

Healthy Indoor Environments

Where We Live, Learn and Play

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Fall into Good Recycling Habits

Written by Leigh Anne Aaron, FACS Agent, UGA Extension, Morgan/Oconee Counties and Pamela R. Turner, Professor and Extension Housing & Indoor Environment Specialist



Georgia Healthy Housing
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You may have done lots of cleaning and sorting in the past “work from home” time and made many trips to the recycling drop off location. It probably felt good; however, you may be guilty of “wish-cycling” at one time or another. That is when you put something in the recycling bin hoping that it’s acceptable, but knowing that it may not be recyclable. You assume if isn’t recyclable, someone down the road will sort it out.

Just because an object is made from plastic, metal, or glass DOES NOT mean it belongs in the bin. Some objects could be hazardous to sanitation workers, or damage equipment used in processing recyclables. Other types of contamination affect the value and quality of the recyclables, sometimes making the material un-recyclable! When in doubt, find out or throw it out. Contact your local recycling program to learn what items are accepted by your recycler. The chart below shows the common items that should be recycled and the ones that shouldn’t be.

It’s good to recycle, but it’s even better to buy less. You don’t have to become a minimalist, just starting by reducing your consumption. A good way to begin is by shopping your home first. Sometimes we buy things that we already own and we either forgot or can’t find the item. Below are some additional strategies you can implement to reduce the amount of waste you and your family produce. Be a part of the solution!

- Buy concentrated cleaning products or learn to make your own cleaning products using the UGA Extension [green cleaning recipes](#).
- Select reusable items like rechargeable batteries, cloth napkins, shopping bags, and reusable drink containers.
- Avoid excessive product packaging by buying in bulk rather than purchasing single-use packaging.
- Switch to reusable microfiber cloths or rags and stop using paper towels.
- Go paperless. Pay bills online and switch to online newspaper and magazine subscriptions.
- Stop junk mail. Contact [Direct Marketing Association](#).
- Find, or start, a local tool library where you can rent or borrow household tools and other equipment that you do not use on a regular basis.
- Shop at second-hand and consignment stores.

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Safely Disposing of Medications

Written by Jackie E. Ogden, CFCS – FACS Agent, Chatham County

Any time you are prescribed a drug, it is important to learn all you can about that medication and possible side effects. Read all the information about the drug provided by the pharmacy. The manufacturer’s information is included with the medication, along with the expiration date. Always verify the dates on medications prior to consuming, and follow directions for proper storage and use.

It’s also important to learn how to dispose of any unused medication. You can get this information by asking your doctor questions as he/she prescribes the medication or follow-up with your pharmacist when you purchase the medication. This service provided by the pharmacist is required by law, so don’t hesitate to ask questions.



(Image Source: Pixabay)

Medications can contribute to soil and water contamination, so it is important that you do not flush medications down the toilet or wash them down the drain. Safe disposal information can be found on the prescription label and also on the Food and Drug Administration’s FDA website (www.fda.gov). Local drug stores and pharmacies may provide a disposal program for prescription drugs through a drug take-back program. Many communities host a prescription drug take back program several times during the year. Contact your local government, drug stores, and health department to see if there is a place to dispose of medications. If your community does not have a drug take back day you may want to help organize a special event. Through collaboration with other volunteers or community groups working collectively can make greater impact to safely dispose of medications for a safer community.

Fall into Good Recycling Habits *(continued from p. 1)*

- Select gifts from your home. Pass along those items you no longer use, that are still in good condition. Give family members heirlooms as gifts for special occasions.
- Join a local community swap group or one of the Buy Nothing groups.

For more information on living greener visit ugagreenway.uga.edu.

Recycle	Don't Recycle
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Containers marked with #1-7 • Clean food containers • Health, beauty, and cleaning containers (cleaned; discard pumps) • Printer paper, envelopes, folders • Magazines, paperbacks, newspaper • Brown paper bags, wrapping paper • Paper egg cartons • Glass food containers (clean) • Tin and aluminum cans and lids • Paperboard rolls • Broken down cardboard boxes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic bags • Hardcover books • Styrofoam • Broken glass • Scrap metal • Candy wrappers • Disposable utensils • Aerosol containers • Batteries • Lightbulbs • Food • Clothing

Hurricane Prep for Homes

Written by Becca Morson, former FACS Agent, UGA Extension, Crisp County

It's hurricane season. This is a great time to make sure you are prepared. The first step is to prepare an emergency kit to help you survive for a minimum of three days. Your kit should include:

- Water (1 gallon per person per day)
- Non-perishable nutritious foods and a manual can opener
- Safety equipment (flashlight and batteries)
- Medical (first aid kit, medications, medical devices)
- Copies of financial and personal documents
- Cash
- Special needs (baby supplies, pet needs)
- Games, paper and pencil
- Clothing and bedding (rain gear, towels and blankets)



(Image Source: Pixabay)

Be sure you are maintaining your kit by replacing expired items as needed and update annually. Store the kit in a cool and dry location. Make sure all household members know the location and have access to the emergency kit. In addition to the emergency kit, make sure you have evacuation and communication plans in place. Also, take CPR and first aid trainings. For more information on getting ready for emergencies, check out the [Home Emergency Management Guide](#).

Healthy Home Hacks

~ Pamela Turner, UGA Extension Housing and Indoor Environment Specialist
~ Diane Bales, UGA Extension Human Development Specialist

Remove wax from furniture by placing a plastic bag filled with ice cubes on the wax. Let sit for a few minutes. The hardened wax should come off easily.

Clean coffee filters leave windows and mirrors streak-free.

Remove cloudy stains from wood by rubbing on mayonnaise. Leave it on overnight then wipe it off and buff the area.

Remove bathtub rings by scrubbing with a ½ grapefruit sprinkled with salt.



Co-editors:

Dr. Pamela R. Turner, Housing and Indoor Environment Extension Specialist
Dr. Diane W. Bales, Human Development Extension Specialist

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