

NEWS

you can use

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Free Publications to Help You Grow Greener for Earth Day

For Earth Day, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is offering four free publications to help Texans with yard care, mulching, and composting.

Every year more than five million tons of yard trimmings and other organic materials end up in Texas landfills. Disposing of these materials costs more than \$150 million a year and takes up more than 15 million yards of space.

By switching to greener yard care techniques, Texans can reduce the amount of materials going to the landfill. By composting and mulching they can also stop bagging grass and leaves, have lower water bills, purchase less fertilizer, and reduce water pollution.

The following free TCEQ publications are available to help Texans make greener yard care choices:

A Green Guide to Yard Care (GI-028) has 28 pages of information and resources. The guide shows homeowners a simple four-step method called “Yard Wise” to help them maintain a healthy yard with lower costs, less work, and less waste. The guide includes information and tips on mowing, mulching, composting, green landscape design, and yard care.

Compost Calculator (GI-301) is a slide-rule calculator that helps users determine how much compost is needed to cover an area. It is designed for use by homeowners, landscapers, sports turf managers, commercial applicators, and engineers. (Available in print only; see ordering information below.)

Composting and Mulching (GI-036) is a brief, easy-to-understand flier for beginners on how to start mulching and composting to reduce the amount of yard trimmings disposed of in landfills.

Worm Composting (GI-219) provides brief, easy-to-understand information for apartment dwellers and others who do not have yards, or have physical limitations (available in English and Spanish).

To get a free, printed copy of these publications, visit www.tceq.state.tx.us and click on “Forms and Publications” or call 512/239-0028.

Earth Day is April 22nd. For more information on Earth Day, visit www.EarthDay.gov.

Last Chance to Get the Master Composter Program Planning Guide

We are clearing out our remaining stock of a popular composting publication, the Master Composter Program Planning Guide. It is available in both English and Spanish. The guide assists in the promotion of backyard composting and source reduction of yard trimmings. There are a limited number of these publications, so be sure to order early. To order these free materials to use in your community, please e-mail your request to cleantx@tceq.state.tx.us or call 512/239-3150.

Mark Your Calendar for Texas' Premier Environmental Conference

The TCEQ Environmental Trade Fair and Conference will be held in the Austin Convention Center, Austin, Texas, from May 2 to 4, 2005. This annual event is Texas' premier environmental educational forum, considered by many to be one of the best in the country. The **Clean Texas Partnership Conference** and the **Environmental Trade Fair & Conference** are teaming up again to bring you one, grand event.

Special events at this year's conference feature:

- ◆ Monday, May 2, Opening Plenary session, 10:15am-11:30am. An interactive town hall meeting where TCEQ Commissioners will discuss critical issues facing the Texas environment.
- ◆ Tuesday, May 3, Keynote Luncheon: William Clay Ford, Jr. (invited) and Clean Texas, Cleaner World (CTCW) Recognition, 11:30am-1pm. This is a rare opportunity to hear how the Ford Motor Company is becoming greener through design changes.

Trade Fair Discounts for Clean Texas, Cleaner World Members

All Clean Texas, Cleaner World (CTCW) members receive a special discount of \$100 off the early registration fee of \$295 if you register by April 15.

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An environmental message brought to you by the Small Business and Environmental Assistance Division.

For only \$195 per person, you and your colleagues can attend the entire three-day conference. The conference includes dynamic speakers on topics such as:

- ◆ Environmental Innovations & Performance
- ◆ Partnerships & Community Involvement
- ◆ Pollution Prevention & Sustainability

To register and pay online by credit card, go to www.tceq.state.tx.us and click on the “Environmental Trade Fair and Conference” link under “Featured Topics and Projects.” The online form will ask for your CTCW member number. Early registration ends April 15.

For more information call 512/239-3150 or visit www.tceq.state.tx.us/assistance/events/etfc/etf.html.

Texas Environmental Excellence Award Winners to be Recognized

The TCEQ Commissioners will honor winners of the 2005 Texas Environmental Excellence Awards at a prestigious banquet held in Austin on Tuesday, May 3. The banquet includes a dinner and awards ceremony featuring a video vignette on each winning project. For more information or to purchase tickets, please call 512/239-3150.

Agricultural Waste Pesticide and Household Hazardous Waste Collections Offered

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is offering rural Texans the opportunity to dispose of—free of charge—banned or unwanted pesticides, household hazardous waste, properly rinsed plastic pesticide containers, used motor oil, used oil filters, and lead acid batteries. The TCEQ will also be exchanging mercury (fever) thermometers for non-mercury thermometers. The events will be held at Paris, Greenville, Denton, Carthage, and Kirbyville in April. For complete information, including restrictions, please visit www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/exec/oppr/agwaste/agwaste.html or call 512/239-3150.

Texas Country Cleanup Events Held to Benefit Rural Texas

Like the Agricultural Waste Pesticide and Household Hazardous Waste Collections, Texas Country Cleanups also give rural Texans the opportunity to dispose of, for free, properly rinsed plastic pesticide containers, used motor oil, used oil filters, and lead acid batteries.

Cleanups are scheduled for communities in Winters, Coleman, and Walls. For details, either visit the TCEQ Web site at www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/exec/oppr/txcntry/tx_cntry.html or call 512/239-3150.

At these collections:

- ◆ Empty plastic pesticide containers must be clean, triple-rinsed, or high-pressure rinsed to be accepted, and lids and instructions must be removed.
- ◆ No hazardous waste or tires will be accepted.
- ◆ There is a two-drum limit per participant on oil filter recycling, and filters will not be accepted from businesses that change oil for a fee.

Texas Country Cleanup is co-sponsored by the TCEQ’s Small Business and Environmental Assistance Division, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Texas Department of Agriculture, and USAg Recycling.

New Clean Air Video Available for Teachers

The Clean Air Crew video, introducing TEX, DOT, Cool Jay, and Ollie Ozone in their first-ever animated form, is now available. This six-minute video pits the Clean Air Crew against the dreaded Smog King, who relishes polluted skies. TEX and DOT teach their classmates simple steps everyone can do to improve air quality and defeat the Smog King! The video is a companion to the free Clean Air Crew Activity Book and the Drive Clean Across Texas lesson plans.

For more information on the video, activity book, and lesson plans, visit the “For Teachers” section of the Drive Clean Across Texas Web site at: www.drivecleanacrosstexas.org/for_teachers/.

To order free copies of the video and related materials, visit: http://www.drivecleanacrosstexas.org/for_teachers/order_materials/.

Environmental News You Can Use is brought to you by the Small Business and Environmental Assistance Division of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. To subscribe, send your name, mailing address, and e-mail address to cleantx@tceq.state.tx.us or call 512/239-3150.