



Ridge Meadows Recycling Society

Recycling Report

SEPTEMBER, 2013

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Where do you need to RECONNECT?

For many children, September is a time of reconnecting to friends they may not have seen since school ended in June. It is a time to get back into the routine of school. For many parents, it is a time to get back to a routine of life without kids at home. For kids in the Maple Ridge Environmental School, it is a time to return to their classroom in the forest.

There are many benefits to spending time in nature, from getting exercise to improving your mood, from just getting out of the house and slowing down to reconnecting to the natural world. Increasingly, in order to reconnect with nature we first need to conscientiously *dis*-connect from social media, the internet, and electronic devices.



While the idea of “nature deprivation” is a relatively new phenomenon, it has been brought to attention through Richard Louv’s book, “Last Child in the Woods.” Luckily, there are many companies and organizations working to get kids outdoors. The Child & Nature Alliance of Canada (childnature.ca) has many great articles on the topic, including “10 Ways to Come Alive in Nature.” Locally, WildPlay, Meadows Maze, and the Laity Pumpkin Patch are great outdoor places to take kids, and we are lucky enough to live in an area with abundant parks & walking trails.



Reconnecting with nature in the form of seeing local wildlife can be exciting and memorable, but WildSafe BC asks you to assist them in “Keeping Wildlife Wild.”



Many people view reconnecting as a way to get back to the “basics,” to simplify things.

What severed that connection in the first place?

How can you avoid it from happening again?



The 5 Rules of Back to School

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The three R's have a completely different meaning than they did 175 years ago when the expression was first coined. They are no longer Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. It's all about the 5 R's now: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repurpose and Reframe.

Back to school means one thing – new stuff! There are ways, however, to cut down on the costs of back to school and be green at the same time.

Reduce

If you do have to buy new supplies, choose products that have reusable containers or recyclable packaging like cardboard. It cuts down on waste, and can be recycled. Try buying plain binders with clear outside pockets so you can change up the look with paper or fabric if you have trend-conscious kids. They can be reused for years to come, as long as they are in good shape.



Reuse

The first thing to do is look at the school supplies your children have brought home from the previous school year. Chances are, you can make many of them work for the new school year. Instead of buying all new pencil crayons and pencils, give them a fresh sharpening. Encourage your children to use pencils over pens. Most pens are not refillable, or people choose not to refill, so encouraging pencil use can save you money and extra plastic. Some items don't take too much of a beating- rulers, calculators and scissors can last for years.

Recycle

Ask other parents if they have spare supplies lying around their homes that you could take off their hands. Often, the needs of each class are different and the slightly older child may not need the supplies from the previous year. See if you have anything that may be of use to them too.

Repurpose:

Instead of buying plastic binders, find ones made of recycled cardboard. If they are looking a little worse for wear, cover them with recycled paper- finally a use for your child's artwork! There are likely to be objects around the house that can be used in a whole new way- an old makeup bag or chocolate box makes a great pencil case, or you could transform last year's holey backpack into a new lunch bag with a bit of time and sewing.

Reframe

What do you do about lunches? Most times, it's actually cheaper to buy snacks in bulk and invest in some great reusable containers. They come in many different shapes and sizes, and often come in your kids' favourite characters and designs. Take a tip from Eastern cultures and find your child a tiffin or bento-style lunch box. These are comprised of several compartments that keep the food separated, and are made of recycled plastic or stainless steel.

Many schools have implemented a no waste policy, so if you bring your sandwich in a plastic baggie, it must go home with the child (discarded crusts and all). This is a great way to learn *with* your kids about materials that can be composted, recycled and reused.

These are just a few ideas to get you started on back to school. Don't forget that when the school year is over, you can recycle many of your school supplies that can't be reused next year.

Take it Home!



This past spring, our Environmental Educator Dan Mikolay did many, many waste audits in the school classrooms he visited. To each class's surprise, 80-90% of what was in the garbage can could be either composted or recycled. Some of the food he found was fully edible, such as sandwiches in plastic bags that hadn't been touched, or whole apples.

This inspired the "Take it Home" Program, where kids are encouraged to take all leftovers home again. This way, parents can learn what a child will or won't eat and perfectly good food avoids ending up in the garbage, where it becomes an attractant for bears or other wildlife.

We will be highlighting this idea along with a Litterless Lunch Challenge to Maple Ridge Mayor & Council during our annual Waste Reduction Week presentation on Tuesday, October 22 at 7:pp - join us if you can!

Coming Soon to a School Near You!

Ridge Meadows Recycling Society is involved with **WildsafeBC** to keep wildlife wild and communities safe. Ways we are working together is through our Take It Home program and teaching Bear Aware workshops in schools. Eliminating food waste, compost and recycling will reduce garbage by at least 50%.

The Bear Aware workshop teaches about reducing attractants such as garbage cans, bird feeders, leftover fruit from trees, and BBQ grease. The students also learn what to do when they encounter a bear.

As local Wildsafe BC Coordinator and RMRS Environmental Educator Dan Mikolay says, "Simply put your hands in the air like you don't care and say 'Wo, bear. I'm going away, bear.'"



British Columbia Conservation Foundation



Reminder - ONLY Plastics #1, 2, 4, & 5 Accepted at Recycling Depot

Just a reminder that we **ONLY** accept plastics with the **mobius loop recycling symbol and the numbers 1, 2, 4, or 5** marked on it at the Maple Ridge Recycling Depot.

Many large items that people think are made of plastic are actually a composite of low-grade plastic, vinyl, & fibreglass. Unfortunately, there is currently no market for this type of commodity. When materials are dropped off at the Depot that are non-recyclable, the non-profit Ridge Meadows Recycling Society has to pay a tipping fee to dispose of them. Please check the label on your plastic - if there's no number 1, 2, 4, or 5, the Society cannot ac-



Don't Forget!

Fall Chipping Deadlines
for Maple Ridge Residents are:

WEST of 224th Street =

Tuesday, October 15

EAST of 224th Street =

Monday, October 28.

Please place all branches in a 3x3x9 pile next to the road for chipping!

More info on our
website at
www.rmrecycling.org



Upcoming Events



Rivers Day - Sunday, September 29:

Alouette River Management Society - www.alouetteriver.org/events

11am - 3pm at Allco Park (24959 Alouette Road, MR)

Come celebrate World Rivers Day at this FREE event in Maple Ridge. Great for the family with lots of activities for kids. Live entertainment, BBQ, children's fishing pond, environmental displays, nature tours, and much, much more!

Metro Vancouver - Kanaka Connections Information: 604-462-8643

11am - 3pm at Kanaka Creek Regional Park (River Road, MR)

Celebrate World Rivers Day with canoe tours, children's activities and stewardship displays. Allow 1.5 hours to complete all activities.

L.A.S.T. Committee Events - Wednesday, October 2:

Free Community Living Month BBQ - 11:30am - 2pm at Memorial Peace Park

Come out & enjoy hot dogs, pop, chips, cookies, coffee, tea, facepainting, balloons, music, & more!

Guest Speakers - 6:00pm at the ACT Arts Centre & Theatre

Listen to guest speaker Mark Wafer from Tim Hortons and others speak about the financial benefits of an inclusive workplace. \$20 includes appetizers, coffee, & dessert.



Waste Reduction Week - October 21 - 27

Join us on Tuesday, October 22 at Maple Ridge Council Chambers as we give a special presentation to Mayor & Council in honour of Waste Reduction Week.

Save the Date - Saturday, April 19 is Celebrate Earth Day in Maple Ridge 2014
*Mark your calendar to help us celebrate **FOOD!** and the Haney Farmer's Market's 10th Anniversary!*



Mission Statement

"Ridge Meadows Recycling Society is a community-based, non-profit organization, advocating zero waste, operating responsible waste reduction services and providing environmental education. We employ people with developmental disabilities assisting their integration into the community."

Vision

"A waste free, socially responsible community."



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