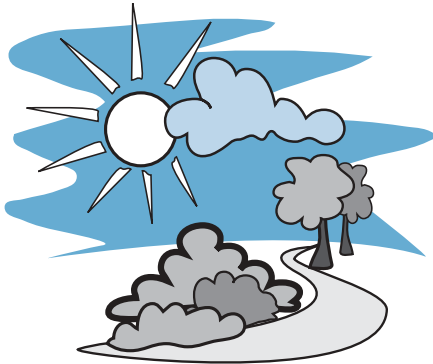


BACKYARD COMPOSTING

Composting, nature's own way of recycling, is one of the most environmentally beneficial activities of modern society. Yard and food wastes make up approximately 30% of the waste stream in the US. Not only does composting successfully divert a significant portion of your family's waste stream from the landfill and water treatment facilities, it is a natural method of recycling organic materials into valuable humus. Backyard composting yields a rich soil amendment which can be used in gardens and landscaping, while saving homeowners money spent on purchasing soil conditioners and fertilizers. Home composting also serves as an invaluable educational tool, teaching youngsters about conservation, the cycle of life, and inter-connectedness of the natural world.



Composting can be practiced in most backyards in a homemade or manufactured composting bin or simply an open pile. Homemade bins can be constructed out of scrap wood, chicken wire, snow fencing or even old garbage cans (with holes punched in the sides and bottom). Bins can also be purchased from Waste Management for \$40.00. Check out these web sites for "how to" instructions: California Integrated Waste Management Board, www.ciwmb.ca.gov or www.Composters.com.

INGREDIENTS

While a multitude of organisms, fungus and bacteria are involved in the overall process, there are four basic ingredients for composting: nitrogen, carbon, water and air. Composting is a lot like cooking, and the easi-

est compost recipe calls for blending roughly equal parts of green or wet material (which is high in nitrogen) and brown or dry material (which is high in carbon). Simply layer or mix these materials in a pile or enclosure; chop or shred large pieces to 12" or shorter. Water and fluff to add air. Then leave it to the microorganisms which will break down the material over time.

HOW TO COMPOST

Though all organic matter will eventually decompose (despite neglect), the trick is to get your pile to decompose as fast as you can fill it. With patience and a little practice, you can have ready-to-use humus for your garden in 6-8 weeks.

Water: One of the most common mistakes in composting is letting the pile get too dry. Your compost pile should be moist as a wrung-out sponge.

Air: The bacteria and fungus that are in your compost pile need oxygen to live and work. If your pile is too dense or becomes too wet, the air supply to the inside is cut off and the beneficial organisms die. Turn and fluff the pile with a pitch fork often, perhaps weekly. You can also turn the pile by just re-piling it into a new pile.

WHAT TO COMPOST

Always remember to throw in a handful of good garden soil to inoculate the new pile with living organisms. A few earthworms and rollie pollies are a nice addition, too. Though

it is not required, many individuals add compost starters and accelerators to help their pile along.

- grass clippings
- leaves
- shrub and tree waste
- sawdust and wood chips
- coffee grounds
- tea bags
- veggie and fruit scraps
- corn husks



WHAT NOT TO COMPOST

- pet excrement
- greasy meat scraps & bones
- styrofoam
- citrus peels
- tea bags
- fireplace ashes
- plastics

HOW TO TELL WHEN IT'S DONE

Your compost is finished when the original material has been transformed into a uniform, dark brown, crumbly product with a pleasant, earthy aroma. There may be a few chunks of woody material left; these can be screened out and put back into a new pile.



KID POWER

On Saturday, April 19th, the City of Capitola and the Capitola Police Department will co-sponsor a 2-hour Parent/Child Workshop on developing safety skills for children at the Jade Street Park

& Recreation Center. Kidpower-Teenpower - Fullpower International will provide the training to children and their parents from 10:00 AM until 12:00 noon. Kidpower, Teenpower, Fullpower

International is a highly successful organization, which provides instruction to people of all ages and abilities to learn how to stay safe, act wisely, and believe in themselves. The Kidpower Parent/Child Workshops provide instruction to children ages 4 to 8 years old and their parents on developing safety skills and techniques to help children deal with confrontations, stranger contacts, bullying and violent crime. The Capitola Police Department also intends to sponsor a police canine demonstration for children and their parents attending the workshop. For workshop information or class reservations please contact Kidpower directly at P.O. Box 1212, Santa Cruz, CA., 95061, or by calling (831) 426-4407.



REWARD FUND FOR THE DOLPHIN SCULPTURE



On the evening of February 27th, the beloved Dolphin sculpture was stolen from its perch in the Esplanade. Much to our sadness and dismay somebody decided to destroy and take the sculpture which was generously lent to the citizens of Capitola by the artist, Bjorg Yonts. At this time there is no information regarding who may have committed such an atrocious act, but in an effort to find who did this, the Chamber of Commerce with the help of the City has set up a reward fund. If you would like to contribute, please make checks out to "Capitola Citizens Reward Fund" and mail to P.O. Box 595, Capitola, CA 95010. You may also drop off checks at City Hall. This fund will be given to the individual who provides the information which leads to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for stealing the sculpture. If you have any information, please call the Capitola Police Department at 475-4935.