



VOLUME 14, ISSUE 3  
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# The Waste Not

## 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, repurposing and energy recovery*

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## Fire at Brown County Recycling Transfer Station Brings Attention to Proper Battery Recycling



Credit: Derek Tess, BC Resource Recovery Technician

On Thursday, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, a fire started in the back end of a semi-trailer that was in the process of loading recyclables at the Brown County Recycling Transfer Station prior to being hauled to the Tri-County Recycling Facility. The semi driver and Brown County staff acted quickly and first responders from multiple fire departments were rapidly on-site to control the fire. Thankfully, there were no injuries and no damage to the building though the trailer had some damage. Operations resumed by 11:30am the same day.

While there was no way to determine the exact cause of the fire, it is likely it was caused by a battery that was improperly disposed of in the recyclables and damaged when the recyclables were loaded into the semi-trailer. This is the second incident in a month that batteries have contributed to dangerous fire incidents at Tri-County Recycling facilities. The first incident occurred on July 8<sup>th</sup> in Appleton, where a lithium-ion battery ignited after it was punctured. Tri-County Recycling was fortunate that the improperly recycled battery had not reached their paper line, but was contained and extinguished by staff.

"People may not know the impact that one battery could have on an entire recycling system or operation," commented Chris Blan, Technician at the Hazardous Material Recovery Facility. "Batteries should never go into curbside recycling or garbage. There are free or low-cost alternatives available for residents to bring their batteries in for proper recovery and recycling."

Recycle your batteries at the Brown County Hazardous Material Recovery Facility located at 2561 South Broadway. In 2023, the facility launched their "Batteries Now Included" campaign where Brown County residents can drop-off their batteries free of charge during residential drop-off hours. While it is still too early to determine the campaign's success, staff are hopeful that residents will consider proper battery recycling a necessary action. Battery retail stores offer another option for recycling.

For more information on battery recycling, the Hazardous Material Recovery Facility, or Brown County Resource Recovery, visit [www.browncountyrecycling.org](http://www.browncountyrecycling.org), or follow Brown County Resource Recovery on Facebook.



Credit: Outagamie County Solid Waste & Recycling

## College Move-In, But Maybe Not These Items

Back-to-school shopping can be an exciting time for many new students, and that applies to those who pursue post-secondary education. College move-in videos have become popular on social media, and many new college students find themselves spending a fortune trying to replicate the comforts of home in their small dorm spaces. Consider how much you really need to bring from home to get the most out of your education.

First, how much time do you plan to spend in your dorm space? Is this going to be your study space, or will you utilize the campus lounges, labs, or libraries? Do you really need your own personal printer and desk set-up.

Bring climate and seasonal appropriate clothing, and not your full wardrobe especially if you plan to return home periodically. Think about how much of a mess you make at home and will a broom and dustpan be easier to pack and store in a small space instead of a vacuum.

Most campus dormitories have shared spaces with kitchen appliances, so don't bring a microwave. Preparing full meals is not the norm for the ever-busy scholar, so leave the pots, pans, and kitchen utensils at home (unless you are in culinary school). Bringing a reusable set of cutlery with you will save on the amount of single-use plasticware that fills your garbage can.

Next, check with the campus before you buy wall décor, candles, or string lights. These may be considered fire hazards and their purchase can be a waste.

Campuses generally provide furniture like a bed, desk, dresser, and chair for each dorm, so avoid bringing your own unless you absolutely need to. Try thrift or second-hand stores for extra furniture since new dorm furniture is targeted towards new college students and can be of lesser quality and designed to be used for a short time, then tossed out.

An unfortunate result of these hauls is that many of the items bought are quickly found to be obsolete or unnecessary. Subsequently, the move-out day at the end of each semester is almost as popular on social media for the amount of things that fill the campus dumpsters. Dumpster-diving on college campuses after the semester yields a shocking amount of perfectly good appliances, furniture, and décor.



Credit: hottydoddynews instagram

## Brown County Sharps Collection Reaches Quarter Million Pounds Collected

The Brown County Sharps Collection Program provides Brown County residents with a proper disposal outlet for household medical sharps (such as needles, syringes, and lancets) with more than 30 drop-off locations throughout the County. Recently, the program reached an impressive milestone. The program has collected nearly a quarter of a million pounds of sharps since its inception almost twenty-eight years ago with more than 55,000 pounds of sharps collected and disposed of properly in just the last five years.

Having a safe, easily accessible, disposal outlet for household medical sharps helps to protect people in your home and in the community. Keeping sharps out of the trash and recycling can also protect the health and well-being of individuals working within the waste industry.

The Brown County Sharps Collection Program is a collaborative effort between the Brown County Port & Resource Recovery Department and the Brown County Public Health Department. The program is a successful partnership with area hospitals and pharmacies within Brown County.

## Are You A Wish-Cycler or a “When In Doubt, Throw It Out” Thinker?

Wish-Cycling is the practice of recycling items that are not recyclable, such as throwing all plastics in the recycling bin like plastic film or toys without first confirming if they can be recycled. This could be done with the best of intentions, but the repercussions of wish-cycling is leading to damaging impacts for waste management facilities, local and regional services, and the environment. The same can be said for the “when in doubt, throw it out” thinkers who take little to no consideration with their waste and throw it all in the garbage bin.

Not everyone can become a master recycler overnight or do it entirely correct every time the bins go to the curb. It is definitely a challenge to have the time and energy to commit to mastering your garbage habits, but there are ways to help.



Credit: Getty Images

First, download the BetterBin app, and you will be able to scan barcodes to determine how to dispose of your purchases both before and after you make them. If you have questions about certain items, utilize the Waste Wizard on the Tri-County Recycling website ([www.recyclenoretricity.org](http://www.recyclenoretricity.org)) to search for the best place to bring them. By using these two services first, you can answer almost all questions you might have in the moment you are asking, What Do I Do With?

Keep in mind that there are far more types of plastic that cannot be recycled than what goes in your recycling bin. Additionally, here are some things to consider if you want to change the way you think about garbage, and what is going into your bins:

- Even before you buy new, see if there is a way to reuse something you already have, or able to re-purpose by upcycling.
- Is what you need to replace able to be repaired? There are several video tutorials online, especially on YouTube, that can help you develop the skills to repair, rather than simply replacing your stuff. Find a local repair shop for assistance.
- Is the old item of good quality and able to be donated? Or hold a yard-sale!
- Really consider if you need some items in your life. Simplify your purchases. For example, do you need a 10-step skin and hair routine, using a half dozen products? No shame if you do, but consider simplifying to less products or finding more eco-friendly packaging.
- If you absolutely need to buy new, make sure that you know what you are getting and learn how to troubleshoot any problems that could arise. With any new device or product, read the instruction manuals to make sure you can make any necessary fixes. This will reduce unnecessary disposals if you know how to fix it.

A few simple actions can make you a better recycler.



**HAS TEAMED UP WITH** **Betterbin**

**TO OFFER A NEW RECYCLING APP!**



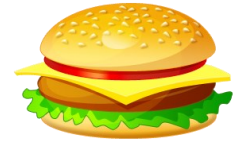
# Have Lunch With Us!

## Customer Appreciation Days 2024

### All customers are invited!



Waste Transfer Station - 3734 W. Mason St.  
Tuesday, **September 10, 2024**  
10:00 am - 2:00 pm



Recycling Transfer Station - 2561 S. Broadway  
South Landfill - 1258 Mill Road, Greenleaf  
Wednesday, **September 11, 2024**  
11:00 am—2:00 pm



***We appreciate your business! Thank you!***

### 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 54126

Phone: 920-492-4950

E-mail: [bc\\_resource\\_recovery@browncountywi.gov](mailto:bc_resource_recovery@browncountywi.gov)

[www.browncountyrecycling.org](http://www.browncountyrecycling.org)

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