

HARVARD

Campus Services

ENERGY & FACILITIES

Recycling Update

Summer 2016

Keep Harvard's Compost Clean...so we can keep on composting!

When you toss your apple cores, napkins and bread crusts into the compost bucket, keep in mind that these organic wastes are going to a farm or garden. The soil microbes at the compost farm cannot break down styrofoam coffee cups, petro-plastic film produce bags or plastic PLU stickers on the apple. So please discard these non-compostables as trash. Also, please recycle all cans and bottles in the blue recycling bin, not the green compost bin. The most common contaminants of compost at several locations on campus are bottles and cans. Please use the blue barrels for these items. Unlike recycling, compost has no mechanical pre-sort. It all goes straight into the soil.

Harvard's kitchens recover over 500 tons of food scraps for composting every year. These peelings, rinds, seeds, stems and bones are most welcome at the farm and our food service workers have an excellent track record. Keep it coming! "Front-of-the-house" retail food outlets and special events recover another 200 tons of organics, although this is mostly compostable serviceware and napkins by weight. This stream is not so clean. For front-of-the-house composting to continue, we need to keep compost free of any plastic, metal or glass contaminants. If the farmer sees over 5% of these materials coming off the truck, our processor will reject Harvard's organics and will have to landfill or incinerate such loads. Some local restaurants have had to suspend their front-of-the-house compost programs recently when their contamination levels reached 20%. See this article from the Boston Globe earlier this month: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/business/2016/07/01/compost/FEQWTVVOXY1VjcxkdMAMqgO/story.html>

Let's not allow that to happen at Harvard. Keep our compost clean! See the chart on Page 2 for what to compost and what not to compost.



RECYCLING ON THE ROAD: When you travel this summer, patronize public area recycling bins. Here is Harvard Recycling Manager Rob Gogan with the recycling barrels at Governor's Island in New York City. Food scraps are composted right on the island by Earth Matter. See their fun compost information page here:

<https://earthmatter.org/compost-learning-center/>

ARE YOU COMPOSTING THE RIGHT WAY?

Helps composting:

Food residues in biodegradable bags



Recyclables in the blue box or barrel



Clear signage:



Hurts composting:

Using petro-plastic film bags that don't break down in compost



↑
Trash in the compost

Recyclables in the compost:



The most common contaminants in compost are water bottles, custodial and food service gloves and custodial cleaning bottles. If our farmer keeps receiving bags of “compost” like the ones pictured, generated at Harvard on 7-20-16 and 7-21-16, he might ban our compost from his farm. Please contact us if you have any questions or confusion about how to compost. Please also make sure your building’s cleaning and catering staff know how to compost correctly. Here is a link to the Office for Sustainability’s excellent compost labels and posters, which you can print out and post on your receptacles: <https://green.harvard.edu/topics/waste/signage>

Lug your Harvard Mug!

What's better than recycling or composting? Reusing! In some of our waste audits, we find that foam, paper or compostable hot and cold cups comprise 5% of the trash. Since many of these cups contain liquid residue and ice, this adds to the weight of the trash that staff needs to tote out of the building. Promoting reusable mugs, bottles and cups cuts waste and conserves beverages for consumption later. Many branches of the University community have custom printed their own mugs. One of the many impressive mug programs is the one at Harvard Law School. Former Dean, now Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan instituted free morning coffee and free mugs for the community. However, there was a catch: no cups provided! If you wanted free coffee, you had to bring your own mug.



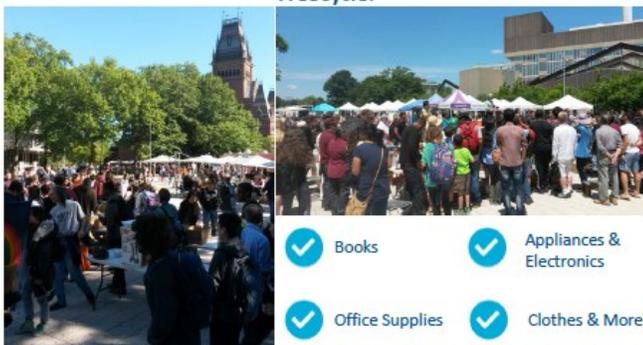
“The free coffee for these bringing a reusable mug in the morning was a dual benefit as it saved costs on providing disposable cups etc. but also was a sustainability win as it helped reducing our waste and promoting sustainable choices. RA also offers coffee/tea at a reduced price in the cafeteria if you BYOM (bring your own mug) helping us promote this to students,” says Elizabeth Caton, Sustainability Manager for Harvard Law School. Senior Director of Student Affairs & Administration Jeff McNaught reminds us that “Students love a discount, and that’s University-wide!” Needless to say, faculty and staff also like saving money...and the environment! Mugs in photo are from FAS Green Program and Freshman Dean’s Office—note customization encouraged at the annual first Brain

Break in September with initial stickers and paint; Harvard Business School; and the Division of Continuing Education.

FAS OFFICE FREECYCLE

TUESDAY AUGUST 16TH
12-2PM
SCIENCE CENTER PLAZA

Join the FAS Green Program at the Farmers' Market for our next office FreeCycle!



Need something for your office or cleaning it out? Come check out all the reusable items from across the University!
Donations welcome 9am to 2pm

Keep Important Papers Away from Recycling Bins

Vital papers and books you want to keep do not belong in, on or near recycling barrels. It is our drivers' job to remove recyclables and we cannot judge what papers you may wish to keep. Months and sometimes years of research have been lost, most recently due to a faculty member staging papers at a loading dock so he could pick them up in his car over the weekend. Unfortunately he set the papers on and next to a recycling barrel and did not come to pick up the boxes until Monday morning, by which time our drivers had picked them up and sent them to the mill to be re-pulped.

Reduce food waste--Save the Strawberries!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WREXBUZBrS8&ebc=ANyPxKo2qPndgpie0ESGw-DaAmGPsC2zi6fSiIsCINAE1bGDDCDFklzQ0fx4ouzZvUWzKYEYOBPmLK-wqZJK0LaWoSHHvYYEGRg>

Old Yenching tiles <https://www.cloverfoodlab.com/blog/2016/02/10/hsq2-another-surprise/>

SEE HOW NYC GETS ALL ITS RECYCLING SEPARATED: See this excellent video from Science Friday narrated by the plant manager of SIMS Recycling in NYC:

<http://www.sciencefriday.com/videos/the-big-sort-an-insiders-tour-of-a-recycling-plant/>

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/06/dining/compost-pail-leslie-vosshall.html?hpw&rref=food&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=well-region®ion=bottom-well&WT.nav=bottom-well&_r=0

TREASURES IN CITY TRASH--see this amazing museum collected and curated by NYC sanitation workers:
"<http://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/fascinating-photos-from-the-secret-trash-collection-in-a-new-york-sanitation-garage>"<http://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/fascinating-photos-from-the-secret-trash-collection-in-a-new-york-sanitation-garage>

Thanks to Harvard Recycling volunteer Nancy Bjornson for passing along these two links! "True Cost" tallies the human and environmental toll of cheap clothing made in developing countries:

<http://truecostmovie.com/>

DO YOU COLLECT TOO MUCH STUFF? Check out this resource on how to be a collector without over-stuffing your living space:

<http://collectorcare.blogspot.com/2014/04/collector-care-interviews-lee-shuer.html>

“The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.” --Mahatma

Recycling House Renewal

Two years ago, Dunster House closed for 15 months for major renovations. This year it is 80-year-old Winthrop House's turn. Students, staff and faculty residing there are moving to 1201 Massachusetts Avenue, the former Inn at Harvard. While the College saved Winthrop's antiques, art works and other artifacts, all the dorm furniture, the House library, the Fitness Center and some of the dining room tables and chairs came to Harvard Recycling's surplus warehouse in Allston for distribution. The House Renewal office decided they wanted to bring new furniture into the renovated House rather than paying to store and return the used furniture. In all, 72 truckloads arrived in addition to the usual 10 truckloads of student donations to Harvard Habitat for Humanity. Over May and June, we received 350 sets of dorm furniture except for bedframes: desk, mattress, dresser, bookcase, chair.



Special thanks to Joe Jones, Ryan Murphy and Cynthia Brunck who loaned us the use of the 3,000 square feet of the 92 Seattle Street Warehouse. We couldn't have done it without you! Thanks also to the entire House



Renewal Team, Britta Wierich of Winthrop House, Jane Menton of AtoB Relocation, and Bob Greenleaf of ABC Moving. We have found new homes for nearly all the goods with several Harvard departments, Harvard staff, charitable organizations including the Massachusetts State Police, Athol Barracks; Compass Classical Academy in NH; Sisters of Divine Mercy of Haiti; Rift Valley Provincial Hospital of Kenya; and many needy individuals.

Thanks for reducing, reusing and recycling!

“The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.” -- Mahatma Gandhi

CAMPUS NATURE WATCH

Squadron of CHIMNEY SWIFTS banks and dives over Eliot House, chasing one another in courtship and territorial defense. Their high-pitched chatter is clearly audible above the thrum of busses, cars and trucks along JFK Street.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE serenades walkers and rowers over Weld Boathouse.

WHITE-TAILED DEER rests in the dappled shade by 135 Western Avenue in Allston... Deer stays put as Recycling and Landscape vehicles come and go... Later, it gets up and easily leaps over the 6' chain link fence around the demolished Charlesview Apartments.

FLEDGLING ROBIN perches confidently on the grip of a bicycle handlebar near 625 Mass Ave late in June. Photo by An Sololovska



GREAT BLUE HERON gliding downstream above the Charles, switches modes and flaps hard to climb above construction equipment on Larz Anderson Bridge.

APHIDS swarm every visible leaf of HORSE CHESTNUT tree in front of Lowell Lecture Hall, dampening the sidewalk below with a steady drizzle of frass. A few days later, the aphids are gone, replaced by a LADYBUG larva on each leaf.

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER is among several riding the wave through Harvard Yard this spring.

BLACK SQUIRREL patrols Business School campus near the Larz Anderson Bridge.

Loeb House garden sustains four WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS (one a dark morph), an extremely cooperative OVENBIRD flits under the big copper-leafed tree by the chain-mail low fence... suddenly a BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER comes through to fly up to the hanging yellowish fringes of the maple tree to feed there... finally, a shy VEERY makes a quick visit to the garden.

RED-TAILED HAWK plucks sparrow out of the air and retires to nearby pine tree near Chemistry and Chemical Biology to dine at leisure. Photo by Anthony Michetti



A Red-tailed Hawk carrying a medium branch flew from Smith Campus Center into the Yard. Construction of the Smith Campus Center delayed removal of the hawk nest on the roof until the fledglings had all left the nest.

HERMIT THRUSH graces the floral garden in front of Loeb House with a rabbit close by.

Thanks to Campus Nature Watchers Aryt Aresti, Quentin Gilly, Chris Johnson, Sonia Ketchian, Erika McCafrey, Anthony Michetti, Rich Pollack, and An Sokolovska!