

ECC NEWSLETTER

MAY 2009

ECC Meeting, May 21, Parsons Complex, Conference Room C at 7:30 pm

May has come in like a lamb and we are scrambling to get our plants in the ground. For some it is not warm enough, especially tomatoes. Katherine Neville, in her talk at the Library, swears that one should follow the waxing and waning of the moon as to when one should plant and sow your seeds. In her experience she has proven, strange as it may sound, that it definitely makes a difference in their productivity and speed for germination. Below is a summary of instructions:

The phases of the moon

Phase 1 – waxing – new moon to 7 ½ days

Phase 2 – 7 ½ to 15 days

Phase 3 – waning 15 to 22 ½ days

Phase 4 – waning 22 ½ to 29 days

Gardening with the phases of the moon

The waxing moon

Considered the new moon- the complete moon cycle takes approximately 29.6 days. When the moon is in front of the sun, facing the earth, it is considered a new moon.

It is best to wait 1-2 days before and after the new moon for planting-- the earth is drier and plants may become woody.

Phase 1 – best time to sow and plant leaf plants also to plant annuals and plants that produce seeds outside the plants. Vegetables in the brassica family-- as cabbage or broccoli.

Phase 2 – Best time to plant leaf plants, which produce seed inside the plant, such as peas, beans or tomatoes; also vines.

The waning moon

The full moon – It takes approximately 15 days for the moon to travel around the sun and become a full moon. At this time water is at its highest and weather conditions are usually damp-- not good to plant 1-2 days before or after full moon.

Phase 3 – As the moon begins to wane, it's the best time to plant biennials, perennials, bulbs, shrubs and trees including root crops. Also time to take cuttings and transplant. Root crops should be harvested during this time for the best storage.

Phase 4 – The time before the new moon is when the water has been drawn deep into the earth. This is the best time for weeding, mowing, pruning, and similar tasks, also time to trim trees -- sap will not be rising so tree will not "bleed" as much.

At our ECC meeting, Paul Nonnenmacher will be speaking about the Garbage Museum, its importance, which is such an excellent educational tool for all ages, and addressing the threat of it being closed because of lack of funding.

Paul Nonnenmacher, has been talking about garbage and recycling since 2003 in his capacity as Director of Public Affairs (CRRA), a quasi-public agency that turns trash into electricity and recycles a wide variety of materials.

Paul is CRRA's primary spokesman, having made numerous appearances on television and radio across the State and he also oversees CRRA's education centers—Trash Museum in Hartford and the Garbage Museum in Stratford—which each year teach more than 50,000 people about recycling and the environment. It's his job to understand the complex processes involved and explain them in language that's understandable to people of all ages.

He was previously an award-winning reporter, editor and columnist for newspapers in Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

Hopefully, there will also be time to discuss the differences between Single Stream and SMART recycling, which are methods of getting rid of our trash and recyclables in a more efficient and money saving manner.

Below is a piece that Kristen Brown wrote for ECC CONNECTS in the Bulletin of the New Haven Register. We are repeating it again because of its importance.

The Less You Throw Away, the Less You Pay

How can you make your community more responsible for reducing waste and preventing global climate change? How can you help residents save money at the same time? "**Pay-As-You-Throw**" (PAYT)/**Save Money and Reduce Trash (SMART)** is a trash collection rate-setting system that promotes economic savings and environmental benefits. Environmentally conscious communities have been using this equitable solution since the early 1900s, though it's an approach few people know about.

According to a new national analysis sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), thousands of communities are successfully using **SMART** programs in the United States, along with communities in more than seventeen countries abroad.

Here's how it works: Under traditional trash collection arrangements where residents pay for trash and sometimes recycling collection through a flat fee bill or the general tax base, residents incur no financial consequences no matter how much or little they throw away. With **SMART**, municipalities charge residents for the number of bags they throw away or the size of the trash containers they use, similar to how we pay for electricity and gas. By attaching a unit price to the quantity residents throw away, **SMART** provides a financial incentive for people to throw out less, which means buying less and reusing, recycling, and composting more. In fact, studies show that cities reduce their waste about 44%, which means avoided disposal savings for municipalities and their residents.

In addition, **SMART** programs offer tangible greenhouse gas reductions. Reducing the amount of waste generated also means fewer greenhouse gases are produced during a product's life cycle. When residents recycle their waste rather than throw it away, their recycled materials are turned into new products, helping to limit the demand for virgin materials and saving the energy that would otherwise be required to harvest, process, and manufacture brand new products. Reducing energy use decreases the burning of fossil fuels, resulting in less greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxides) in the air. Likewise when residents buy less to begin with or reuse or donate things rather than simply throwing them away.

SMART programs are now available in approximately 25% of communities in the United States, covering about 75 million residents. States with the largest share of communities with PAYT available include Minnesota, Washington, Oregon, Wisconsin, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Iowa and California.

Reports and articles about PAYT have documented the following successes: Worcester, Massachusetts decreased its waste management by 1.2 million and increased its recycling rate and decreased the volume of waste about 50% immediately following the introduction of PAYT.

* In Tacoma, Wash., solid waste management costs fell by more than 50 percent in the PAYT program's first year, and the recycling rate tripled.

* Fort Worth, Texas, increased its recycling rate by 14 points and trash disposal cost decreased by about \$8 million.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, who boasts 130 SMART programs in a state where PAYT/SMART is not mandated, SMART should be an obvious choice for any community that wants to save money, reduce waste and decrease its climate change impact.

Janice Canterbury from the EPA office of Resource Conservation and Recovery says, "While other initiatives may have positive benefits, SMART is the single best way to utilize a continual economic incentive to encourage citizens to prevent waste and reduce greenhouse gases, as well as, generating an equitable revenue stream." For more information about PAYT, please visit www.epa.gov/payt. See Kristen Brown's: www.gogreenmilford.com

The Senate will be voting on **HB 6572** about **Bisphenol-A (BPA)**, the chemical that is in baby bottles and so many other products. It is known as a hormonal disruptor and especially harmful in the newborn and younger years. Here is a synopsis from the latest document that was forwarded from Nancy Alderman, President of Environment and Human Health, Inc.

A new study finds that exposure to Bisphenol-A in the womb causes infant male monkeys to behave more like infant females, highlighting a new and potentially important consequence of exposure to low doses of BPA. The species of monkey used in this study was chosen due to its similarity to humans. People are exposed to BPA-A chemical found in hard plastics-through food, water and some medical instruments.

Context: Bisphenol A (BPA) is a chemical used in many plastics. Polycarbonate plastic, which is clear and often shatterproof, is used in many consumer products including baby bottles, water bottles and plastic toys. Most food cans on US supermarket shelves today are lined with an epoxy resin made from BPA. Humans are exposed to BPA through plastic's contact with food, or by contact with BPA containing products or devices such as dental sealants and medical equipment. Many of our body's processes are controlled by hormones. Some chemicals can mimic hormones and disrupt normal body functioning. Processes involving reproduction and development appear to be especially vulnerable. Concerns about BPA's ability to act like estrogen hormones have received a great deal of scientific and media attention. Many scientific studies from laboratories across the world have uncovered a host of negative health effects associated with BPA exposure.

Of recent concern, are studies reporting changes in behavior and brain function in laboratory animals exposed to BPA. Male rats exposed to BPA have shown female-like behaviors in some studies. Female rats have been shown to be more cautious and less explorative of their environment than unexposed females ([Adriani et al. 2003](#)).

Call Senator Gayle Slossberg to say you support **HB 6572**.
1-800-842-1420. Your support is needed to pass this bill.

Are you bothered by smoke coming at you from a fire pit? Or do you frequently use one yourself without noticing how it may affect your neighbor? The Board of Aldermen passed an Ordinance on Open Burning for the City of Milford. Basically it says: Open burning shall mean any burning outside the confines of a building. Open Burning Official shall be a qualified representative of the Milford Fire Department.

An amendment was added to the Ordinance that gives citizens recourse for complaint. If the smoke from outside burning fire pits or stovepipe fireplaces continually affects them, they can call the Fire Department to have it put out if there is non-compliance.

We would like to note that recently an extreme case of "wood smoke" came to court:

"The CT Department of Public Health sent out a letter to all CT local Health Departments stating that the local health department of Trumbull/Monroe had brought a wood smoke case against an offender and the court upheld the local health department's decision. This means that there is now precedent in CT for wood smoke to be held up in CT as a public health nuisance and that other local health departments may now follow suit."

The ECC suggests that if you have a fire pit or stove pipe fireplace, to use a fire log, as they do not emit harmful smoke or particulates. Wood smoke has many health hazards.

OUR EARTH DAY WILL BE ON MAY 23 AT EISENHOWER PARK.

The Boy and Girl Scouts will be doing their clean-ups from 8 are to noon and serving food at that time. The ECC will have some exhibitors giving gardening and conservation advice for the home. **Exhibitors** will be there from **12:00-3:00**.

ECC: recycling, Four Foot gardening tips, composting, etc.
Master Gardeners: Kathy Kobishyn and Terry Pitt will be available to give gardening advice.

Dale Abby to give water-filtering advice

Mr. McCarthy, from Griffin Insulation, insulation advice.

Hopefully, we will have Jeff Carter, contractor and architect, Arthur Ratner to give advice on how to make your house more green.

It's time to register for **Freedom Lawn Contest**, register:

<http://milfordecc.com/freedom-lawn/2008/form.html>

Lets not be complacent about global warming, the report says that CO2 has been growing at 3.5 % per year since 2000 Up sharply from the 0.9 % per year in the 1990s.

Want to treat yourself? Visit Hill-Stead Museum, with its sunken gardens, art, woodland trails, etc in Farmington, CT
www.hillstead.org or call 860-677-4748.

Ann Berman, Chair of ECC, www.milfordecc.com