

CONSERVATION CORNER

October 2014

Less is more!

Have you ever wondered what happens to all of the things we don't need anymore? Trash goes into the landfill and recyclables get processed and mostly reused; but what about the contaminated materials- the things that don't break down or hazardous and electronic waste? They all end up in different places, but precious resources are used in collecting, transporting, sorting, cleaning, storing, reusing and disposing of them.

TRASH: Our trash is collected and then put on a train or truck and sent to a landfill approximately fifty miles away.

RECYCLABLES: The City of La Verne residents fill approximately 35 trucks full of recyclables every Monday that are brought to a sorting facility. Energy is then used to sort the recyclables, clean them and store them until they are bailed together and sent to companies who manufacture new products out of our old materials.

CONTAMINATED RECYCLABLES: Materials with food, grease and other contaminating products that cannot be rinsed off become trash and end up in landfills.

ELECTRONIC WASTE: When it is brought to an official electronic waste collection, the materials are put through a high tech separation device to extract valuable metals, which are sent to a smelter. The plastics are removed, then the metals and plastics are remade into different products.

HAZARDOUS WASTE: When hazardous waste is brought to an official hazardous waste collection event, the materials are separated and processed differently. Some liquids are neutralized, some are reclaimed, sent to smelters and remade into other products, and some are placed in hazardous waste landfills, while others are blended or re-refined and used as fuel.

Repurposing is Rewarding!

As responsible as recycling and hazardous/e waste collections are, there are other options for repurposing goods. Just because you're done with a t-shirt, phone, book, couch or television doesn't mean someone else wouldn't look at it as brand new and look forward to months or years of enjoyment with the same product. After all, one person's trash is another person's treasure!

To repurpose goods, please explore these options:

- 1) Donate your products to a nearby second hand store or charity. This will help conserve our resources, provide someone with low cost necessities and may also earn you a tax rebate!
- 2) Consider getting to know your neighbors better and bring your items to the Community Yard Sale (tentatively scheduled in April 2015)
- 3) Ask your friends and neighbors or place an ad to see if anyone else needs the very product you're looking to dispose of.
- 4) Bring your items to a local shelter, church or community organization to see if their visitors could use these items.

