

# CHaRM Adds Another New Material: Big Durable #2 Plastics

by Dan Matsch

What do plastic laundry baskets, lawn furniture, and five-gallon buckets have in common? They're big, they're hard plastic, and they're some of the last holdouts in your trash can without a recycling option. That is, until now. Every year, we work to develop new markets to help the community recycle yet another hard-to-recycle material at the

Eco-Cycle/City of Boulder Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM). In years past, we've added electronics, clothing, #2 and #4 plastic bags, books, block foam, and other materials. This year, as of November 15<sup>th</sup>, our newest material is the big stuff you hate to throw away: durable plastics with a #2—that's the most descriptive term we can think of

to cover the diverse group of goods made out of high-density polyethylene (HDPE or #2).

### What Counts as Big Durable #2 Plastics?

Each new recyclable we add to the CHaRM seems to live up to its name as a "hard-to-recycle" material. This one is no exception, but we know our dedicated recyclers like you are up to the challenge. Unfortunately, unlike plastic beverage containers, many of these durable goods don't necessarily have the #2 stamped inside the familiar "chasing arrows" symbol that you can use for verification. So, we'll need your help to read these descriptions

carefully to make sure you're bringing us materials we can accept.

### Your plastic item qualifies if it meets ALL of the following conditions:

- ✓ **Opaque** – You can't see through durable #2 plastics.
- ✓ **Matte finish** – It has a matte finish like a Big Wheel rather than a glossy finish like a CD jewel case.
- ✓ **Large size with a simple design** – These products are usually one large plastic piece made in a plastic mold.
- ✓ **Has a seam** – You can often find a raised seam dividing the item in half, evidence of the two halves of the mold that were used to form the item when it was manufactured.
- ✓ **Durable** – This plastic is built to last, so it is quite durable and bending it does not cause it to crack. It's different from your #2 yogurt and dairy tubs in that it was designed for long-term use, not single use.
- ✓ **1/8" thick** – Durable #2 plastic is typically no more than 1/8" thick. If it is a closed shape, it is hollow and never solid plastic.

### YES

Examples of items that can be recycled in this category are plastic lawn toys like a slide or play structure, plastic lawn furniture, Big Wheels, plastic watering cans with a #2, laundry baskets, #2 plastic buckets, crates, rigid backyard kiddie pools and plastic trash containers with a #2.

### NO

Some examples of items that are NOT in this category are CD jewel cases, some small plastic toys and action figures, flower pots, chaise lounge chairs with a metal frame and plastic webbing (this type of chair can be recycled with scrap metal), inflatable wading pools, inflatable pool toys, or water beds (sorry, all of these materials still have to go to the landfill). One-time use #2 plastics, such as motor oil bottles, also do not fall in this category. Plastic toys with many parts and materials other than plastic do not qualify either.

### Please remove non-plastic parts.

Small amounts of metal such as bucket handles or Big Wheel axles are okay, but if you can easily remove any part that clearly is not #2 plastic (including metal) from the item you want to recycle, you will help us ensure we'll have a viable market for durable #2 plastics for the long term.

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# Happy Holidays from CHaRM: Recycle Your Cooking Oil

## During Our Six-Week Pilot Program: November 24 – January 6

by Dan Matsch

If your family's holiday traditions include a deep-fried turkey, fondue, homemade latkes, or the more Boulder-friendly deep-fried tofu, we have good news for you: You don't have to pour your cooking oil down the drain or send it to the landfill. Instead, it can become an eco-friendly fuel! This holiday season, as an experimental pilot program, we will accept used cooking oil at the Eco-Cycle/City of Boulder Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM). Cooking oil collected during this six-week project will be sent to a local refiner to produce biodiesel, an environmentally-friendly alternative to diesel for cars and trucks.

What's the big deal about keeping cooking oil from going into the landfill or down the drain?

- Landfilling cooking oil pollutes our groundwater. Any liquid in a landfill oozes through the waste, picking up toxic chemicals and metals along the way. Eventually the liquid seeps through the landfill liner and into our groundwater, carrying the toxins with it.
- Landfilling oil and other organic materials contributes to greenhouse gas production. Liquids contribute to anaerobic decomposition within a landfill, which generates methane that can be released to the atmosphere. Methane is a greenhouse gas 23 times more potent than carbon dioxide.
- Pouring oil down the drain is no better. Grease and oil clog pipes and must be removed by hand from wastewater treatment plants.

Cooking Oil continued on page 7



CHaRM Accepts Cooking Oil for Six-Week Pilot

**When:** November 24 – January 6 ONLY  
**Where:** CHaRM at 5030 "old" Pearl, Monday-Saturday 9-4 (see page D for map)  
**Charge:** No charge for residents; businesses will be charged \$1 per gallon.

**YES** Cooking oil (such as canola, corn, vegetable, olive and sesame oils)

**NO** Motor oil or any oil used for purposes other than cooking

We cannot recycle or dispose of your oil container.

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**Eric Lombardi**  
Executive Director

Revolution, we as a species are seriously jeopardizing the potential for more waves of positive change in our future.

The warming of the Earth's biosphere and the associated destruction of our life-support systems could make a mockery of all of our previous advances in food (wave one), lifestyle (wave two) and knowledge (wave three). The human species is, once again, doing something new and grandiose—we are multiplying in exponential numbers, we are consuming far more than our environment has to offer, and we are spreading our toxic waste into groundwater through landfills, into the air from carbon emissions, into our bodies through contact with and ingestion of environmental toxins, and even into the bodies of our children—the most vulnerable among us—through mothers' milk.

There are generally two schools of thought on this situation:

1. Some say it's all a bunch of hype. The end of the world has been predicted before, yet it has never happened. As the Knowledge Revolution progresses, we will engineer solutions to all these mega-problems, and life on Earth will continue to get better. Don't panic. Just stay the course and let technology and the free market do their magic.
2. Others acknowledge that our increasing knowledge is producing new solutions, but they point to the fact that our environmental and resulting health problems keep increasing in scale. Why?

## Greening the Third Wave

The great futurist Alvin Toffler wrote a book a few decades ago called *The Third Wave* that changed my worldview. According to Toffler, the evolution of human society has experienced two great "waves" of change: The first was the Agricultural Revolution, and the second was the Industrial Revolution. He suggests we are in the process of creating the Third Wave, which he calls the Knowledge Revolution. I am going to humbly suggest that another unprecedented global phenomenon is underway as the Earth heats up. I call it the Warm Wave and if it isn't understood and integrated into the emerging Knowledge

There is no short answer to this. I think one of the main factors is many people are still too busy pursuing their "individual gain," and the current tragedy-of-the-commons will continue to worsen until a new balance is found between individual prosperity and community welfare. There is nothing wrong with "enlightened self-interest," but it may be time for this, a primary orientation of many, to take a backseat to the larger needs of our communities and to the protection and prosperity of all life forms on our planet.

In this issue of the *Eco-Cycle Times*, we propose there is a positive path forward on which we tap the best new ideas coming out of the Knowledge Revolution and unite them under a common framework. We call it the "Z-3 Strategy," which stands for Zero Waste, Zero Emissions and Zero Population Growth (see page 3). Of course, we may never achieve "zero" in any of these areas, but that isn't the point. The goal is to get on the path and make "moving toward zero" in all three the cornerstone of all new public policy. In this way, we're setting a new benchmark, against which we can measure our actions as a society and send a message to industry that public policy will support the practices of Z-3 businesses in the future.

The Knowledge Revolution is exciting, but the developing and potential problems of a Warm Wave demand a new social dialogue about the value of life versus the value of business profits. Yes, they are both important, but they are not equal. This conflict of people vs. profits has driven tribal wars and corporate pirates since the beginning of time, but only now do we realize it's reached a level where everyone will lose if something doesn't change. We hope our Z-3 strategy unites the community under one all-encompassing vision, so that we can work together on the solutions and thrive as a community and as a planet. ♻️

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## Eco-Cycle International Helping our Global Family

by Eric Lombardi

Our readers tell us they love hearing about the global projects we are involved in, so here are a few interesting projects I've been helping with:

### Sea Gypsies in Burma.

Some of you may have heard about the Sea Gypsies in Burma who live on boats and who knew the big tsunami was coming when their boats all lifted oddly out of the water just a few inches. Well, we've been asked by a French development agency to help the Sea Gypsies with the growing pollution problem of thousands of plastic bags in their ocean. I am working with some Colorado School of Mines students to invent a small-scale human-powered recycling baler to help the residents in poor rural areas prep the plastic for shipping.

I'm happy to report those young engineers down in Golden are quite clever!

### Yucatan peninsula.

Along Mexico's Yucatan peninsula, where I'd guess half of Boulder vacations, the coral reefs are being threatened by toxic groundwater seepage from local landfills. I'm in discussions with the largest local environmental group in that area to create a model Zero Waste approach to resort waste management systems, and they are moving ahead quickly on a new composting project. Next time you vacation down there, be sure to tell your hotel you're sick and tired of having no recycling or composting systems included as part of your vacation! ♻️

## Eco-Cycle's Zero Waste Community Guide

This information-packed guide includes everything YOU need to know to be a part of making our community a model for Zero Waste.

**Zero Waste practices  
for residents and businesses**

**Eco-Cycle's Guide to  
Hard-to-Recycle Materials**

**Composting how-to's**

**Zero Waste entertaining**

**Non-toxic cleaning recipes**

**Tips for how to stop junk mail**

**Zero Waste workplace tips**

**Zero Waste shopping**

**...and much, much more!**

This guide will be available in both electronic and print versions. Sign up to be notified when the Zero Waste Community Guide is available. Go to Eco-Cycle's home page, [www.ecocycle.org](http://www.ecocycle.org), and click on the "Sign Up" button to be included on our email notification list.

**Available  
January 2007!**

**Got recycling  
questions?**

**We've got  
answers!**

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Working to Build Zero Waste Communities

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# Global Warming and the Z-3 Solution

by Marti Matsch

Today is a crucial time to be active in our communities and the world. At no point in our history has our species been faced with such a monumental planetary challenge—and simultaneously an enormous opportunity. We are living in a time that is both scary and hopeful—scary because we are experiencing unprecedented environmental and cultural crises that demand immediate action and hopeful because the solutions to these planetary crises already exist. We do not have to wait for science and technology to “discover” the cure; we know enough to act now. We simply need to CHOOSE to take action and change the status quo by focusing on a few key steps:

## Step 1: Admit we have a problem—the same problem.

The first step to healing is to admit there is a problem, and, in this case, the first step is to acknowledge it's all the SAME problem. Many of us are dedicated to working on a wide variety of issues of serious concern around the globe: environmental issues like saving the rainforests, protecting coral reefs and slowing global climate change; and social issues like stopping threats to public health, protecting the rights of indigenous peoples, and ending wars fought over resources. While these may seem like disparate issues,

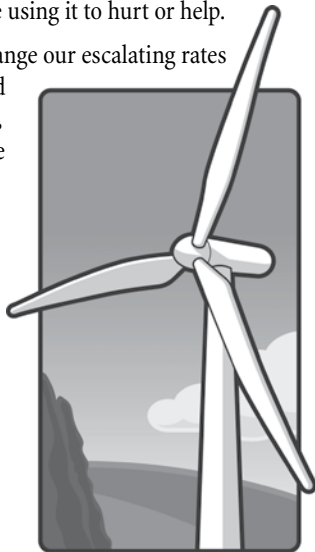


they are each a symptom stemming from the same epidemic: the global over-consumption of our natural resources as we live beyond the carrying capacity of our planet.

Our over-consumption of resources and reckless use of toxic chemicals directly impact people all around the globe. Indigenous populations in developing countries watch as their lands are stripped from under their feet for minerals and timber to be exported to meet the developed world's needs. Wars persist over

ownership and access to natural resources from oil to diamonds, and some day soon for clean water. Citizens in our own country battle health threats from toxic products, production methods, and improperly treated discards. Every decision we make in our homes and businesses has the power to make these problems better or worse. It's time we take ownership of that power and discover whether we're using it to hurt or help.

Unless we change our escalating rates of growth and consumption, it is inevitable that we will increasingly fight each other for limited resources, that the populations and cultures of those who live in resource-rich regions will be increasingly under attack, and that the poisons we emit in manufacturing and production will continue to create environmental devastation and serious health concerns for all species, including humans. The sooner we come to the understanding that all these issues have one common root, the better we can work toward the same goal and make real progress.



## Step 2: Focus the solution: Z-3

To say we have just one common problem is, of course, an over-simplification, but it allows us to embrace one unified vision for the future. We at Eco-Cycle believe the solution can be framed in a three-pronged approach: Zero Emissions, Zero Waste, and Zero Population Growth—or Z-3. A Z-3 community understands that “getting to zero” isn't the point. But, getting on the path toward zero on these three key issues is absolutely the correct public policy direction for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Zero Waste** refers to redesigning our production and consumption systems to use resources more efficiently, to prevent waste before it happens, and to incorporate all leftover materials back into the production cycle rather than discarding them as waste.

**Zero Emissions** refers to emissions from transportation, energy and production—choosing alternative means of travel and renewable fuels, maximizing conservation and efficiency, and expanding renewable, abundant and non-polluting sources of energy like wind and solar.

**Zero Population Growth** addresses the issue of our exponentially-growing population combined with our rapidly growing rate of consumption. Even with the current “slow” growth rate of just over 1%, the world's population will double within 70 years! Clearly, simply reducing our rate of consumption will be ineffectual if the number of those of us depending on resources continues to increase.

The world's worst population problem is arguably right here in the United States, since we live at the world's highest rate of per capita resource consumption. It is estimated that a person added to the U.S. population will have 30 or more times the impact on world resources than a person added to the population of a developing nation. When you consider that people in developing countries seek a material standard of living that is more like ours, it's clear that we have the responsibility to set a different example, both in consumption and in population.

## Step 3: Plan, Design, and Choose for Z-3.

It is time to stop all the research and debating about how best to solve the problems of the world and just get on with the task of making some significant choices in bold new directions. We will learn and get better as we go forward. Each of us has an important role to play in creating a Z-3 society:

**Plan:** Elected officials need to be sure that every decision they make as public servants is aiming for Z-3 and that rules and regulations

reward Z-3 practices rather than perpetuate the status quo, which has now been established as unsustainable.

**Design:** Businesses need to design every product and service for Z-3, from manufacturing, to product use, to end-of-life recovery. Some industries are already embracing this “Cradle-to-Cradle” approach. Now it's time for public policy to financially reward the clean companies over the dirty ones.

**Choose:** This is the key to Z-3. Every decision each of us makes every day—including the products we purchase, the energy source we use, our means of transportation, the size of



our families, even the elected officials we vote for—is a decision either for or against a sustainable Z-3 future.

Here at Eco-Cycle, we recognize our Zero Waste work as one of the three legs of the solution, and it is our mission to work with each sector of the community to create a Zero Waste Community model. We also support and work cooperatively with organizations focusing on the other two legs of the solution because it will take all of us to progress toward a Z-3 future. See articles throughout this issue of the *Eco-Cycle Times* for updates on how we're doing on our Zero Waste front. ♻️

## Introducing Eco-Cycle Exchange

### Your new FREE Online Reuse Resource

by Erin English



Eco-Cycle announces the launch of our newest service aimed at helping our community become a model for Zero Waste: Eco-Cycle Exchange. At Eco-Cycle, we always advocate reuse before recycling. So, we've invested in an online, one-stop reuse clearinghouse where you can find, in one convenient place, every possible reuse resource available in Boulder and Broomfield Counties. Now you can exchange free reusable items online, learn how to find all the local thrift stores, advertise or find garage sales, and learn about all the other reuse programs available in our community. It's all handily available at [www.ecocycle.org](http://www.ecocycle.org).

At the core of Eco-Cycle Exchange is its most exciting feature—an online community bulletin board where you can advertise free, reusable items, browse through listings to find a treasure of your own, or post a listing for the specific item you want to find. Anyone can join; it's easy to use; and it's all free—free to post, free to browse, free to exchange. It's like a Craigslist or free eBay.

If you're looking for something in particular, search by category for items like pet supplies, furniture or clothing. When you see something you want, simply send an email or call the contact on the posting and arrange a place to pick up that baby jogger, slightly worn throw rug or sofa pull-out bed (all items already successfully exchanged). If you're

trying to relinquish an unwanted item, you can create a posting in minutes—you can even add a photo of your slightly used “treasure” if you like—and wait for people to contact you. Everything can be done from the convenience of your computer.

Eco-Cycle Exchange is also a great way to advertise or find other reuse events and programs. If you're hosting a garage sale, post it on the site. Thrift and consignment stores are other great places to find and get rid of gently-used items, and we've got a big list of all the local ones. There are links to other online exchange services like Freecycle or RecycleBoulderValley where great used stuff is traded for free every day. Reuse programs like ReSource, a program for the reuse of construction supplies, are also listed, as are charities that accept reusables such as the Emergency Family Assistance Association (EFAA), Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and Extras for Education. Finally, Eco-Cycle's tried and true reuse and recycling service, our Hard-to-Recycle Guide, is also available on Eco-Cycle Exchange.

It's a reuse extravaganza at Eco-Cycle Exchange, and we hope you'll take advantage. It's easy to join our bustling bazaar. Just go to [www.ecocycle.org](http://www.ecocycle.org) and click on “Eco-Cycle Exchange.” It's our goal to make Eco-Cycle Exchange a comprehensive online reuse resource, so that reusing is more convenient than ever. If there's a reuse resource you don't see on the site, we'd love to hear about it. Call us at 303.444.6634 or drop us a line at [recycle@ecocycle.org](mailto:recycle@ecocycle.org). Happy Exchanging! ♻️



“Shop” for free, slightly-used (yet fabulous) treasures like this office chair on Eco-Cycle Exchange.

Become a corporate sponsor for Eco-Cycle Exchange, and get great exposure every time a community member visits online. To support reuse and receive the many marketing benefits of sponsoring this online resource, please contact Anne Mudgett at 303.444.6634 x123.

# The City of Lafayette Adopts Curbside Recycling

by Caroline Mitchell



In a time when citizens and communities often feel powerless to the influences of big corporations and government, good news is a welcome change. The City of Lafayette recently celebrated some great news—they've brought a new curbside recycling program to their town. The adoption of this city-wide program demonstrates the power of organized citizens working with a municipality to create a better community and a healthier environment.

To understand the significance of this new program, we first have to understand the current recycling option available to Lafayette city residents called "subscription-based recycling." Under this system, each resident individually hires a hauling company for trash pick-up and likely has to pay extra if s/he elects to recycle. Under this type of system, only around 20% of residents recycle at the curb (compared to an 80% participation rate when recycling is offered at no charge).

Who benefits under this system? Certainly not residents, who must pay a premium for the convenience of curbside recycling or must store and haul all their recyclables to a drop-off center. The only ones who really benefit from the status quo are waste haulers and landfill operators. While there's nothing wrong with companies making a profit, there is a problem when a company's profit is the only motivator for a community's systems.

Recognizing that waste is more than trash cans and garbage trucks, but actually part of a larger social issue that impacts their community, a number of citizens formed a grassroots group called Lafayette Recycles. With Eco-Cycle's technical support, the group surveyed curbside recycling systems to find better options that could benefit the community, as well as waste haulers. They found an example of a better system right under their noses: Home Owners' Associations (HOAs) in Lafayette.

HOAs generally contract as a whole for their trash and recycling service, so every resident receives quality service from the same company at a fair price. This system benefits the customer through fewer trucks in their neighborhoods, lower prices and easily available recycling. Why not apply such a system to the whole town?

With the support of Lafayette Recycles, the City of Lafayette pursued just that system. But why was the advocacy and support of a citizens' group so important? The answer lies in local history. In 2003, Louisville attempted to implement a similar curbside recycling program. However, multinational hauler Waste Connections, operating locally under

the name Town and Country, was angered about the prospect of losing its market share in Louisville, so the company sent misleading letters to customers claiming their mom-and-pop operation would be forced out of business entirely. With no organized recyclers to counter this blatant misrepresentation, the proposal was rejected because citizens had been successfully duped by a profit-motivated corporation.

The Lafayette Recycles group took the lessons learned from their neighboring community and organized their friends and neighbors to speak up for equality of price and access to recycling services.



Cooper Lajeunesse and Emma Piller are members of Lafayette Recycles, a grassroots group that helped bring curbside recycling to the City of Lafayette.

"I hadn't really felt like I was a part of the Lafayette community prior to being involved in Lafayette Recycles," said resident Lisa Bailey. "Now, I not only feel this really is my community, but I have also been inspired by the incredible people I've met."

Last May, Lafayette Recycles held a citizens' meeting, attended by more than 100 residents, to educate the community about curbside recycling and gather input. They helped spread the word about the issue through letters to the editor of *Lafayette News* and letters to Lafayette City Council. While Western Disposal and Waste Connections both sent out misleading letters to disrupt the campaign, they didn't convince the public or City Council because Lafayette Recycles was there to share the truth. In the end, more than 70 residents attended the decisive City

Council meeting to speak in favor of contracted curbside recycling and its associated community benefits. The community won, and Lafayette residents will all receive curbside recycling in 2007.

Although the subscription-based recycling model is foreign to the majority of the U.S., it is unfortunately commonplace in the Rocky Mountain West. As a result, our region has some of the worst recycling rates in the nation. Perhaps Lafayette's

choice to switch to universal curbside recycling will not only bring recycling to all Lafayette residents, but will also set a precedent for other communities in the West to create the systems they want for a better environment. ♻️

## Community Events Demonstrate Zero Waste in Action!

by Brandon Walton

Boulder and Broomfield Counties are known for phenomenal mountain views, a plethora of outdoor trails and 300+ days of sunshine a year. And, anyone coming to a public event in our community will discover yet another reason our community is unique. Here, when we have a public event, it's no longer the norm to stuff the trash cans with literally tons of garbage—Styrofoam cups, plastic utensils, paper plates and uneaten food—and ship it all off to the landfill. Instead, our events don't even have any trash cans.

"How does this happen?" ask intrigued event patrons. It all comes down to planning and people. First, the event is planned so that all products and packaging sold by vendors are designed to be reused, recycled, or composted, and all trash cans are replaced with "Zero Waste Stations," to collect recyclables and compostables. Second, Eco-Cycle volunteers are on hand to educate visitors about Zero Waste and how to apply the concept to our personal and professional lives. The invaluable personal contact with our volunteers brings Zero Waste to life for event-goers.

Zero Waste events have come to characterize our community's environmental values and are one of the best ways we can demonstrate a Zero Waste Community in action. Attendees from out of state have noticed and taken the idea back home to start their own Zero Waste events. The national trade publication *BioCycle*, has taken note as well, a fact that speaks volumes about our community's dedication (read the article "The Zero Waste Summer of 2006" on our website, [www.ecocycle.org](http://www.ecocycle.org)).

### Congratulations to All Our 2006 Zero Waste Events.

In 2006, Eco-Cycle, with the help of event coordinators, community groups, food vendors, and our volunteers, coordinated 16 Zero Waste events. We reached an estimated 163,000 people with our Zero Waste vision and saved 75 trees, 16,000 gallons of water, and 21,000 kWh of energy—enough power to run two households for an entire year. This was an impressive community effort—our

thanks and congratulations to everyone involved. Together we are working to build Zero Waste communities—one event at a time.

#### Let's take a look at five of the successful Zero Waste events held this past summer:

- The Broomfield Days Lion's Club Pancake Breakfast came darn near to Zero Waste with a whopping 97% of their material composted or recycled. Soon we hope to take the entire Broomfield Days community event to Zero Waste.



Attendees of the three-day Labor Day festival in Louisville used Zero Waste Stations to compost and recycle their waste.

- Rhythm on the River is the longest running Zero Waste event in Colorado. Now going on its 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, this Longmont event is a great example of a Zero Waste commitment with this season's recycling and composting rate of 76%.
- The Superior Old West Chili Fest diverted 87% of its material from the landfill and composted more chili than you can shake a spoon at!
- Kudos to the Lafayette Peach Festival coordinators and the City of Lafayette for making their signature community event Zero Waste and for achieving a 68% rate for recycling and composting.
- Lastly, Eco-Cycle would like to recognize the Boulder County Fair and Boulder County Resource Conservation Division for their ambitious first-year efforts at making part of the County Fair Zero Waste. Our hats off to their huge undertaking.

With another year of Zero Waste events under our belts, we look forward to improving our Zero Waste events program for 2007. Part of that evolution involves developing several tools for you to use to host your own Zero Waste event. So, whether you're coordinating a large community event or a small party with your neighbors, Eco-Cycle will help you make your next gathering Zero Waste. Stay tuned to [www.ecocycle.org](http://www.ecocycle.org) for more details. ♻️

## Eco-Cycle is making events Zero Waste in Boulder and Broomfield Counties.

Thanks to our Zero Waste event sponsors!

### Boulder Farmers' Market



Downtown Boulder, Inc.

### Countywide Events



Hunter Douglas

# Businesses Thriving on the Way to Zero Waste

by Robin Burton

Businesses throughout Boulder and Broomfield Counties are doing great things every day to help reduce their impact on the Earth through Eco-Cycle's Zero Waste Services program. They are recycling traditional recyclables, composting, recycling hard-to-recycle materials and making smart choices about purchasing that are dramatically decreasing the amount of material that ends up in the trash bin at the end of the day. To help you know who these businesses are and the commitments they've made to the environment and the community, we provide them with Zero Waste Community Partner window decals that promote their participation in various aspects of our program. But spelling out a business's efforts on the front door of the establishment isn't always enough.

We see what goes on behind the scenes in cubicles and kitchens to make Zero Waste programs a success, and we want to share those achievements with you. It is the enthusiasm and creativity of the managers and staff at each business that keep these programs going strong. Read on to discover how a few businesses of different sizes and from various industries, thanks to the dedication of employees and management, are having a great time making significant strides toward Zero Waste with Eco-Cycle and redefining how businesses handle their discards in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



Guests at the Boulder Outlook Hotel are able to recycle and compost in their rooms.

## Boulder Outlook Hotel & Suites, 50 employees

Boulder Outlook Hotel & Suites, a locally-owned 162-room hotel with an on-site restaurant, signed up for Eco-Cycle's Zero Waste Services program in March 2006 and hit the ground running. The hotel uses our services for collection of 100% of its discards—mixed paper and cardboard, commingled containers, compostables, hard-to-recycle materials like plastic bags and white block foam, and “whatever's left.” Additionally, management took a close look at the products they were purchasing and replaced the hotel's non-recyclable to-go containers with cornstarch-based straws and cups.



Local organic produce delivery business Door-to-Door Organics diverts from the landfill 97% of its waste through Eco-Cycle's Zero Waste Services.

You can tell this isn't a typical hotel when you meet their Managing Owner and Ambassador of Cool Dan King and Green Goddess Diane Schevene (those are their real titles!). King has become a huge proponent of Zero Waste since coming on board with Eco-Cycle and even hosted a Zero Waste open house and networking event at the hotel earlier this year in the hopes that other hotels and local businesses might follow suit. King was excited to spread the word that greening his hotel has been a good thing for the environment and his bottom line.

“We have already generated in excess of \$10,000 in revenues from new corporate customers and one-time guests who chose the hotel because of our commitment to Zero Waste with Eco-Cycle,” King says.

You realize the hotel is really doing something different when you find recycling bins prominently displayed in the rooms. These are no ordinary recycling bins, either. Employees and their children were invited to a “recycling fiesta,” where the group hand-painted cardboard boxes and labeled them with recycling guidelines while enjoying dinner and educational presentation by their Eco-Cycle representative. Now each room features a functional piece of artwork that guests can't miss. And, where else can you find a small compostable bag clipped to a hanger in the closet with a note inviting guests to put all biodegradable waste into the bag for collection by housekeeping? Now that's room service!

## Door to Door Organics, 10 employees

Door to Door Organics delivers organic and pre-dominantly local produce packaged in cardboard boxes to businesses and residences. Community outreach coordinator Laura Ruby says the company is “thrilled” to have recently moved to Louisville from Denver because they're now able to take advantage of Eco-Cycle's Zero Waste Services. They're certainly

getting off to a great start. By recycling traditional recyclables and hard-to-recycle materials and by composting all biodegradable material, the company is already saving 97% of its waste from the landfill! And the business reduces waste by encouraging customers to leave their boxes out on delivery day, so they can be picked up and reused. So, what's left in the trash can? Very little! Plastic strapping, cold-pack pouches and other odds-and-ends are the only discards that wind up in the one cart designated for “whatever's left.”

## Google, 65 local employees

Google's Boulder office started working toward Zero Waste with Eco-Cycle in its previous incarnation as a local software development company. Now that the dust of acquisition has settled, Google is reinvigorating the Zero



Lunch at Google is served on compostable bowls and plates, and employees (like Tommy Acierno, pictured here) eat with compostable cornstarch cutlery.

Waste Services program at the office. Each day, meals are catered in the cafeteria for the 65 local employees. Since it's not feasible to use a dishwasher, they're using the next best thing to reusable dishware—compostable utensils and servingware. What's on the menu? The caterer uses local and organic ingredients when available and packages leftover produce in compostable bags.

In a bold effort to encourage employees to change their wasteful ways, Google is in the process of taking the trash cans out of each individual workstation. The office is organized in workstation “pods,” and now each pod has its own set of three bins—one for mixed recyclables (hand-sorted by the cleaning crew), one for compostables and one for “whatever's left.” This change wouldn't be possible without the company's diligent effort in making purchasing choices to ensure that most of their waste is recyclable or compostable. ♻️

**Want to start your business working toward Zero Waste with Eco-Cycle? Give us a call! We'll do a free waste assessment and help your business—whatever the size or industry type—get on the road to Zero Waste today.**



**ZERO WASTE**  
COMMUNITY PARTNER

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



**WE RECYCLE**



**WE COMPOST**



**WE USE ZERO WASTE**  
PURCHASING PRACTICES



**WE RECYCLE**  
HARD-TO-RECYCLE  
MATERIALS

## Welcome to our newest Zero Waste Services customers!

Over the past six months, a wide variety of local businesses ranging from landscapers to retailers with six employees to 600, have signed up for Eco-Cycle's Zero Waste Services.

Eco-Cycle welcomes our newest customers and gives kudos to some existing customers who have recently made significant additional strides toward Zero Waste by adding or increasing recycling or composting services or significantly decreasing the amount of trash they produce. Congratulations to all of these businesses leading the way toward Zero Waste in Boulder and Broomfield Counties.

You can know whether your favorite businesses are working toward Zero Waste by looking for the Eco-Cycle Zero Waste Community Partner decals at the business entrance. If you find it there, thank them for their commitment to the environment and our community with your patronage. If it's not there, ask them to get on board!

### Zero Waste Businesses

*Using 100% collection services and waste reduction strategies*

Blue Poppy  
Panorama Coordinated Services

### Composting & Recycling

Boulder Arts and Crafts  
Eco-Products

Grey Mountain Partners, LLC  
Spruce Confections

### Composting Only

Naropa University – Snow Lion campus

### Recycling Only

Alarian Press  
Boulder County AIDS Project – Longmont  
Burlington Medical Center  
Carmel Community Living  
InSite Properties  
ITW Industrial Finishing Medium  
Overway & Pedersen Architects  
Rosewood Construction  
Talmey Drake Properties  
Transwestern Commercial Services  
Trap Tek  
Wal-Mart Store #5341 – Broomfield

This list includes only the businesses that have joined our program or increased their services in the past six months and have given Eco-Cycle written permission to promote their participation in the Zero Waste Services program. For a full list of businesses working toward Zero Waste with Eco-Cycle, visit [www.ecocycle.org/zws](http://www.ecocycle.org/zws). ♻️

# Green Star Schools Reduce Lunchroom Waste

by Erin English



Styrofoam in the lunchroom is SO old school. That's the word on the street at each of the nine Eco-Cycle Green Star Schools, anyway! This semester, each school took a huge step toward Zero Waste by replacing all disposable serviceware products from its cafeteria with reusable or compostable alternatives.

"Bear Creek Elementary, Boulder Community School of Integrated Studies, High Peaks Elementary, Creekside Elementary, Douglass Elementary, Foothill Elementary, Horizons K-8, Mesa Elementary and Nederland Elementary happily transitioned to using reusable and compostable items," says Eco-Cycle's Green Star Schools Educator Nancy Dudek.

Instead of Styrofoam, hard plastic bowls and mugs are now used to serve foods such as

soup, chili, condiments and fruit. Sturdy, washable blue plastic utensils have replaced flimsy, single-use plastic sporks. Some schools are also using compostable paper food trays to hold french fries and nachos. After lunch, instead of dumping their waste into overflowing trash cans, kids visit a station set up for reuse, recycling and composting. Bowls and utensils go in the reuse bins; plastic milk containers, water bottles and aluminum cans are put in the recycling bin; and uneaten food, paper napkins and paper food trays get composted.

"Students are very enthusiastic about the program and trying their best to correctly sort materials in the lunchroom," Dudek says.

Food service, administrative and kitchen staff, as well as students and teachers, all deserve huge kudos for embracing this exciting new aspect of the Green Star Schools program.

Starting this fall, Eco-Cycle's Green Star Schools are also getting up close and personal with red wiggler worms, the special kind of worms that eat our garbage. Eco-Cycle staff are holding

worm bin composting workshops for Green Star Schools teachers and families. The workshops, funded by the Red Empress Foundation, include step-by-step instructions for how to set up a worm bin for indoor composting, as well as tips for resolving any problems that can arise. Eco-Cycle staff hopes attendees will incorporate worm bins into their classrooms and homes as a result of attending the workshop.

In addition to saying goodbye to Styrofoam and hello to worms, Eco-Cycle's Green Star Schools are raising the bar for recycling and composting.

All of these elementary schools have been doing an outstanding job of separating their discards and maximizing their recycling and composting to keep waste out of the landfill. Just to give you an idea of the amount of materials being diverted from the landfill: Foothill Elementary showed an average increase in paper recycling of 267 lbs per month from spring 2005 (before becoming a Green Star School) to spring 2006, while Bear Creek Elementary collected 220 more pounds



The cafeteria lunch offered at Creekside Elementary School is nearly waste-free—almost everything is reused, recycled or composted.

of beverage containers per month during the same time frame. Eco-Cycle picks up anywhere from 800 to 1800 pounds of compostables from each of the schools each month.

Way to go, Green Star Schools! ♻️

## Congratulations to CU Recycling 30 years as a Community Partner and Campus Leader

by CU Staff



CU students Casey Mulligan and Todd Norris collect recyclables in this mid-1980s photo. Combined with increased administrative commitment, students continue to be a driving force for advancing recycling at CU and on at least 2,500 other campuses nationwide.

Established in 1976, CU Recycling is one of the oldest campus recycling programs in the country. Thousands of individual actions by students, faculty and staff contributed to 1500 tons of recyclables collected last year alone. The last 30 years of recycling at the University of Colorado at Boulder have resulted in a successful, cost-effective program for environmental conservation. In the next 30 years, CU envisions an even stronger commitment to waste reduction and recycling on campus.

From 1976 to 1985, CU Recycling was run entirely by student volunteers promoting and collecting all of the campus recyclables. CU and Eco-Cycle were early partners during these formative years, cooperating on markets for campus recyclables and exchanging academic and political support between programs. In 1991, a student-administrative partnership was created between the University of Colorado Student Union, Facilities Management and the Housing Department. This included the construction of CU's intermediate processing facility, which not only has consistently supplied high quality materials to the recycling industry but has also paid for itself within six years from landfill savings.

### A Nationally Award-Winning Program

CU Recycling has been recognized again and again as a leader in campus recycling. In 1995, CU Recycling was awarded the Outstanding School Recycling Program prize by the National Recycling Coalition. In 1999, the White House Task Force on Recycling awarded CU Recycling the Model Campus Recycling Program Award. This year, CU Recycling was awarded the 2006 School Recycling Program Award by the American Forest and Paper Association for high quality paper recycling.

CU now collaborates with other campus programs around the country through the College and University Recycling Council. Jack DeBell,

Recycling Development Director at CU, has been asked to assist the board of the National Recycling Coalition as a liaison for university recycling programs nationwide. Information on CU's national role is available at [www.colorado.edu/recycling](http://www.colorado.edu/recycling).

### New This School Year

CU recently released its *Blueprint for a Green Campus*. Among the numerous initiatives for sustainability, CU envisions an increased commitment to a waste-free campus. This will require CU to continue reducing the amount of waste generated, while expanding operations and facilities capable of diverting current and new materials and creating equitable and incentive-based funding. Combined, these programs will help the University of Colorado at Boulder become a new model in sustainable materials management. View the entire *Blueprint for a Green Campus* at <http://ecenter.colorado.edu/blueprint06/>

For more information about the program, subscribe to CU Recycling's Email Bulletin. This is an easy way to stay current with campus recycling developments, new projects and upcoming events. To subscribe, send an e-mail message to [listproc@lists.colorado.edu](mailto:listproc@lists.colorado.edu). In the message text, type "Subscribe recycling-infolist your full name."

We Need To CU Recycling! ♻️

## Happy 30th Birthday!

Two other great environmental organizations are also celebrating 30th birthdays this year, the Center for Resource Conservation and CU Recycling.

Please join us in wishing these two organizations a very happy 30th birthday!

Celebrating 30 Years of Recycling Services Since 1976

CHaRM continued from page 1

### Your plastic will save virgin lumber and prevent creosote use.

The durable #2 plastic you bring to the CHaRM will be baled and sent to a company in Texas that grinds it all up to make recycled plastic railroad ties. We're especially excited about working with this company because not only do they keep plastic out of the landfill and make a very durable, long-lasting product out of it, but there's an added environmental benefit. Plastic railroad ties can be used in place of virgin hardwood lumber railroad ties injected with creosote. Hardwood lumber takes a very long time to regrow, and creosote contains several toxic and carcinogenic chemicals, which can leach into the environment through contact with soil or water.

Remember, this new recycling opportunity is available only at the CHaRM, open from Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The CHaRM is located at 5030 "old" Pearl Street. There will be no charge for this plastic. For a map and a list of other materials we accept at the CHaRM, see page D of the center pull-out recycling guide or visit [www.ecocycle.org](http://www.ecocycle.org).

As far as we're aware, ours is the only program in the country to accept this hard-to-recycle material for a domestic market. We're proud of this one-of-a-kind facility and its mission of adding at least one new material each year, and we're proud of our careful recyclers who make it work!

CHaRM is funded by the City of Boulder, Eco-Cycle, YOU and our Partners for Responsible Recycling. ♻️

# Zero Waste Around the World

by Kate Mangione

## Dell will recycle Dells, free—no ifs, ands or buts.

Dell finally got it right. After nearly a decade as the target of negative publicity campaigns from environmental groups and with recycling regulations now in place across Europe, Dell recently announced it will be fully responsible for the free-of-charge recycling of all Dell electronics. Around the world, consumers can schedule the free home pick-up and recycling of their broken or outdated Dell monitor, CPU, or other electronic device. According to Chairman Michael Dell, “We have a responsibility to our customers to recycle the products we make and sell.”

Bingo. This is textbook producer responsibility and a huge leap forward in the role of businesses in a Zero Waste system. To thank Dell for being the industry leader and take advantage of the program, go to [www.dell.com/recycling](http://www.dell.com/recycling).

A big “thanks” also goes out to the GrassRoots Recycling Network (GRRN) for leading the fight to get Dell’s attention on this matter.

## Sweden schedules the end of oil.

Like most of the world, Sweden believes fossil fuels are not the future, but so far they’re the only ones to decide when this future will come. By 2020, a commission appointed by the Swedish government plans to end Sweden’s dependence on fossil fuels. Admittedly, it won’t be easy, but this country of nine million is already ahead of the curve with only 32% of its energy coming from oil. Oil-free transportation will be Sweden’s biggest challenge, so the country is turning to national carmakers Saab and Volvo to ramp up development of alternative fuel vehicles. Already in the works is a massive restructuring of the national tax system to encourage the good and reduce the bad. Taxes are on the rise for environmental harms such as sulfur and carbon dioxide, solid waste and fossil fuels, while taxes have been eased on social security, education and income. Altogether, Sweden’s undertaking a visionary renovation of society to protect its citizens from economic and environmental uncertainties. When the price of a barrel of oil hits triple digits, at least we know who can tell us how to kick the habit. **Read more at [www.peopleandplanet.net/doc.php?id=2662](http://www.peopleandplanet.net/doc.php?id=2662)**



A quick glance across the globe reveals promising new commitments to Zero Waste and model programs for our community to emulate.

## Wal-Mart converted?

It simply doesn’t get bigger than Wal-Mart, so when the mega-retailer unveiled a plan to save the planet, the world stopped to listen. The world’s largest retailer launched a number of initiatives that aim to move the company toward a net zero environmental impact. Short-term goals include a 25% reduction in waste over three years, a preference for suppliers who use less packaging, a 25% increase in fuel efficiency for its trucking fleet, a sustainable fisheries label, and a \$500 million annual investment in technologies to reduce the company’s greenhouse gases by 20% over the next seven years. With Wal-Mart’s enormous influence on the global supply chain and vast customer base, the potential for positive social and environmental change is staggering. While Wal-Mart’s plans are not without their critics who rightfully await results, the company has at least steered the ship in the right direction. It’s our job as consumers to make sure the retailer keeps sailing toward more environmentally-friendly packaging and policies—and the faster the better. Do your part to encourage Wal-Mart to take a stronger stance against PVC plastic by lending your voice to the online campaign on our home page at [www.ecocycle.org](http://www.ecocycle.org).

**Learn more about Wal-Mart’s green policies at [http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/fortune\\_archive/2006/08/07/8382593/index.htm](http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/fortune_archive/2006/08/07/8382593/index.htm)**

## Al Gore spoke, California listened

Carbon emissions are on the chopping block in California where the state recently passed landmark legislation requiring industry to reduce carbon emissions by 25% by 2020. As the first state to mandate reductions, California hopes to become an incubator for resource-efficient technologies and innovations. The legislature will now work on the details of the plan, including an emissions credit trading system and possible fees on emissions to encourage alternative fuels and conservation. By joining a growing number of states in taking climate change into its own hands, given the void of national leadership, California has decidedly shifted this country’s tune from debate to decision. With a population of nearly 40 million, and the sixth largest economy in the world, California’s efforts will have a tremendous impact. It’s now up to industry to sing along or pay the piper. **Read more about the legislation at [www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2006/08/31/MNGMGKSMHH1.DTL](http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2006/08/31/MNGMGKSMHH1.DTL)** ♻️

### Cooking Oil continued from page 1

- Cooking oil is a resource. Biodiesel made from cooking oil reduces our dependence on foreign oil and is much cleaner than petroleum-based diesel—both for your engine and for the environment.

## What will be accepted during the six-week pilot?

To experiment with the viability of collecting this material for biodiesel production, the CHaRM will run the pilot for six weeks only from November 24 through January 6. There will be no charge to residents; businesses will be charged \$1 per gallon of oil to cover the cost of the program. We will accept any kind of oil used in cooking, such as vegetable, canola, sesame, sunflower and olive oils. Oil from food production, such as grease from cooking meat, is also accepted. Please strain out large solids (anything that won’t easily fit down a funnel—that stuff can go into our compostables container while you’re at the CHaRM). Please do not bring us your motor oil or any type of oil that is used for purposes other than cooking. Check the Hard-to-Recycle Guide on our website for a list of locations that accept used motor oil. If there is sufficient demand for

recycling cooking oil, and we find we are able to easily maintain the collection, we will consider adding cooking oil as a regular CHaRM material in the future.

As with other CHaRM materials, cooking oil will be accepted at our CHaRM location ONLY. (See page D of the center pull-out section or go to our website, [www.ecocycle.org](http://www.ecocycle.org), for more information about our location, hours of operation and the other materials we accept at the CHaRM.) We will have a barrel set up for you to transfer oil from your container into ours. Please note we cannot recycle or dispose of your oil container.

So, plan on bringing us your used cooking oil over the holidays! And, to help keep the program running, consider converting your diesel engine to a biodiesel blend, available at local retailers like Bartkus Oil and Boulder Gas. If you have a business that generates cooking oil (like a restaurant), check out Rocky Mountain Sustainable Enterprise’s website at [www.rmse.biz](http://www.rmse.biz). Visit Boulder Biodiesel at [www.boulderbiodiesel.com](http://www.boulderbiodiesel.com) for more information on the benefits of biodiesel and using it in your vehicle or fleet. ♻️

## Give More for Less with Retirement Assets

You’ve worked hard to save for retirement, and contributions to retirement plans can provide an excellent opportunity for financial success as they grow tax-free. Retirement assets can also help you accomplish your charitable giving goals. With the passage of the Pension Protection Act of 2006, you may be eligible to donate retirement assets to non-profits in your lifetime. This legislation helps relieve the tax burden on donors over the age of 70.5 years, making it possible to transfer money from your IRA directly to Eco-Cycle, up to \$100,000 a year, without having to pay taxes on it.

When planning your estate, it may seem natural to designate a family member the beneficiary of any residual retirement assets and to use other assets to make a charitable bequest. However, if left to a family member or loved one, retirement funds may be subject to both income tax and estate tax, which greatly reduce the value of your well-earned asset. (Depending on the tax bracket of your heirs, taxes may amount to 70-75% in some cases.) If left to a non-profit like Eco-Cycle, such taxes are avoided. Eco-Cycle isn’t required to pay income tax on the distribution and the gift will not be subject to estate tax. The entire designated amount benefits Eco-Cycle’s programs. This strategy makes your planned giving even more effective, enables you to leave other assets to your heirs, who will benefit from a reduced estate tax burden, and is flexible because you may name Eco-Cycle as the beneficiary of all or only a portion of your retirement assets.

**Please discuss the options for donating retirement assets with your attorney or financial advisor, or call Anne Mudgett, Fund Development Manager, at 303.444.6634 x123.** ♻️

## Thank you to the following donors who contributed to Eco-Cycle from June 21 - October 25, 2006.

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**Support the Recycling of Hard-to-Recycle Materials and Help Build a Zero Waste Community**

Developing recycling opportunities for hard-to-recycle materials is a critical aspect of Eco-Cycle's effort to build a Zero Waste Community. Big durable #2 plastic is the latest material to be added to the list of those accepted at the Eco-Cycle/City of Boulder Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHARM). By recycling materials such as big durable #2 plastic, electronics and block foam, Eco-Cycle is keeping valuable resources in the production cycle, saving virgin natural resources, and preventing lead and other toxic substances from leaching out of landfills and polluting our groundwater.

Please make a tax-deductible donation to Eco-Cycle today. Your gift will support programs like the recycling of hard-to-recycle materials and bring us closer to Zero Waste.

Donate online at [www.ecocycle.org](http://www.ecocycle.org) or clip the coupon below.

**Yes, I want to help build a Zero Waste community!**

Enclosed is my gift of: ☐ \$1,000 Founders' Society ☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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- ☐ Save paper and resources. Check here if you would like us to e-mail your thank you and if you'd rather receive the Eco-Cycle Times via e-mail.
- ☐ I prefer to remain an anonymous donor. Please do not acknowledge my gift in newsletters or other publications.



**Thank you for your donation.** Eco-Cycle strives to be as responsible about your privacy as we are about the environment. To this end, Eco-Cycle will never trade, rent or sell the names, phone numbers, addresses or e-mails of our supporters.

**Donate online at [www.ecocycle.org](http://www.ecocycle.org)**

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Working to Build Zero Waste Communities

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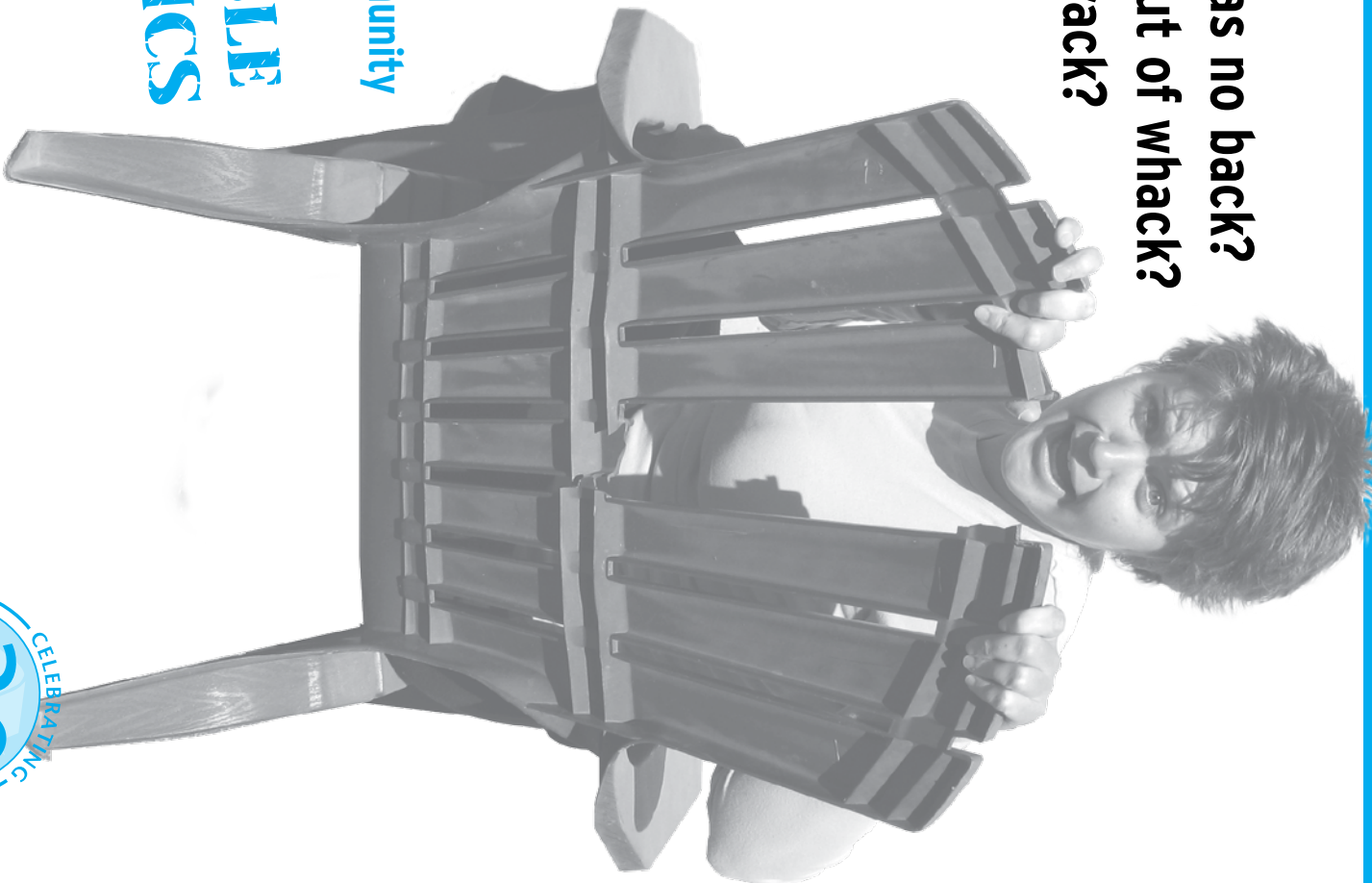
# eco-cycle times

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Working to Build Zero Waste Communities

**What do you do when your  
Plastic lawn chair has no back?  
Laundry basket is out of whack?  
Kiddie slide has a crack?**

**Take them to the CHARM!**



**CHARM unveils its newest  
material to help the community  
get to Zero Waste:**

**BIG DURABLE  
#2 PLASTICS**

**Recycling Guidelines Inside**

