



# CITY OF UNION OHIO

## Spring 2012

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## City Council

Meetings are at 7:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month at City Hall, 118 North Main Street. When City Council calls for a second meeting of the month, it is typically held on the fourth Monday. Meeting dates are posted in the City's calendar at [www.ci.union.oh.us](http://www.ci.union.oh.us)

**Mayor Michael O'Callaghan**  
836-0177

**Vice Mayor John Bruns**  
836-9248

**Councilwoman Colette Adams**  
771-3077

**Councilman David Blackwell**  
832-8332

**Councilwoman Jean Kyle**  
832-2811

**Councilwoman Helen Oberer**  
836-3269

**Councilwoman Robin Perkins**  
832-3902

## Easter Bunny and Egg Hunt arrive again in the City of Union!

The Easter Bunny arrives in the City of Union on Saturday, April 7, for the annual Easter Egg Hunt! The City of Union's Park Board sponsors the annual Egg Hunt, starting at 10:30 a.m. when the Easter Bunny arrives by Union Fire & Rescue truck.

The Egg Hunt will be held at Union Community Park, 3280 Phillipsburg-Union Road. Children from ages 1 to 8 years old are invited participate.

There will be about 4,000 plastic, candy-filled eggs to find --

plus punch and cookies for everyone. Bring your camera to take photos of your little ones and the Easter Bunny.

As part of the event, the City of Union will collect food donations for the F.I.S.H. organization. Please bring a non-perishable food item for a donation to help others in need in the Northmont Community.



## Citywide garage sale is June 7-9

No permit is required to participate in the annual citywide garage sale this June 7-9. Please call the City at 836-8624 by May 29 to let us know if you will be participating, and we'll include your address in our garage sale ad in the newspaper. The garage sale is a great way to do some spring cleaning!

## Spirit of Union Award

We're again looking for



that special property! The City of Union's Park Board is gearing up for this season's Spirit of Union program.

The Park Board established the Spirit of Union Award in 1997 to encourage exterior enhancements of residential and business properties, recognizing those who make exceptional landscaping improvements. Call the City at 836-8624 to make a nomination!

## Public Safety news - Q&A

**Does Union have a curfew?** Yes. The City of Union's Police Department strictly enforces the curfew laws. Anyone under the age of 17 needs to be within their own property/yard

between the hours specified unless accompanied by a parent, guardian or other adult person having the

care and custody of the minor. Curfew Hours: 11 p.m. each day to 6 a.m. of the following day.

**What are my responsibilities as a pet owner in Union?** Dogs and cats must be secured on the property of the owner, either by way of leash, fence, or contained inside the home.

Dogs and cats are not allowed to run loose.

While on walks, dogs should be tethered on a leash no longer than 6 feet. Also, owners should take measures to prevent a dog's prolonged

howling or barking. Vicious animals, including vicious dogs, are prohibited in the City of Union. Vicious animals are those that bite or have a propensity to cause harm to humans or animals. Residents should limit the number of dogs and cats to no more than two of each per household. Owners should take care to clean up after pets. When it rains, bacteria from pet waste can run into our streets and storm drains, polluting our rivers and streams. By City Ordinance, pet owners must immediately pick up after their pets on walks and also routinely take care to keep their property clean of pet waste. Please call the City at 836-8624 if you have questions or need to complain about a nuisance.

**Open burning -- is it**

**allowed in Union?** Open burning is regulated by the Regional Air Pollution Control Agency. Citizens may have appropriate-sized fires for cooking, warmth and recreation (camp fires/ fire pits). The fires **MUST** be attended at all times and **MUST** have a fire extinguisher or hose at hand. Only clean, dry wood can be burned (no plastic, tar, garbage, dead animals, building materials, rubber, wire, tires, etc.). No burning during air pollution alerts and on windy days. Any damage to property due to burning is the responsibility of the person doing the burning, including any soiled laundry, and fires that spread and damage landscaping, structures, or any other property. Most homeowner insurance policies **DO NOT**



cover these claims. Please contact the City of Union’s Fire Chief when planning on having a recreational fire.

### Ice and salt issues in spring

Midwest weather means snow and ice sometimes mingle with spring. We do our best to shovel and remove the snow from walks and drives, but the little we leave still may cause slips and falls. So we toss some salt on the surfaces to make the last ice and snow disappear.

Occasionally we put too much salt on the walks and drives “just to be safe.”

Unfortunately, none of that salt really disappears; it just mixes into the snow and ice, lowering its melting temperature, and causing the ice and snow to melt and flow away. The salt goes with the water that results from the melting of the snow and ice. The salty water travels downhill into the lawn or the storm drains and from there into the creeks and streams, where it is not particularly good for the aquatic life. A little salt in the waterways doesn’t eliminate the fish, but too

much can cause them serious problems.

We should use no more salt than is absolutely necessary.

In the City of Union, we do several things to minimize the use of road salt. First, we mix some sand with the road salt because sand can help cars to stop at intersections with less salt present. We also spray liquid calcium chloride on the salt and sand because it helps the mixture to stick to the roads (where it is doing its job) instead of the shoulders of the road (where it is only wasted at best, and doing damage to the grass or streams at worst).

But here’s our latest technology to reduce salt: We are now tracking salt/sand use quantities on all of our roads automatically with a system that records the amount of salt/sand and liquid calcium chloride being spread on our streets.

We recommend that everyone use as much salt as they need to make for safe passages, but don’t use more than you must because it has negative effects on the environment.

### Congratulations, holiday winners!

Congratulations to the property owners selected for outstanding holiday decorations and lighting during the 2011 season. The City of Union Park Board chose 18 homes:

- |                     |                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 204 Applegate Road  | 148 Lightner Lane        |
| 115 Barnside Drive  | 904 West Martindale Road |
| 102 Bowman Court    | 204 Riesling Drive       |
| 319 Carol Lane      | 110 Settler’s Trail      |
| 104 Ewing Court     | 107 Shaw Road            |
| 111 Ewing Court     | 108 Union Ridge Drive    |
| 19 Greencliff Drive | 100 Waldwick Farm        |
| 104 Irongate Drive  | 128 Westrock Farm        |
| 109 Krug Drive      | 154 Westrock Farm        |

The City of Union thanks these residents for their hard work and creativity in decorating their homes. Thank you to ALL of the citizens who spent time and effort to prepare their homes for the season.

Slowing down long before intersections is the safest way for vehicles to be ready for stopping in time. Please don’t forget to slow down. And be very careful when you are out walking in the snow and ice. Let’s all try to make it to spring -- and through spring -- without any slipping mishaps.

### CBDG funds more improvements

A second phase of curb ramp replacements starts this year where walkway accessibility will be improved in the Concord Farms North neighborhood.

The City of Union received another \$61,000 CBDG grant to fund the project. The city’s local share cost is \$6,800 and will be funded with income tax revenue.

Walkways will also be improved, continuing on a project begun in 2011. A second phase will replace an additional 3,900 lineal feet of walking paths in Concord Farms North. The estimated cost of these 2012 improvements is \$50,000.

Also this year, a first phase of replacing walkways in the Concord Farms West Subdivision is

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**Batter up!** The Northmont Amateur Baseball League (NABL) swings into season on April 28 at Union Community Park on Phillipsburg-Union Road. Please contact Jim Tracy at 836-1350 for more information or visit the NABL website at [www.nablnfo.com](http://www.nablnfo.com).



planned. Walks on the north side of Martindale Road will be replaced first. It's expected that replacement of walks on the south side of Martindale Road will occur in 2013.

**Stormwater improvements**

The City of Union is slated to receive an Ohio Public Works Grant to help improve stormwater flow in the Concord Farms West Subdivision. The total project cost is estimated at \$255,000. A \$179,000 grant and \$50,000 zero-interest loan will be used to install concrete within the existing storm channels

in order to prevent erosion and improve ease of maintenance. Stormwater collection fees will be used to pay the City's portion of the project.

**Pre-sale inspections**

Union City Council passed an ordinance in 2006 requiring a pre-sale inspection and certificate of occupancy before a property is sold. The legislation affects all properties in Union, including residential and business properties. Before

selling or transferring a property, an owner will need to request a pre-sale inspection conducted by a City code official. The inspector will note any exterior repairs or other exterior work necessary to eliminate any unsafe or hazardous conditions in order to comply with the City's Fire, Zoning, and Property Maintenance codes and other City ordinances. Inspection will include the condition and placement of storage sheds, fences, etc. The

inspection and list of needed repairs will be part of the process of issuing the required certificate of occupancy. The inspection will cost sellers a total of \$50 for both the initial inspection and re-inspection after violations have been repaired. The seller is responsible for making repairs to correct any defective aspects of the property unless the new owner is willing to formally assume such responsibility by signing a Transfer of Responsibility Agreement. A copy of this agreement would then be kept at City Hall. Buyers should still have their own interior and exterior inspections conducted. Applications are available at City Hall and at [http://www.ci.union.oh.us/images/uploads/Presale\\_Inspection\\_Checklist.pdf](http://www.ci.union.oh.us/images/uploads/Presale_Inspection_Checklist.pdf). Call 836-8624 for more information.

**Building Dept. handles permits**

The City of Union Building Department can now issue permits for residential properties for all electrical, gas, and heating/air-conditioning (HVAC) work. Permits for commer-

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## City of Union

### Guide to

## Property Maintenance & Required Permits



This enclosure to the Spring 2012 City of Union newsletter generally outlines the requirements of the Property Maintenance Code of the City of Union. Please use this checklist to evaluate your property. We appreciate your compliance with these important community regulations. If you have questions, please call us at 836-8624. We're happy to discuss specifics with you.

### Why a Code?

The Property Maintenance Code sets minimum standards so a property owner clearly knows what maintenance is expected. Plus, it provides assurance to all residents that their neighbors will do the same. In general, the exteriors of all properties in the City of Union should be structurally sound, and free of nuisances, unsanitary conditions, and hazards, to ensure the safety of occupants, pedestrians, and others, and to help protect property values. It is the property owner's responsibility to comply with property maintenance measures. To further protect property values in our neighborhoods, the City of Union also passed legislation requiring the exterior inspection of properties before they are sold.

### Pre-Sale Inspections

An exterior inspection is required of all properties before they can be sold. The current property owner should stop by City Hall to complete an application and pay an inspection fee of \$50. A City of Union building inspector then will inspect the exterior of the property, including the exterior of the building and any other structures on the property, including driveways, storage sheds, etc. Any violations to the City's Property Maintenance Code will need to be resolved before the property is sold, or arrangements will need to be made to transfer the required repairs to the new property owner. Adding a pre-sale inspection is an expansion of the existing zoning code and is designed to prevent deterioration of properties. The pre-sale inspection does not replace other inspections such as those for termites, plumbing, interior, etc.

### Who's Affected?

All owners of properties or structures

within the City of Union must comply with the Property Maintenance Code.

### Who Enforces the Code?

The City Building & Zoning Department has the responsibility to enforce the code.

### How Will It be Enforced?

It will be enforced initially by a formal notice of violation when inspectors observe significant deficiencies on a property. Later, specific legal steps may be implemented to gain compliance and protect the rights of all residents.

### Why Comply?

Property maintenance benefits property owners and neighborhoods by protecting property values. Compliance also avoids possible fines that may be imposed if property owners fail to correct property deficiencies.

## PMC CHECKLIST:

**\_\_\_Refuse.** Properties should be free of broken glass, stumps, garbage, and other debris.

**\_\_\_Treatment of Trash Receptacles.** Trash containers must be removed from the curb within 12 hours of trash collection. The containers should be stored inside the home's garage or at the rear of the home.

**\_\_\_Natural Growth and Weeds.** Dead trees and limbs or other natural growth that is rotting should be removed. Vines, grasses, rank vegetation, and noxious weeds, any of which that are 6 inches or more in height, should be cut down.

**\_\_\_Landscaping.** Properties should be maintained, with lawns, hedges, and bushes kept from becoming overgrown or decayed. Grass may not exceed a height of 6 inches. All trees and bushes along sidewalks and streets should be trimmed back to provide a clear height of 10 feet above the surface of the sidewalk and 12 feet above the surface of the street. Overhanging branches should be trimmed back to the property line. If a property backs up to a City-owned greenspace, that area may not be used for gardening, planting of bushes, flowers, trees, etc. If there are any questions concerning this space, then please contact the City's zoning inspector.

**\_\_\_Yard Waste.** Yard waste should be disposed of properly. Or, if yard waste is composted, it must be maintained properly, and kept in the rear yard, so as to not

create a nuisance for adjacent properties. Dumping of grass and weed clippings, tree limbs, or other debris on private property or City parks/greenspaces is prohibited.

**\_\_\_Foundation Walls and Basements.** They should be structurally sound, free from defects and damage, and capable of bearing loads safely. Basements should be sound and maintained to prevent the entrance of rodents, wood-boring insects, rain, or water runoff.

**\_\_\_Chimney and Flue-Vent Attachments.** These features must be maintained to be structurally sound, free from defects, and capable of performing the functions for which they were originally designed.

**\_\_\_General Maintenance.** The exterior walls, trim, doors, and window casings of every structure and accessory building should be structurally sound and kept painted and/or coated to prevent decay. Paint should be lead-free. Exteriors should be free of broken or unusable windows, crumbling stone or brick, peeling paint, or other conditions that reflect deterioration.

**\_\_\_Roofs, Gutters, and Downspouts.** Roofs should be maintained to be free of leaks and rot. Drainage should be collected in suitable downspouts, which may discharge into splash blocks or other devices provided that no excess water flows into adjoining properties or over sidewalks. Downspouts should be free of clogs and rust. Connecting any pipe carrying roof water or yard drainage to a sanitary sewer is prohibited.

**\_\_\_Design Schemes.** Garish design schemes must be modified to eliminate obvious negative impacts on surrounding properties.

**\_\_\_Junk, Inoperable, or Unlicensed Vehicles.** Properties must be free of junk, inoperable, or unlicensed vehicles. Repairing any such vehicle or trailer is prohibited anywhere on the exterior property, including on the front driveway.

**\_\_\_Utility Trailers.** These trailers must be stored in the rear yard only.

**\_\_\_Trailers, RVs, Mobile Homes, and Boats.** Trailers, recreational vehicles, tents, garages, or temporary buildings cannot be used as residences. RVs, trailers, and boats more than 6 feet in height cannot be parked or stored in the front or side yard of residential properties, except for a loading or unloading period, not to exceed 48 hours. RVs, trailers, and boats less than 6 feet in height may be parked or stored in the side yard of residential districts if screened by a 6-foot solid or privacy fence. Temporary parking of a mobile home is permitted for up to 48 hours; it cannot be used as a residence.

# Property Maintenance

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**\_\_Operable Vehicles and Commercial Trucks.** All operable vehicles should be parked on a paved surface. Parking or storing any truck or commercial vehicle more than 11,500 pounds is prohibited in the front yard, including on the front driveway.

**\_\_Porches.** Foundations should be sound; the porch, guardrails, handrails, and porch stairs should be safe and without rot. Porches require a building permit.

**\_\_Additions or Separate Structures.** They should be sound and capable of serving their original purpose. Applicable permits should have been obtained for their construction. If the structure has a garage door, it must have a paved driveway. If a garage is to be converted to living space, the permit will require the existing driveway to be enlarged to accommodate the loss of a parking space. The enlargement of the driveway will not be required if the property is in compliance with parking requirements. When converting a garage into a living area, the construction must include adding a footer under the garage door, leveling the floor, and adding appropriate insulation.

**\_\_Driveways and Other Paved Areas.** All off-street parking areas must be either asphalt, concrete, brick, brick paver, or other similar hard-surfaced material. Specific requirements are available at the City Building. Permits are required for replacing deteriorating concrete or blacktop. Best results occur when the original, crumbling layer is removed. Sealing a driveway does not require a building permit.

**\_\_Fences, Walls, and Other Non-Residential Exterior Structures.** Accessories such as fences, walls, signs, etc., should be maintained and firmly anchored, with painted and/or protected surfaces to prevent decay and hazard. All fences and signs require a permit. Regulations may vary among subdivisions.

**\_\_Reconstruction of Walls and Siding.** Reconstruction of these features should be of standard quality and appearance commensurate with the character of the neighborhood.

**\_\_Free From Infestation.** All areas of properties should be maintained to prevent infestation from rodents, insects, and other animals.

**\_\_Pools.** Pools are regulated in Union for safety reasons. Even inflatable pools, if

the sides are 24 inches or higher, require a building and if applicable an electrical permit. Check with the City’s zoning inspector for details.

**\_\_Storage Sheds.** Storage sheds require a building permit and must be located in the rear yard. Check with the City’s zoning inspector for regulations regarding the size, foundation, and placement on the property.

**\_\_Temporary Storage Containers.** Containers such as PODs (Portable on Demand) are permitted but do require a permit. The location and time used are specified in the City of Union’s building code.

**\_\_Permanent Signs and Billboards.** All signs and billboards exposed to public view must be maintained or otherwise removed. Permits are required.

**\_\_Home Occupations.** Generally, office-related home occupations that do not

change the appearance of the residential property or increase traffic on the street are permitted, but please contact the City first about the proposed home occupation.

**\_\_Pets.** Dogs must be secured on the property of the owner, either by way of leash, fence, or contained inside the home. Dogs are not allowed to run loose while on walks; they should be tethered on a leash no longer than 6 feet. By City Ordinance, pet owners must immediately pick up after their pets on walks and in public areas and also routinely take care to keep their property clean of pet waste. Also, owners should take measures to prevent a dog’s prolonged howling or barking. Vicious animals, including vicious dogs, are prohibited in the City of Union. Vicious animals are those that bite or have a propensity to cause harm to humans or animals. Residents must limit the number of dogs and cats to no more than two of each per household.

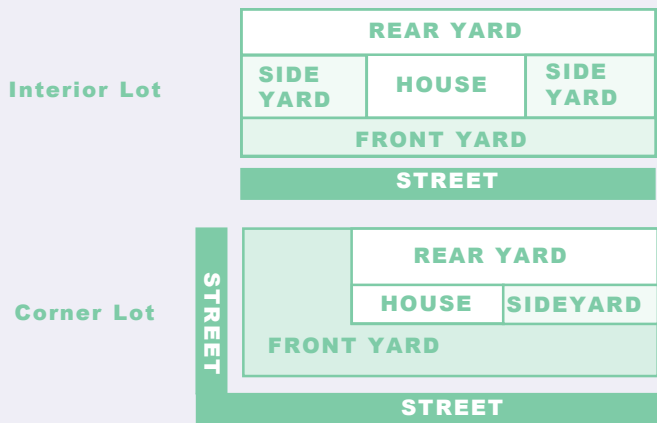
## REQUIRED PERMITS

The City of Union requires permits for certain projects, structures, and activities. Some projects, such as plumbing projects, require a permit from Montgomery County. Below is a list of items requiring permits. Please contact the City of Union for details about each permit.

- Satellite dishes
- TV and radio towers
- New home construction
- Structural remodeling, including converting garages to livable spaces
- Rehabilitation
- Room additions
- Storage sheds
- Garages
- Driveways
- Patios/patio enclosures
- Decks
- Fences
- Pools
- Peddlers/solicitors
- Garage sales
- Signs
- Sidewalks
- Fireplaces/wood stoves
- PODs (Portable on Demand) storage containers
- Pre-sale property inspections
- Sewer lateral replacement. Residents must notify City Hall if they plan to replace their sewer lateral. Because most sewer laterals are connected to the City’s sewer main within the street, either the contractor or the homeowner must post a \$500 bond to ensure that any sidewalk, curb, or street asphalt is properly replaced. The City will inspect these repairs before releasing the bond.

## DEFINITION OF YARDS

Corner and regular lots have different definitions of “front yard.” Use this representation to understand the definition as it applies in the City of Union Property Maintenance Code.



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 cial properties still need to go through Montgomery County. Permits are also required for such installations as hot water heaters, furnaces, air conditioners, gas lines and piping, electric lines for pools and hot tubs, any changes in electrical wiring and upgrades in electrical service. Residents can now come to City Hall for these permits instead of driving to the Montgomery County office, and inspections can be easily and quickly completed through Union. If you have any questions, please contact City Hall at 836-8624.

### Permits for special projects

As we head into the home improvement season,



please take note of the permits required of certain projects. For a complete list of required permits, please contact the City or refer to the Property Maintenance Code information inside this newsletter. Here are a few of the projects that require permits:

**Swimming pools.** Building and electrical permits are required for all swimming pools of 24 inches or more in depth or greater than 150 square feet in surface area, including inflatable pools. The swimming pool or the entire property on which it is located must be walled or fenced to prevent uncontrolled access by children from the street or adjacent properties. The wall or fence must be at least 6 feet in height, in good

condition, and with a gate and lock. Another option is a deck package in which the top rail of the deck is 6 feet above the ground and has a ladder that swings up and locks to prevent access to the pool. Hot tubs and spas are subject to the same regulations except a locking cover may be used instead of a fence. There are additional requirements. **Call 836-8624 to contact the City's building and zoning inspector for more information.**

**Temporary storage containers.** Temporary storage containers such as Portable on Demand (POD) containers are permitted in Union as long as a permit is issued. PODs may be placed in the driveway only, out of the City's right-of-way, and for a duration of 30 days or less, unless an extension is approved by the City's building and zoning inspector. Temporary storage

containers cannot be placed in the street or block sidewalks.

**Storage sheds.** Storage sheds require a building permit. These structures can't exceed 12 feet by 12 feet,

with a total height of no more than 12 feet. Sheds need to be at least 10 feet away from the main structure and no closer than 6 feet to the property line or off any easements. Material and construction of these structures must be of acceptable quality. There are additional requirements; plus, other restrictions may apply within the covenants of a neighborhood development.

**Patios.** Patios also require a building permit. They must be of 4-inch concrete on 4 inches of compacted gravel. **Call 836-8624 to contact the City's building and zoning inspector for more information.**

*See more on permits inside this newsletter.*

### County offers a free way to dispose of household hazardous waste

Household hazardous waste drop off is a service available to Montgomery County residents (proof of residency required) free of charge. Through this program, residents can ensure the hazardous

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## Tap the City of Union's free and easy oil recycling program!

Here's a free, easy and sustainable way to deal with used oil: tap the City of Union's oil recycling program. One 15-quart oil drain recycling container is available per household while supplies last.

A form with your name and address is required when the container is picked up from City Hall. All oil collected must be brought to the City of Union's maintenance garage at 216 Shaw Road

and put in the red storage box outside the fence. After the oil has settled in the container for a few days, the container will be dumped in our tank and then returned to your front porch.

If you are using a non-city container, it will be disposed of after the oil is dumped. Accepted oil products include: motor oil, hydraulic oil, fuel oil, transmission oil. The City of Union received grant funds from the Montgomery County Solid Waste District to help cover the cost of the containers.

## Vehicle registration reminder

When registering a vehicle, it's important to use the right code. For Union residents in Montgomery County, please be sure that the tax district box on the registration form, line 2, third box, shows tax district "5716." For Union residents in Miami County, the tax district code is "5513."

## Vacation check offered

If you're going away this summer, consider signing up

for a Union police officer to check on your residence. You can either go to the City of Union offices at 118 North Main Street to fill out a form; or, download a form from our website and mail it in. The form can be found at [www.ci.union.oh.us/images/uploads/police-vacation-check.pdf](http://www.ci.union.oh.us/images/uploads/police-vacation-check.pdf).

► Forms for all kinds of things can be found at [www.ci.union.oh.us/index.php/forms/](http://www.ci.union.oh.us/index.php/forms/)

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materials from their homes are disposed of properly and will not harm the environment. This service is available weekly at the following locations:

**North Transfer Facility:** 6589 Old Webster St. in Vandalia - Tuesdays 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**South Transfer Facility:** 1001 Encrete Lane in Dayton - Saturdays 8 a.m. to 2 pm.

**Accepted materials:**

- Batteries
- Fertilizers
- Household cleaners
- Paints
- Vehicle Fluids
- Varnishes/Stains

**Unaccepted materials:**

- Asbestos
- Explosives
- Radioactive material
- Non-residential waste
- Items exceeding 25 pounds or 15 gallons
- Pharmaceuticals

For more information regarding the hazardous household waste program or for facility information, visit [www.mcswd.org](http://www.mcswd.org) or call 225-4999.

