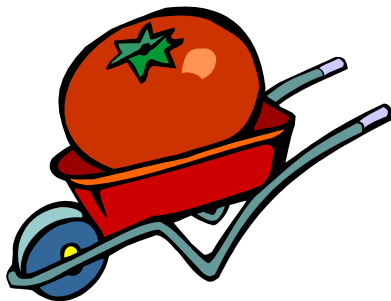




CITY OF GLENDORA

Compost Bins

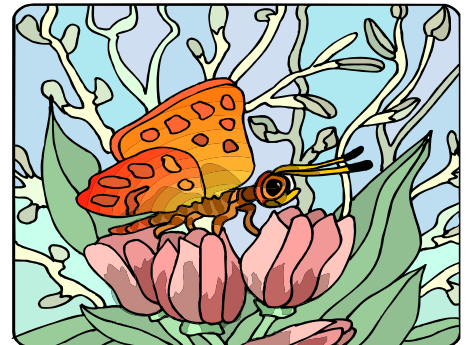
For sale to Glendora residents for \$25.00 each. Available while supplies last. Planning Department/ Environmental Programs office, 116 E. Foothill Blvd. 626-914-8214



CITY OF GLENDORA

Kristen Johnston
Environmental Programs
116 E. Foothill Blvd.
Glendora, CA 91741

Phone: 626-914-8213
Fax: 626-914-9053
Email: kjohnston@ci.glendora.ca.us



Backyard Composting
or
How to Keep What You Grow
.....OR
A Leaf Saved Is A Garden Earned

Backyard composting may not be for everyone. First, you need a backyard or access to a community garden or a friend's back yard etc. Then, you need to like the idea of saving money. Finally, you need to like having a healthy, less thirsty garden. If you fit this pattern, maybe you should try backyard composting. It can be as simple as throwing all your grass clippings, leaves and small garden refuse into a pile in a hidden corner of the yard to quietly "cook" for a few months, or it can be as complex as a gourmet recipe. The final result of these efforts is a valuable product which will benefit your garden in a multitude of ways.

Compost is a higher quality soil amendment than just about anything you can buy in your local garden supply store—and it is free! It will not leach rapidly through the soil and into the groundwater like chemical fertilizers. The nutrients in compost are slowly released to plant roots in a more natural way. Compost can be used as a mulch blanket to protect the soil from drying out, thereby reducing the need for intensive watering schedules. Compost will also reduce the spread of plant diseases because it provides a rich environment for the many good organisms and natural antibiotic processes which help fight off bad bugs.

Getting started (or the first banana peel).

If you have an out of the way corner in your yard, you can begin with a small compost pile. Compost piles consist of four basic ingredients: *green material* and kitchen vegetable trimmings (high in nitrogen), *brown, dry material* (high in carbon), and *water*. You can layer the green and dry material, watering the layers as you go. It should feel about as moist as a damp sponge. The fourth ingredient is *air* or oxygen, which is why you want to layer the green and brown material—so the denser green doesn't pack down and drive out the oxygen. When you have used all your material, cover the pile with a layer of straw or dried grass which will help keep the pile from drying out. Then, let it "cook" for about three months. If you are very ambitious, you can turn the pile every month or so to speed up the process. Be sure to add more water when you do this.

Ideally, you should have a "working" pile and a "resting" pile. The working pile is the pile you continually are adding new layers of leaves and kitchen scraps until it reaches a size that you feel is large enough, or when you have used up all the compost from your resting pile. Then it becomes the resting pile and so on.

Another simple way to compost more neatly in small spaces is to make or buy a compost bin. There are many available. They are basically covered boxes or plastic bins that sit on the ground and have the added advantage of not drying out as easily as a pile. You will have the best luck if you layer the material like the pile method and of course, add water.

Things to add to compost piles: All plant material except thick branches (unless they are shredded) and yucca leaves, All vegetable kitchen waste, Horse, Chicken or Rabbit manure, Coffee grounds, Tea bags, Egg shells, Small amounts of bread and grains.

Things not to add to compost piles: All meat and bone scraps, oily foods like peanut butter and cheese (attract pests), pet droppings (diseases), anything with chemical pesticides or herbicides (destroys beneficial organisms).