you have \$\$ or a credit card in your purse. Or, does shopping give you an emotional high? **Respect** your money and what it took to earn it.

u – Is put here because you need to be in the middle of being a good steward of your resources.

Buy – local and in season to reduce the number of miles your food travels to reach you. Or look at how far you travel to buy household items or gifts. Even some grocery stores are posting the miles their meat or produce may have traveled to get to the store. If everyone in the world lived an American lifestyle, it would require 4 Earths to sustain that level of consumption.

So say out loud the mantra **RRRRRRuB!** Then try to live by it. Be a model for your children and grandchildren.

(Good)Habits are first cobwebs, then cables!
Spanish proverb

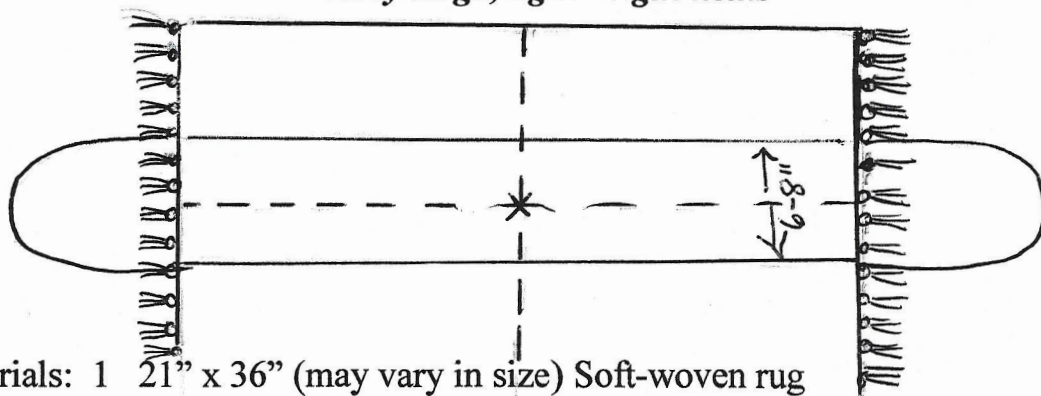
National FCE is asking for your Green tips and will publish the top tips in FCE Today. A page has been added to your packet.

Fill out the evaluation form. Thank you.

Share this information with family, FCE group, neighbors, and friends.

Written by Anne Engen and Pat Wallin October 2008

Soft-woven Rug Bag To carry large, lightweight items



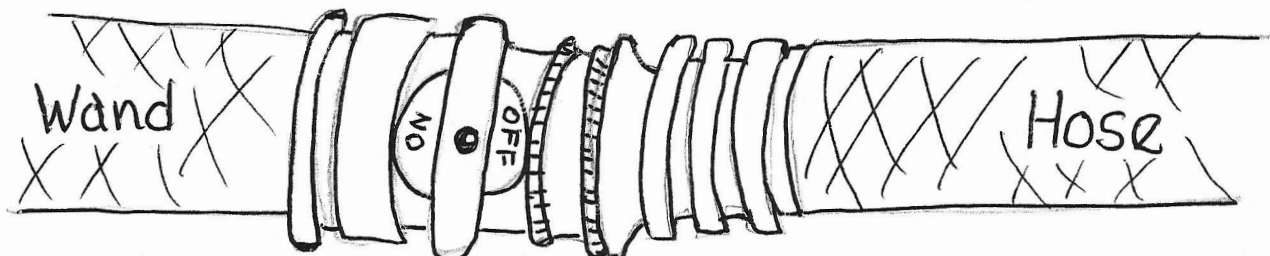
Materials: 1 21" x 36" (may vary in size) Soft-woven rug
 3 1/2 to 4 yards of 3' or 4' sturdy fabric for band & handle
 Or buy woven strapping at fabric store

1. Measure rug to find center.
2. To make band from fabric, fold edges to center to make 1 1/2" or 2' band. Top stitch center of band to secure raw edges.
3. Pin band 3 or so inches from center of rug, looping at either end of rug to allow for handles.
4. Stitch band to rug.
5. Turn right sides of rug together and stitch sides. Miter corners 2' from corner.

Easy Watering Wand

Materials: Old or worn out garden hose
 Shut-off valve, found in garden hose section of stores

1. Cut 18" to 24" off female end of hose. (Female larger metal end)
2. Attach hose piece to shut-off valve.
3. Screw shut-off to regular garden hose.
4. Now use to water hanging baskets, pots or individual plants as you can easily adjust amount of water, or shut off when moving hose.



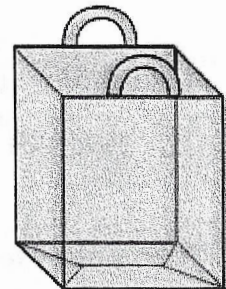
Baby-Related Crafts | Links



The URL for this page is: <http://crafts.sleepingbaby.net/clothbags.html>

Simple cloth grocery bags

This is another of these miscellaneous, only peripherally-baby-related craft ideas, but since I've gotten a request for it, here it is! (I suppose I can justify it as an environmentally-conscious idea: if enough people do it, we will save resources for our childrens' future!) Typical paper grocery bags are about 12" wide by 21" deep, with 7" sides; opened up, that's 38" long by 21" high. This pattern is copyright to me (Jan Andrea) and is NOT for resale under ANY circumstances!



Appropriate fabrics:

- Canvas is great, but it can be hard to find inexpensive canvas. At JoAnn's, it's usually \$4+ per yard. You can use the 40% off coupon to get it cheaper, though. Also check the clearance section; occasionally there'll be some there.
- If canvas is unavailable or too expensive, thinner fabrics will work; they will simply wear out a little faster than canvas. Poly/cotton broadcloth can be gotten fairly inexpensively, and you can make a reversible bag with two layers if you are concerned about its light weight. You could even do a two-layered one with a pretty calico on the outside and a broadcloth on the inside; just baste the two layers together initially and then treat them as a single piece of fabric.
- If you can find cheap home dec fabrics, many of them would make excellent bags, as the heavier-weight fabrics are intended for the rough-and-tumble world of upholstery.

Whatever you get, you'll need a piece that's about 36" by 22" to make a standard grocery bag. So if you buy 44" wide fabric, you can make two bags with a yard, provided you make it a little shorter to accomodate cutting out straps; or if it's 60" wide, you can easily make two, or even three if you cut them shorter (again, for straps). Or you can buy webbing for the straps and have them the "correct" height. However, that size holds a "lot" of groceries, and may be too heavy when full, so you can certainly make them smaller if you want. I would suggest a depth of 18" rather than 24".

Of course, smaller bags are also quite useful. I have a ton of greyish twill that's 60" wide and just not selling as slings, so I made cloth bags for gift-giving this year. I cut the bag pieces as 30" by 20", with handles at 15" by 5" -- so a 20" long piece of fabric (20" by 60") yielded two finished bags. With a 5" gusset (see below), the finished bags are 10" wide by 5" long by 15" deep.

Straps can be made of self-fabric, very sturdy ribbon, matching fabric remnants, nylon webbing, or whatever else seems appropriately sturdy that you have handy.

The pattern:

Next time you go grocery shopping, get some of your items in a paper bag. After removing your groceries

10

(hee!), carefully open up the seams. There should be one on the side, and another on the bottom, plus the gussets. For full-sized bags, use this as a template. For shorter bags, just cut off about 6" from the top of the bag (not the bottom, since the bottom piece will show you where the gussets go). Your pieces should be about 36" wide by 18-24" long.

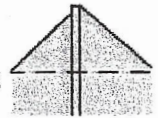
Sewing the body of the bag:

Sewing is really simple. First, sew the short sides. I would recommend a French seam (where the fabric is sewn first with a 1/4" seam allowance, wrong sides together, then turned so that the right sides are together and another 3/8" seam is sewn, enclosing the first seam) since it is sturdy and keeps the inner seams from ravelling.

Next, sew along the bottom. A French seam is good here, too. You can put your side seam wherever you want, but I would recommend positioning it so that it's about 3" from a folded edge. That will make it one of the corners of the bag.

Adding the gussets:

To make a gusset, flatten the bag with the bottom seam on top, as shown in the diagram at right (which involves folding the bag into a weird triangular shape, but makes more sense when you actually do it). Then sew across the triangle so that your seam is about 6-7" long (mark it by sliding a ruler down until it reads 7"). When you turn the bag right-side-out, it will stand up like a paper grocery bag.

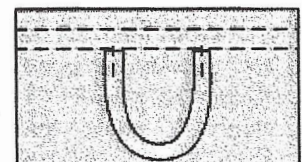


Making the handles:

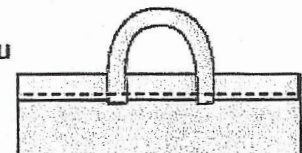
If you are using fabric for the handles, make a long tube about 1" wide. If you have a 4" by 18-24" long piece left from cutting out the bag proper, fold the strip in half (so that it's 2" wide by 18-24" long) and sew 1" from the folded edge. Don't trim the excess fabric; this will give the handle some strength and make it more comfortable to hold. Turn the strip right-side-out, and if you want to, topstitch the edges, or just along the center. Cut into two pieces, as long as you want the handles to be plus 3". If your fabric is too heavy to stitch as a tube and then turn it (that will be the case with many heavier fabrics, like canvas and home-dec prints), fold the long edges in by 1" (pressing if desired), and then fold that in half, and topstitch along the open edge. I usually do this "freehand" without pressing; heavy fabrics usually take a finger-press pretty well. You can also topstitch along the folded edge, and anywhere else you like; it looks fancier if there are more lines of stitching, but that's not strictly necessary.

Finishing the top and adding the handles:

Find the center of each long side of the bag. Press or mark or eyeball the location of the hem folds, about 3/4"-1" and 1.5"-2" (for the first and second fold lines) from the top edge. Pin the finished handles to either side of the center, along the second foldline, with the handles against the wrong/inside of the bag, so that there's about 4-5" between the ends of the handles.



Now, fold down the second hemline, including the ends of the handles, then fold the handles upwards; pin again. Stitch around the hemline, including over the handles. You will need to sew slowly over the handles, as the fabric there will be quite thick. You may want to reinforce the handle stitching again by making a square or X where the handles overlap the bag.



That's it! Now, go out and shop with a clean conscience. Just remember to bring your bag with you when you go shopping! (I always forget mine...)

Recycling: Decoding the Numbers



safe and readily recyclable

PET or PETE - Polyethylene Terephthalate

- **Found In:** Soft drink, water and beer bottles; many common food packages including peanut butter containers, salad dressing, and vegetable oil containers.
- **Recyclable?** Readily recyclable through most curbside recycling programs.
- **Recycled Into:** bottles, polyester fibers fiber, tote bags, furniture, carpet, panning
- **Environmental & Health:** low risk of leaching breakdown products

HDPE - High density Polyethylene

- **Found In:** Milk jugs, juice bottles; bleach, detergent and household cleaner bottles; hair care products, motor oil containers, shampoo bottles; some trash and shopping bags; motor oil bottles; butter and yogurt tubs; cereal box liners
- **Recyclable?** Readily recyclable through most curbside recycling programs (some containers with necks are not allowed)
- **Recycled Into:** Laundry detergent bottles, oil bottles, pens, recycling containers, floor tile, drainage pipe, lumber, fencing
- **Environmental & Health:** low risk of leaching breakdown products

sometimes recycled

LDPE Low-density Polyethylene

- **Found In:** dry cleaning and shopping bags, sandwich bags, squeezable bottles; bread and frozen food packaging, furniture, carpet
- **Recyclable?** Not often accepted through curbside programs, though more communities are accepting it (check with your local government).
- **Recycled Into:** trash can liners and cans, compost bins, shipping envelopes, panning, lumber, landscaping ties, floor tile
- **Environmental & Health:** generally considered safe.

PP - Polypropylene

- **Found In:** hot food/liquid containers, syrup bottles, ketchup bottles, caps, straws, medicine bottles
- **Recycling:** Can be recycled through some curbside programs.
- **Recycled Into:** fibers, bottles, battery cables, brooms, brushes, ice scrapers, bicycle racks, rakes, bins
- **Environmental & Health:** generally considered safe.

toxic properties, not easily recyclable

V (Vinyl) or PVC - Polyvinyl Chloride

- **Found In:** Window cleaner, detergent bottles, shampoo bottles, cooking oil bottles, clear food packaging, toys, furniture, siding, windows, piping
- **Recyclable?** Rarely recycled, as the material itself is difficult to recycle.
- **Recycled Into:** Decks, panning, mud flaps, flooring, cables, speed bumps, mats
- **Environmental & Health:**
 - Contains chlorine, thus the manufacturing process can release highly toxic dioxins into the environment.
 - Avoid #3 plastics for food and drink products, as toxins such as phthalates may be released into food. Risk is greatest if containers are worn, heated (including the microwave), or run through the dishwasher.
 - If cooking with PVC, avoid allowing plastic to touch the food.
 - Avoid burning PVC, as it will release toxins into the environment.

PS - Polystyrene

- **Found In:** Made into soft or rigid foams and hard plastics; disposable cups, plates and food trays, packing peanuts, egg cartons, carry-out containers
- **Recyclable?** Can be recycled through some curbside programs.
- **Recycled Into:** Insulation, egg cartons, rulers, foam packing, carry-out containers
- **Environmental & Health:** Generally considered to be environmentally unfriendly, evidence suggests that this type of plastic can release toxic by-products into foods, especially when heated.

Other/Miscellaneous

- Number 7 plastics encompass a wide variety of plastic resins that don't fit into the previous categories.
- **Found In:** 3- and 5-gallon water bottles, baby bottles, sunglasses, electronic casing, signs and displays, certain food containers, nylon
- **Recyclable?** Traditionally not recyclable, some curbside programs now accept them.
- **Recycled Into:** Plastic lumber; custom-made products
- **Environmental & Health:** Studies have shown that the polycarbonate varieties can leach bisphenol A, a potential hormone disruptor, into liquids.

THE HAIN
CELESTIAL
GROUP

To find out more ways you can live A Healthy Way of Life™, visit us online at www.MYHainCelestial.com

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Clinging to unused stuff? Someone really needs it

You really should get rid of that old bed. It's been in the garage, or the basement, or the back bedroom, for years.

But your son slept in that bed. You remember when he used to bounce on it, against house rules.

It is the Age of the Purge, but it's hard to let go.

Baby boomers and folks who are downsizing have been hit with a passion to unload all the things they've held onto for decades for sentimental reasons.

What if you knew that what you give today will almost certainly be given, for free, to someone who really needs it . . . within days?

Would that make it easier to let go of Great-Grandma's silverplate? Or the dining room table your aunt left you? Or the bunk beds you bought in 1958?

There are kids all over the metropolitan area who have nothing to sleep on. "People don't realize a lot of kids are sleeping on the floor," says Kevin Dickson, a social worker with child welfare for the state of Oregon. "It's amazing how many clients I have who sleep on the floor, maybe with a blanket or two."

One of the nice parts of Kevin's job is when he gets to take families to the Community Warehouse in Portland. The warehouse collects household goods from donors, and within days those goods are in the homes of needy families.

Often the families, accompanied by caseworkers, come to the warehouse in North Portland and pick out the furniture and lamps and kitchen items they need, when they're moved off the streets, or welcomed as

refugees, or leave a domestic violence shelter with nothing of their own.

"When a kiddo finds out they're getting a bunk bed, when they've never had a bed," Kevin says, "it's an amazing experience for them."

Every week, the warehouse provides a household's worth of free goods to 70 families. You read that right: 70. Give the

warehouse your old microwave, somebody will be cooking with it in days.

"A woman donated a couple of really nice green love seats to us last Friday," says Tom Elston,

warehouse manager. Shortly after the woman left, "somebody said, 'I love these' and took them." There were a few missing back pillows, but Tom found substitutes.

When the donor returned the next day, with the missing pillows, she was amazed the love seats were gone. "I said, 'As soon as you pulled out of the parking lot, they were out of here.'"

Of course, some items move more slowly, says Kristy Wood, executive director. "It's great to see the variety of cultures and tastes," she says. "The bright orange couch I would never choose, someone else sees and their eyes light up. A very bright purple love seat with zebra pin-striping sat there for quite a while. Then someone came in and was so excited."

You can see why those who work in the warehouse love their jobs. "Just the people-watching alone is great here," Kristy says.

Folks can't just walk into the warehouse and say they need stuff. Recipients are referred by social agencies, vetted by case-

workers. Even with such stringent oversight, there is much more demand than the warehouse can satisfy.

"We have a three-week waiting list for families," Kristy says. So you see? Donating your unneeded household goods will do more than give you more room. It will give a kid a bed, and more. Right away.

There's a checklist of needs that each family fills out. Maybe they've lost their home to a fire. Maybe the parent is coming out of the hospital, into an empty apartment. Warehouse workers, with the family, collect items from the checklist.

But workers keep an eye out for small items, things people might not think to ask for. "Little kids can use an alarm clock so they can get up in the morning and go to school," Tom says. "Kids are really grateful for those little things. Sitting in a shelter for four months, you don't have a lot."

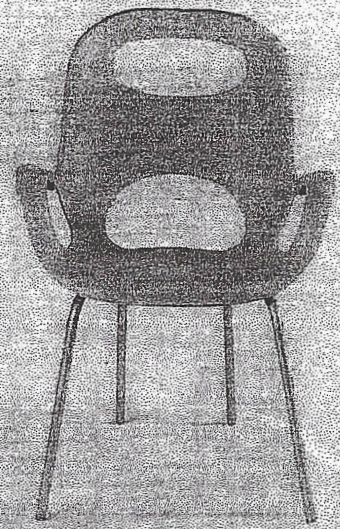
He remembers a teenager, last week, who got excited about a desk. "It was a computer desk. A kid can do his homework on a desk like that."

"They work so well with our clients," Kevin says of the warehouse workers. "They understand people are coming from a hard spot. They're not holier-than-thou, just nice and friendly."

And the recipients are grateful. "There's people that jump up and hug you and squeeze the life out of you," Tom says. "We've had people leave crying, they're so happy." One woman showed up a few days later "with a pan full of tamales. That was an awesome thank-you."

Ninety-five agencies, including the public schools, Head Start programs, and agencies involved with the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness, bring clients to the warehouse.

And what do those clients need most? Furniture. Especially beds and dressers. Especially single beds, for kids. Next most



needed: linens. Blankets, sheets, towels and pillows. And then kitchen equipment: pots and pans, dishes, glasses, utensils.

"We need lamps, alarm clocks, can openers," says Roz Babener, one of the founders of the Community Warehouse.

Those who don't have goods to give can always donate money, which pays for the truck that collects donations in the metropolitan area.

They could help more families if they had another truck. And if they had money to pay for more gas.

Donations also help cover staff salaries at the nonprofit. A good amount of the work is done by more than 40 volunteers.

Valuable donations, antiques or collectibles, are sold in a shop within the warehouse, to cover other expenses.

"My favorite thing is seeing the connections," says Tom. He's often the one who receives someone's dishes, and helps someone else carry them out later.

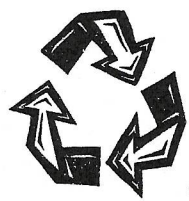
Roz says all they're doing is promoting reuse and recycling. Only they're not collecting and redistributing plastic jugs or old magazines. They're accepting things that often have sentimental value, that aren't being used, and giving them to people who really will value them.

"I always say, 'From those who have too much, to those who have nothing.'" Roz says. "It's really true."



MARGIE BOULÉ

For more info, go to www.communitywarehouse.org or call 503-235-8786. Margie Boulé, 503-221-8450; marboule@aol.com



Give us your Green tips

Whether it is a recycling tip or a natural remedy...let us know. We will publish the top 3 tips in FCE Today for all to see and try. Keep being Earth friendly.

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