

## POLLUTION Questions & Answers

### Q. Is there a difference between the storm drain and sewer system?

A. Yes...an important difference. Stormwater and pollutants that flow from our homes, parking lots and streets to the gutter into the storm drains discharge directly into our creeks and water bodies...untreated. Water and pollutants that flow into the sanitary sewer (bathtub/toilet water) are sent to a wastewater treatment facility before the water is discharged to the bay, delta or ocean.

### Q. What is a watershed and how do I affect it?

A. A watershed is an area of land that catches and drains water into a creek, stream or river and eventually ends up in a large body of water such as the delta, bay or ocean. As stormwater flows over land and impervious surfaces into the creek, it often carries polluted urban runoff such as used motor oil and grease, pesticides, trash and other harmful debris. This is where the public comes in. The more we prevent polluting the watershed, the healthier our waterways will be and the habitats it supports.

### Q. What is E-waste?

A. E-waste is a popular term for electronic products that have reached the end of their "useful life." Computers, monitors, TVs, VCRs, stereos, microwaves and fax machines are common electronic goods. Many of these products can be reused or recycled. Unfortunately, electronic discards are one of the fastest growing segments of our nation's waste stream. When we improperly dispose of e-waste, the mercury or the lead from the cathode ray tubes leaches into surface and groundwater. Computer monitors and TVs are banned from landfills due to the high amounts of lead they contain.

(continued on page 2)

## Lafayette's Dirty Little Secret?

Newspapers. Bottles. Batteries. Coffee grounds. Junk mail. Egg shells. Diapers. That ugly lamp shaped like a flamingo you got from Aunt Lucille. What do they have in common? Sooner or later, they all end up in the trash. Lafayette residents and businesses throw away about 4.5 pounds of garbage per person each day. That adds up to almost 40 million pounds of trash each year. Piled up on just one mile of Mt. Diablo Blvd., that much garbage would be over a foot deep.

But, it all magically disappears when you put it out at the curb each week thanks to a little known public agency called the Contra Costa County Solid Waste Authority (CCCSWA). In 1996 the CCCSWA was formed as a joint powers authority by the cities of Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda, Walnut Creek, Danville and some unincorporated areas of the County such as Alamo, Blackhawk and Diablo. The primary purpose of the agency is to ensure that garbage disposal services are both environmentally sound and cost effective. By banding together, these cities are able to negotiate more favorable terms with the waste disposal companies than any of them would be able to alone. For example, prior to 1996 basic trash service for Lafayette residents cost 23% *more* than it does today.

The California Integrated Waste Management Act mandates that, after the year 2000, 50% of waste must be diverted. Non-compliant cities could be subject to hefty fines – as much as \$10,000 per day. The CCCSWA helps Lafayette meet our diversion goal by sponsoring a wide variety of programs in the areas of waste prevention, recycling, and composting, as well as offering technical assistance and providing public information and education to residents and businesses.

In 1999, the CCCSWA developed a mini-grant program to aid member

agencies in achieving the state mandated diversion goal. The program allocates \$50,000 each year for grants ranging in size from \$250 to \$10,000 and awards them to innovative projects in the service area that increase individual and community involvement in waste prevention efforts and encourage the development, marketing and use of recycled products. Some recipients of the mini-grants have been:

**Pacific Rim Recycling** — awarded \$9,250 to help develop PRR's new educational center, including a professional video on recycling for 4th–8th grade students. PRR processes two-thirds of the CCCSWA's service area recyclables so educating students should improve the recycling volume.

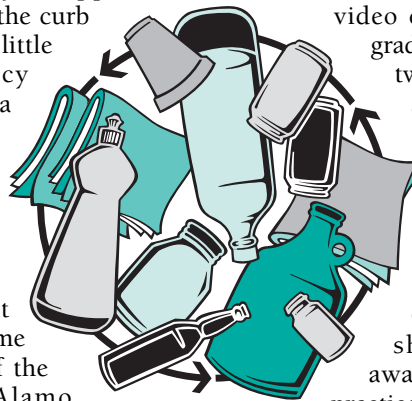
**Green Resource Center** — received \$7,810 to implement a Green Home Tour to showcase and increase awareness of green building practices, products and technologies in high-performance homes.

**Orinda Intermediate School** — received two Biostack compost bins to include food waste from its daily food services and \$700 to increase awareness of the importance of recycling on campus.

**Lafayette Elementary School** — awarded \$475 and three Biostack composting bins for completion of the school's wildlife habitat composting program.

**East Bay Regional Parks District** — awarded \$4,532 for purchasing ten self-contained beverage recycling containers for placement throughout Briones Park area.

The CCCSWA 2006/07 mini-grant application cycle opens January 9, 2006 and applications are due no later than Friday, March 10, 2006. You can find an application and instructions, as well as tons of other great information on recycling, garbage collection and waste diversion at [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org).



## POLLUTION: Q & A *(continued from front page)*

### Q. How do I properly dispose of E-waste?

A. Contact the household hazardous waste information line for more information:

Central County: 800-646-1431 (Martinez)

### Q. How should I dispose of mercury products?

A. Mercury can be found in thermometers, fluorescent lighting and watch batteries. Dispose of them at a household hazardous waste (HHW) facility. For more information call: 800-646-1431.

### Q. The creek near my house is polluted. What can be done about it?

A. You can be proactive and inform your neighbors of proper pollution prevention behaviors. You can also work with Lafayette's Creeks Committee (call 284-1968 for info.) to promote water health. If there is a toxic spill, call 911 and trained firefighters will either clean up the pollution or contact the proper agency. For the proper number to call in your area, call 1-800-NO-DUMPING.

### Q. Why should I recycle used motor oil?

A. Used motor oil contains heavy metals and other harmful contaminants that negatively impact the environment. Improper disposal of used oil also costs money...your money! You pay higher consumer prices, taxes for environmental cleanups, and increased health care costs.

### Q. There's oil in the street in front of my house. What should I do about it?

A. If you can't determine who is responsible for the pollution, sprinkle it with kitty litter, sweep up the soiled absorbent and place it in a household hazardous waste container for disposal at a HHW facility.

### Q. Can I drain my pool into the storm drain?

A. Only if the water is dechlorinated and has never been treated with copper-based algacides.

### Q. Leaves and yard clippings are organic. Why can't I put them down the storm drain?

A. When organic and/or yard waste decays in water, the "breakdown" process removes oxygen from the water. Essentially, it robs the aquatic life of oxygen and can suffocate the organisms.

### Q. What can I do with left over chemicals?

A. See the four options explained in the accompanying **TOXIC** article on this page.

## REUSE: An Alternative to Garbage Cleanups

Instead of throwing away unwanted items, you can conserve landfill space through the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority's "Reuse and Cleanup Days" program. Place unwanted items out the day before either of your two annual community cleanup days. Pacific Rim Recycling will collect your reuseable items which will be distributed to non-profit and charitable organizations. For more information call **Pacific Rim at 1-800-999-6067**. Additional reuse options are available at [www.ccrecycle.org](http://www.ccrecycle.org).

**Acceptable Reuse Items** (for a complete list check the website):

- CDs, jewel cases, DVDs, audio/video tapes, records, record players
- Computer CPUs, monitors, peripherals, tabletop TVs, radios, clocks
- Wrought iron & metal items: gates, grates, furniture; garden items: wood or metal lawn furniture, flower pots, planter boxes, statues
- Clothing, vintage accessories, shoes, purses, belts, watches, leather
- Household items: ceramic, metal and glass kitchenware, vases, cutting boards, utensils, placemats, tablecloths, area rugs, sheets, towels, bed spreads, comforters, blankets, pillows, decorations, wheeled luggage, blenders, toasters, mixers, blow dryers, paper goods, magazines
- Ladders, hand, power and electrical tools, unpainted lumber, high-grade plywood, moldings, shutters, cabinets
- Chairs, tables, lamps, child-sized and other *lightweight* furniture
- Wood or tin toys, stuffed animals, bicycles, books, art materials, paper, sculptures, paintings, musical instruments, skis, bowling balls

## TOXIC: Household Hazardous Waste

### Options for Disposal or Recycling

Household hazardous waste should **NEVER** be placed in garbage, recycling or yard waste carts. Here are four options for recycling or disposal.

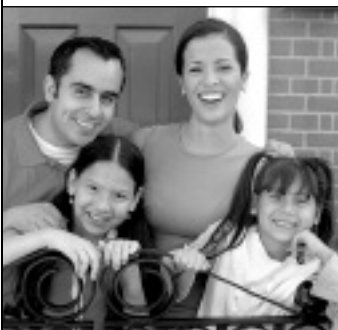
**Option 1:** Recycle car batteries, latex paint, anti-freeze, fluorescent bulbs, motor oil and oil filters at the **Allied Waste Services Recycling & Drop-off Center**, 444 N. Buchanan Circle, Pacheco. Hours: Monday-Friday: 8am-4pm; Saturday: 9am-1pm.

**Option 2:** All hazardous wastes, including solvents, cleaners and pesticides, can be taken to the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District's facility at 4749 Imhoff Place, Martinez. Call 1-800-646-1431 for information and hours or visit the District's website at [www.centalsan.org](http://www.centalsan.org).

**Option 3: Walnut Creek Recycling Center:** You may recycle used motor oil, antifreeze, yard clippings and wood debris for a fee. Compost made from yard clippings is also sold. Free 24-hour drop-off is available for aluminum cans, glass, paper, junk mail, magazines, catalogs, cardboard, tin, phone books and #1 to #5 and #7 plastic containers. Operated by Valley Waste Management, the center will be open at 480 Lawrence Way, Walnut Creek, through March 1, 2006. After March 1, please call 925-935-8900 for the Center's new location.

**Option 4: Televisions, Monitors & Electronics (E-Waste).** State law prohibits putting CRT-containing devices in the garbage. Pacific Rim Recycling will accept at no charge CCSWA service area customers' computer equipment and TVs at its Benicia facility, 3690 Sprig Rd. from 8am-1pm, Monday-Friday. CRT devices are accepted free of charge as reuse items during either of your area's two annual Reuse and Cleanup collections. If you cannot wait for a reuse collection, a curbside pickup of electronic waste is available for a fee through Allied Waste Services: 925-603-1144, ext. 1. For additional e-waste recycling options, see the CCCSWA website: [www.wastediversion.org/ewasteoptions.htm](http://www.wastediversion.org/ewasteoptions.htm).

## Neighborhood Watch



Interested in forming or reviving a neighborhood watch program? Call Cathy Surges at 299-3220 for information about the City's Crime Prevention Commission.

# LAS TRAMPAS, INC.

## History and Mission Statement

*The mission of Las Trampas, Inc. is to support adults with developmental disabilities to discover their capabilities and to lead fuller lives in their homes, at work, and in the community.*

Las Trampas has a 48-year history of supporting people with developmental disabilities living in our community. In the late 1950's, parents and community members raised the funds to purchase the Helen Lucas School for children with mental retardation in Lafayette. In 1958, Las Trampas School, Inc. was founded as a non-profit residential school. In 1967, the old buildings were razed and new facilities built, doubling the number of residents and creating a community day school for people with moderate to severe retardation.



In the early 1990's, Las Trampas became part of a State project to demonstrate the social and financial feasibility of people with severe disabilities living in their own homes or apartments with adequate staff support, later known as Supported Living. The success of the men and women in this project has demonstrated the importance of living full lives in a community, developing friendships and relationships and being responsible for personal decisions.

Las Trampas thus began an effort to move all of their residents out of the dormitories on the Lafayette campus and into the community. With help from many individual donors, foundations, businesses and volunteers, the last residents moved into community-based living in 1994. Concurrently, Las Trampas expanded their vocational program to include supported employment services, enabling clients to work for local employers. In fact, Las Trampas clients are employed by the City of Lafayette to sweep streets in the downtown, helping the City achieve its goals in the mandated Storm Water Pollution Control programs. Look for teams patrolling the downtown in orange vests.

In 2005, Las Trampas expanded its list of day program choices to include an art room, computer room, a sensory-motor development environment, a fitness program, and inclusive music activities.

### Upcoming Events at Las Trampas

Sunday April 30th is the 17th Annual "What's In Our Hat?" event. This year's theme is ALL THAT JAZZ! and will be held at the Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa. The event will feature appetizers, cocktails, live jazz, a raffle, silent auction and a drawing to win \$10,000. Tickets are \$100 each. For more information about Las Trampas and events please visit [www.lastrampas.org](http://www.lastrampas.org) or call 925-284-1462 ext. 239.

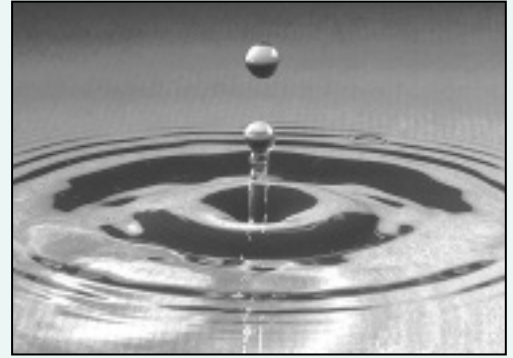
## ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY

On September 12th, the City Council approved an Environmental Strategy Mission Statement for the City:

*The City of Lafayette is committed to developing and implementing environmental policies and programs that will enable the City and its residents to meet their present needs without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their needs.*

The Council also approved draft guiding principles and goals and established an Environmental Strategy Task Force with representatives of the City, schools, residents, and businesses. More information on this new program will be presented in the next issue of Vistas.

## ONLY RAIN IN THE STORMDRAIN



**Rainwater** – what could be more pure or more natural? In open space and undeveloped areas, that might be true, but storm water from urban runoff is one of the leading causes of pollution in creeks, rivers, and lakes.

In fields and forests, most rain is absorbed by the soil or is taken up by plants and trees. However, developed areas contain many impermeable surfaces like roofs, parking lots, and streets. And in urban environments, this rainwater is called "storm water" and can become contaminated with pesticides, paint, fertilizers, pet waste, litter, oil, automotive fluids, and household chemicals as it travels over paved areas, into gutters and ditches, and through concrete storm drains.

Many people think that everything that flows into storm drains gets treated, just like wastewater in a sewer system. Actually, these two systems are not connected. Everything that flows into a storm drain goes untreated directly into our creeks, rivers, lakes, delta, and eventually the ocean. For this reason, the state, via the Clean Water Act, requires that cities and counties administer a variety of storm water pollution control programs that are paid for by a fee collected on your property taxes.

Activities funded by the fees include sweeping streets, cleaning storm drain inlets, culverts and roadside ditches and collecting litter. Last year, the City discarded over 1,100 cubic yards of debris.

You can help protect Lafayette's creeks, reservoirs and the San Francisco Bay, too by remembering these tips:

- Do not sweep leaves and trash into the gutter.
- Minimize your irrigation runoff and pesticide use.
- Recycle or dispose of chemical waste properly.



## CITY WINS PRESTIGIOUS HELEN PUTNAM AWARD

Established in 1982 by the League of California Cities, the Helen Putnam Award for Excellence recognizes California cities that have made unique contributions that result in lower costs or more effective delivery of services. This year Lafayette was recognized in the category of **Effective Advocacy, Intergovernmental Relations and Regional Cooperation** for the new Veterans Memorial Building.

Also honored were our partners in the project – Walnut Creek and Contra Costa County. The project was cited as a great example of governmental cooperation that was a “win” for everyone involved: honoring veterans; providing a beautiful, modern, accessible regional facility; clearing property for reuse in downtown Walnut Creek; providing land for a new public library in downtown Lafayette; and relieving the County from the financial burden of maintaining two veterans’ facilities.

The Helen Putnam award is the highest honor that a California city can achieve, and this year’s award is Lafayette’s first.

## AROUND TOWN

**Jan 26 – Feb 19**

**TOWN HALL THEATRE • WIT** – Margaret Edson’s Pulitzer Prize winning play is a rare beast: art that engages both the heart and the mind. The story is about a university professor of English who is dying of ovarian cancer. As she copes with her life-threatening cancer she assesses her own life through the intricacies of the English language, especially the use of wit and the metaphysical poetry of John Donne. Box Office: 283-1557 or [www.thtc.org](http://www.thtc.org)

**Jan 27**

**GOLD COAST CHAMBER PLAYERS • CELEBRATE MOZART’S 250TH BIRTHDAY** – The Gold Coast Chamber Players perform at a party Mozart himself would have loved! *Also featuring Sibling Revelry:* Dazzling audiences as Mozart and his sister once did, local child prodigies, **Chloe Pang**, acclaimed in *International Piano Magazine*, and her brother, **Clark Pang**, an award-winning cellist, make their debut with the Gold Coast Chamber Players. Lafayette Veterans Memorial Building, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Tickets: \$60/\$75. Portion of proceeds donated to the Lafayette Library & Learning Center. Tickets: Town Hall Box Office: 283-1557

**March 4**

**2ND ANNUAL TOAST TO TINY TOTS** – The Lafayette Community Center Tiny Tots Program will be hosting a benefit event with live and silent auctions. Proceeds contribute to art, language, and science enrichment programs for children. 6:00–9:30 pm, Live Oak Room, Lafayette Community Center. Tickets: \$50/couple; includes wine, beer and hearty appetizers. For tickets please call: 299-3266

## CITY DIRECTORY

For Council Members call: 284-1968

### Council Members

Ivor Samson	<b>Mayor</b>
Carol Federighi	<b>Vice Mayor</b>
Mike Anderson	<b>Council Member</b>
Carl Anduri	<b>Council Member</b>
Don Tatzin	<b>Council Member</b>

Messages to all Council Members:  
[cityhall@lovelafayette.org](mailto:cityhall@lovelafayette.org)

### Administration

<b>General Reception and</b>	<b>284-1968</b>
<b>Steven Falk, City Manager</b>	<b>Fax: 284-3169</b>
Tracy Robinson, Admin. Srv. Dir.	<b>299-3227</b>
Gonzalo Silva, Financial Srv. Mgr.	<b>299-3213</b>
Joanne Robbins, City Clerk	<b>299-3210</b>

### Community Development

Ann Merideth, Director	<b>299-3218</b>
Tony Coe, Engineering Srv. Mgr.	<b>284-1951</b>
Niroop Srivatsa, Planning Srv. Mgr.	<b>284-1976</b>
Ron Lefler, Public Works Srv. Mgr.	<b>299-3214</b>
P.W. Hotline (to report problems)	<b>299-3259</b>

*If you observe illegal dumping in creeks & storm drains or accidental spills on roads, call Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Division 646-2286.*

### Lamorinda School Bus Program

Juliet Hansen, Program Mgr.	<b>299-3216</b>
	<b>Or 299-3215</b>

### Parks, Trails and Recreation

Jennifer Russell, Director	<b>284-2232</b>
Senior Services	<b>284-5050</b>
Teen Programs	<b>284-5815</b>

### Police Services

Emergency: 24 Hours	<b>911</b>
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours	<b>284-5010</b>
Police Business Office:	<b>283-3680</b>

*Anonymous Tipline, Traffic Enforcement, Suggestions & LEARN (Laf. Emergency Action Response Network), 299-3232 X 2205*

**Fax** **284-3169**

**Address** **3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210**  
**Lafayette, CA 94549**

**Website:** **[www.ci.lafayette.ca.us](http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us)**

**E-MAIL:** Council/staff members can be reached via e-mail using this address format:

**First Initial + Last Name@lovelafayette.org**

**Example: SFalk@lovelafayette.org**



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