

THE RECYCLER

Newsletter of Recycle Rutherford, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Fall 2016

October Speaker: All the 'Whey' to Sustainability

Among the many products made at the General Mills facility in Murfreesboro is popular Greek yogurt, the production of which generates a significant amount of leftover whey. As part of their sustainability goals, the company looked at ways to make use of this waste and for about the past year has been using it to produce 10% of the plant's electrical needs. In the past, the waste was taken away in tanker trucks—using even more resources—and spread on farm fields.

Leslie Marshall, energy engineer with the Murfreesboro facility, will discuss this unique break through and other aspects of General Mills' sustainable practices at **Recycle Rutherford's Fall meeting on Monday, October, 24, 2016, at 7:00 p.m. in the second floor courtroom of the Rutherford County Courthouse.**

Also at this meeting, **winners of the second Postcard Contest will be recognized.**

Come and hear about innovative ways our corporate neighbor helps preserve the environment

Marshall, who is a member of the General Mills corporate-wide team committed to reducing energy usage at its North American facilities, will present the company's sustainability goals and rationale for having them. Her program will include the company's annual energy needs, waste generation, and recycling efforts along with the results of their energy efficiency and sustainability projects over the past two years.

In order to help General Mills meet its global sustainability goals, Marshall uses utility consumption data to track the effectiveness and cost savings of energy efficiency projects and initiatives. Last year alone, improvements in compressed air usage, heat recovery, recycling, electricity conversion from biogas, and other projects resulted in a 12% reduction in electricity and gas usage relative to the pounds of product, thus saving hundreds of thousands at the Murfreesboro site.

The General Mills - Murfreesboro Energy Strategy includes implementing new technology,

making behavioral changes to improve the efficiency of existing equipment, and finding alternative ways to manage the waste stream.

Leslie holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from Cornell University. She is a member of MTSU's Engineering Technology Department Advisory Board, the Rutherford County Workforce Council for Manufacturing, and Murfreesboro's Earth Day Committee.

Householders Can Have Impact on Stormwater Control

Katie Peay, stormwater coordinator for Rutherford County, focused on best management practices for homeowners in her presentation at Recycle Rutherford's annual meeting in April.

She explained that stormwater goes through either a natural water cycle, during which it condenses, evaporates, and filters through soil or rock, or an urban water cycle, during which it runs over impervious surfaces and through contaminated waterways picking up various pollutants, as it makes its way to the watershed. She emphasized the importance of re-establishing natural water cycles. One way citizens can help do that is to increase stormwater infiltration, reduce water pollution, and increase water conservation awareness. Measures which help this include

- Disconnect downspouts that drain directly into the ground.
- Use grass to line ditches rather than concrete.
- Use pervious surfaces or pavers with spaces between for landscaping.

Since the average American household uses 30% of its total water for outdoor applications, such as watering plants and lawns; irrigation; and washing cars, windows, and other items, a rain barrel offers multiple benefits. These include

- Naturally soft water that is free of chlorine, fluoride, and other chemicals
- Reduction of water flowing to storm drains

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Householders Can Have Impact on Stormwater Control

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- Helps reduce erosion
- Helps keep waterways clean
- Provides a backup water source during times of drought
- Saves money by lowering water bills

Rain gardens, low areas filled with native plants that like water, offer another way to enjoy benefits while filtering stormwater and removing pollutants. Such areas should drain within 72 hours.

Not only are native plants best for rain gardens, but they offer significant benefits for all plantings. They are hardier and require fewer fertilizers and pesticides; they attract birds, butterflies, and bees and provide wildlife food and shelter; and they promote biodiversity and help restore regional landscapes.

Katie recommended looking at TN Smart Yards, which has a native plant database, nine principles that guide planning and care of residential yards, and information on butterfly gardens. Go to

<https://ag.tennessee.edu/tnyards/Pages/default.aspx>

Emphasizing the importance of the three Rs, Katie recommended

- Recycle grass clippings by leaving on lawn.
- Create and maintain a compost pile that can include grass clippings,
- Use landscape waste (such as tree trimmings, fallen leaves, pine needles) on site.
- Incorporate salvaged materials into landscaping (e.g., newspaper in gardens to suppress weed growth).

For more information, see Katie's website at <http://rutherfordcountyttn.gov/stormwater/bmp.htm>

Local Residents Can Drop Off Electronics at Haley Road

Rutherford County residents can take most electronics (either with an electric cord or battery operated) to 1140 Haley Road Monday through Thursday and Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at no charge. The exception is television sets and computer monitors. Because of hazardous materials in these devices, the county is charged a fee, which is passed on to users. The cost is \$5.00 per 20-pound increments, payable by cash or check (credit cards are not accepted).

Postcard Contest in Schools Underway for Second Year

Recycle Rutherford is once again conducting a postcard contest in the schools to promote recycling. This year's theme is based on America Recycles Day: Keep America Beautiful.

Students are invited to design original postcards 5.5 by 8.5 inches promoting the theme. Teachers are asked to select a class winner and submit that entry.

There are three categories by grade:

- Middle—Grades 6-8
- Elementary—Grades 3-5
- Primary—Grades K-2

Cash prizes will be awarded in each category:

- winning classroom: \$100
- honorable mention classroom: \$75
- winning student: \$50
- honorable mention student: \$25

In addition, all teachers who submit a classroom entry but do not receive one of the awards listed above will be entered in a drawing for a teacher appreciation award—a \$50 class donation. Four participating classroom will be awarded.

Recycle Rutherford hopes that the contest provides teachers convenient opportunities to incorporate recycling into their classes. The contest replaces the annual collection of telephone books.

Dealing with Fall Leaves

Although our temperatures are still in the 80s, it won't be long until cooler days and even cooler nights persuade the green leaves of summer that it's time to change color. After the lovely colors come the fall—meaning the leaves fall off the trees and into our yards. Here are some "green" suggestions for approaching this fall task:

- Skip the leaf blower and use a rake. Yes, it's a little harder, but raking leaves is better for the environment than blowing them. Blowers create noise pollution and a fair amount of air pollution unless the blower is electric or battery powered.
- Never burn your leaves; compost or mulch them instead. You will have a start on next year's gardens.
- If you live in Murfreesboro, you can put your leaves by the street for pick-up. Rake your leaves in windrows no more than two feet in depth. Do not block storm drain inlets. Don't mix other debris such as limbs or stumps with the leaves. Place them no more than five feet from the curb.

Friends of the Earth Continue Fighting Monsanto

For some years, Friends of the Earth has been a leader in the effort to get the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to ban glyphosate, the extremely toxic herbicide in Monsanto's product Roundup®. The following is taken from a Friends of the Earth email:

The EPA will decide this spring whether to pull the plug on glyphosate—a.k.a. Monsanto's Roundup®. If the EPA renews Monsanto's license, it would put monarch butterflies even more at risk than they already are. These pollinators are declining largely because Roundup® wipes out milkweed, the only food young monarchs eat. And all signs are that the EPA is poised to make the wrong decision.

The EPA's track record on glyphosate is troubling. In May, it published a report claiming that glyphosate is unlikely to cause cancer in humans. The media questioned the agency on the legitimacy of the report's findings and the fact that it relied on industry-funded research from chemical companies.

How did the EPA respond? By pulling the report and claiming it wasn't ready despite being labeled "final." The EPA's abrupt reversal in the face of media scrutiny raises questions about whose interests the agency is focused on serving: the American public or the pesticide industry? The agency recently re-published the report claiming that glyphosate is not likely to cause cancer in humans.

The science is clear. Roundup® is terrible for people and the planet. It's used to douse our food, including common crops like soy and wheat. These chemicals are likely ending up on our plates. Independent studies have found

Monsanto's toxic herbicide in human urine and breast milk. FDA tests confirm that it's been found in oatmeal and baby food. There's evidence that glyphosate has the potential to be even more harmful in combination with other chemicals—bad news given our chemical-intensive food system.

And the news is even worse for pollinators. Monarchs are on the brink of extinction, and we're in real danger of losing them for good if we don't get Roundup® out of our food system.

The chemical company has a lot at stake; in the past 19 years, glyphosate use in U.S. agriculture has increased 20-fold. And Monsanto rakes in \$5 billion every year in profits.

Monsanto is fighting to stop countries in Europe from pulling glyphosate from the market, calling the debate "political" and denying that the chemical poses risks to human health or the environment when used correctly.

We can't let a giant chemical company manipulate our government officials like this. We need to send the message to the EPA to stop caving to Monsanto's demands and put us ahead of its profits.

There's more information on this and other concerns on the Friends of the Earth website at <http://www.foe.org/>

Ecowatch also provides information on Roundup®, which was developed by Monsanto in 1974 after DDT was banned. The use of Roundup surged after genetically engineered seeds were developed to tolerate high doses of Roundup. See <http://www.ecowatch.com/15-health-problems-linked-to-monsantos-roundup-1882002128.html>

Recycle Rutherford Membership Form

I enclose my annual dues to support Recycle Rutherford and receive the newsletter.

\$25.00 supporter \$15.00 student \$100.00 patron

I am contributing \$_____ in addition to my dues.

PLEASE PRINT:

name _____ amount enclosed _____

address _____

city, state, zip _____

telephone: day _____; evening _____

e-mail _____; volunteer interest _____

Please make check payable and mail to Recycle Rutherford, P.O. Box 1804, Murfreesboro, TN 37133-1804

Safely Dispose of Unsafe Waste

Householders can safely discard hazardous wastes on Saturday, November 5, 2016, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., 4765 Florence Road. The collection is sponsored by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), in collaboration with Rutherford County and the city of Murfreesboro.

Accepted items include home maintenance or improvement products such as used strippers and thinners, adhesives, driveway sealant, roofing tar, and wallpaper remover. Home lawn and garden products accepted include pesticides, fertilizers, and wood preservatives. Miscellaneous items accepted include pool chemicals, photo processing chemicals, aerosols, compressed gas, mercury thermostats and thermometers, fluorescent tubes, and compact fluorescent bulbs. Medicines and drugs will be accepted, but they should be emptied into a zip-lock plastic bag before bringing them. Needles and sharps in puncture-proof containers with sealed lids are now accepted as well. Unused medicines may be dropped off year-round at the Rutherford County Sheriff's Department, 940 New Salem Highway, Murfreesboro. The bin is located in the main lobby; Needles and sharps are NOT accepted at the Sheriff's Department.

Items which will not be accepted include infectious wastes, automotive gas tanks, explosives, ammunition, gun powder, and fireworks. Nor are radioactive wastes such as smoke detectors and radium paint accepted. This is an opportunity to clean up around your house as well as protect the environment.

**Reminder: To renew your membership,
please see the form on page 3.
Dues are only \$25 per year.
We don't want to lose you!**

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.



P.O. Box 1804
Murfreesboro, TN 37133-1804

2016-18 Officers and Board

Recycle Rutherford holds elections each April at the annual meeting; in general, officers and part of the board are elected in even years for two-year terms, and approximately half the board is elected in uneven years, providing for staggered terms.

The officers are listed below with the board members, who are elected each April and serve staggered terms. The date indicates when the term of each ends. The board meets monthly on first Mondays at 6:15 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 210 N. Spring Street.

Rachel Cornett, president
Bonnie Black, vice president
Suma Clark, secretary
Rick Racker, treasurer
Glenn Himebaugh, past president

Board Members:

Gib Backlund, 2018 Linda Hardyman, 2018

Dates to Remember

Fall Semi-Annual Meeting—Recycle Rutherford:

Monday, October 24, 2016, 7:00 p.m.
Rutherford County Courthouse Courtroom

Household Hazardous Waste Collection:

Saturday, Nov. 5, 2016, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Murfreesboro Public Works Facility,
4765 Florence Road

**For more information, go to
www.recyclerutherford.org**

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