



VOLUME 12, ISSUE 2
SPRING 2022

BROWN COUNTY PORT & RESOURCE RECOVERY DEPARTMENT

The Waste Not

Reducing Waste until You Are Zero Waste

OUR VISION

To provide Brown County municipal commercial and industrial customers cost-effective and sustainable solid waste management systems with the focus on resource recovery primarily through recycling, and energy recovery

Editor:

Katie Platten

Contributors:

Mark Walter

The easy answer to the question "Is zero-waste living for everyone?" is "No, but it should be".

Zero-waste living is a lifestyle that has become popular in recent years, focusing on completely eliminating the creation of waste that goes to landfill. Many people first hear about zero-waste living through interviews with individuals whose entire trash footprint from the last five years can be fit into a small mason jar. In awe of these pioneers in minimalism, many start to look around and see how much trash is generated each day in their own homes. Rob Greenfield, a Wisconsin-born environmental activist, performed a 30-day experiment in 2016



Photo Credit: waste360.com

(with plans to recreate the experiment in 2022) where all the trash he generated was stored in a specially designed suit which he wore. This thought-provoking demonstration brought focus to the average of 4.5 pounds of trash that each person in the U.S. generates every day.

For the average person, this is may be a far-fetched concept to imagine themselves participating in given the complex lives they lead. How do you live a zero-waste lifestyle with a large family and little support? Perhaps a good way to start is to rephrase the idea to "reduced-waste".

Execution is biggest hurdle to overcome. The first step often involves research and reading about what others have done. Watching informational videos on Youtube or joining a reduced-waste forum or a Facebook group in your area can all provide ideas for moving towards a less wasteful lifestyle. Being informed and seeing examples of people in a similar situation is also a powerful motivator.

After doing some initial research, take stock of the waste you are currently generating. This can be an intricate inventory of every item you toss, or something as simple as keeping a mental note of how many times you are taking out the garbage each week. This is where many people tend to get overwhelmed again. The key is to not beat yourself up over something that you are actively trying to fix.

It is easy to want to change everything at once and be the BEST at it. This can often lead to burn-out and feeling overwhelmed by the sheer number of alternatives and changes that are needed. Rather than getting bogged down, identify one thing you want to change and try it out for a week, then a month. Habits are formed over time, not overnight.

Following the research and inventory, you can start to break old habits. An easy change can be as simple as using a re-usable water bottle in place of purchasing bottled water. Think of all the times that you feel thirsty in a day, how much you are hydrating, and count up how many bottles are in your recycling bin at the end of that day. This is an easy change if you are already an avid water drinker and can provide health benefits as you choose to forgo the carbonated beverages and drink more water.

By making some simple changes and thinking about the way in which you and your family generate waste, we can all move towards a reduced waste lifestyle and help our environment.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

The Ugly Eight: How do I Dispose of These? 2

South Landfill Open House 2

Every Day is Earth Day 3

New HMR Hours 4

The Ugly Eight: How Do I Dispose of

Although the name sounds like a Quentin Tarantino film, The Ugly Eight is actually a list of the eight different materials that are often erroneously placed into the recycling and solid waste disposal streams that Brown County operates with Tri-County Recycling.

The Ugly Eight: plastic bags, shredded paper, YUCK, tanks, sharps, tanglers, textiles, and batteries.

Plastic bags, wraps & films are the #1 contaminant in the recycling system in Brown County and throughout the U.S. The material is not considered recyclable, and when it is sent into the sorting process at the Tri-County Recycling facility in Appleton, film and plastic bags clog and tangle the machinery. Take clean and dry plastic bags back to store drop-off collections. Dirty and otherwise wet plastic bags are trash. When disposing of plastic bags and films, condense the materials into a container (such as another bag) to prevent further littering and tangling.

Paper is easily identified as recyclable in recycling programs pretty much everywhere. However, *shredded paper* is not accepted in the Tri-County system because it builds up in the equipment, causing unnecessary maintenance and cleanup. It also becomes litter very easily, and cleanup is nearly impossible once it gets out. Take confidential papers to a shredding event or look into private shredding companies that will shred for a price.

YUCK category is what you would expect. Putting garbage, liquids and food in the recycling or “wish-cycling” items that you are unsure what to do with makes it difficult and costly to sort clean recyclables. When in doubt, use the Waste Wizard website tool at www.recyclemoretricity.org before recycling something you are unsure of.

Tanks and compressed gas cylinders can contain small amounts of fuel and can ignite if damaged. These cylinders can be brought to the Hazardous Material Recycling Facility during residential drop-off times (See page 4 for more details).

Sharps like needles, lancets, and syringes are the #1 safety concern for the sorting staff. Do not throw sharps in your recycling or trash! Visit www.dnr.wi.gov and search “Sharps Collections” for proper drop-off locations.

Tanglers are materials such as cords, hoses, and wires that can wrap around the sorting equipment. Take these to a drop-off location for proper recycling or place them in the garbage.

Textiles are clothing, bedding, or towels. Donate good condition textiles. If they are not good condition and they cannot be made into rags for reuse, throw them in the garbage.

Lastly, batteries. Batteries and electronics are a fire hazard and should **never** go in recycling carts. Bring batteries to the Hazardous Materials Recovery Facility during residential drop-off times.



South Landfill Open House



Photo Credit: Leonard & Finco

An assortment of guests representing various municipal and business leaders, neighbors, local and state representation, and BOW staff were in attendance at the South Landfill Open House on Monday, April 18th, 2022. Recognized were those in attendance: State Senator Robert Cowles, Brown County Supervisors Coenen, Dantine, and Peters.

Brown County Port & Resource Recovery Director Dean Haen opened with a few remarks and congratulations to those involved in the construction of the new landfill. Mr. Haen later reminisced on the decades-long journey that was necessary for the landfill project to be completed.

Brown County Executive Troy Streckenbach offered his congratulations as well. Mr. Streckenbach discussed the County's involvement in Solid Waste services and touched on the BOW Partnership that made the coordination and cooperation of landfills in the Tri-County Recycling areas possible.

John Katers, Chairman of the Solid Waste Board of Brown County gave remarks and recognized current and past staff whose involvement made the project possible.

Guided tours of the maintenance building, leachate tank, and landfill cell were conducted by Brown County Staff.



Photo Credit: Leonard & Finco

Earth Day is Every Day

"Earth Day comes but once per year" is a phrase that needs to change if climate scientists and environmentalists have anything to say about it.

The world has radically changed since the very first Earth Day was celebrated in 1970. The population of the U.S. has increased by 127.3 million people, prices are 7.41 times higher (Bureau of Labor Statistics), and the country has warmed by 2.6°F on average (Climate Central). Accelerated human activity has been proven to be direct cause of global warming and climate change.

Task yourself with maintaining the enthusiasm and work ethic that you feel on Earth Day to every single day. This will make it easier to live a greener, more environmentally sustainable life.



Photo Credit: treehugger.com

Hazardous Material Recovery: Additional Hours

The Hazardous Material Recovery Facility ensures that hazardous waste and materials are properly disposed of. From lithium batteries to old gasoline, the HMR Facility takes in over 850,000 pounds a year of hazardous materials. Beyond safely disposing of these materials, the facility tries to recycle or make safe materials available to the public. The Product Exchange Room allows members of the public to pick up excess paint, cleaning supplies, and various household chemicals that have been sorted by the HMR Associates. The Product Exchange room is open during regular HMR Facility hours, excluding Thursday's when it opens an hour later to accommodate peak times.



Starting in May and continuing through October, the HMR Facility will be providing an additional day for residential hours, Tuesdays 9:00 am - 3:00 pm. They will also have their original hours on Thursdays 12:00 pm - 6:00 pm and Saturdays 8:00 am - 2:00 pm. For large amounts of residential material, please call our office to make an appointment at 920-492-4950. Businesses, non-profits, and farms must make an appointment on our website.

For questions on what to bring to the Hazardous Material Recovery Facility and prices, visit our website <https://www.browncountyrecycling.org/hmr-acceptable-material>.

Follow Us

For facts, general information and ideas on how to reduce waste, follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest! We post information you want to know several times a week.



If you are interested in reading more about a resource recovery topic online or in our newsletter let us know! We would love to hear from you.



Brown County Port & Resource Recovery Department

Recycling & Hazardous Material Recovery Facilities

2561 S. Broadway | Green Bay, WI 54304

Waste Transfer Station

3734 W. Mason | Green Bay, WI 54155

South Landfill

1258 Mill Road | Greenleaf, WI 54216

Phone: 920-492-4950

Fax: 920-492-4957

E-mail: bc_resource_recovery@browncountywi.gov

www.browncountyrecycling.org

Department Contacts

Dean Haen, Director

Chad Doverspike, Assistant Director

Mark Walter, Business Development Manager

Ben Hintz, Landfill Manager

Chris Blan, Resource Recovery Technician

Jon Logan, Resource Recovery Technician

Derek Tess, Resource Recovery Technician

Theresa Slavek, Account Clerk II

Katie Platten, Clerk/Typist II

