Earth Day focus

Recycling: How Does It Work?

One way you can honor Earth Day every day is by recycling. What happens to the items after they are picked up from your bin? From Georgetown they are trucked to Creedmoor to a materials recovery facility, owned and operated by Texas Disposal Systems. On a recent tour, City of Georgetown Environmental and Conservation employees Gabriel Dominguez, Ken Arnold, and Rachel Osgood got to see how items are processed.

1. First sort
When collection trucks arrive at the facility, all of the bottles, cans, paper, cardboard, and other items are loaded into a hopper that feeds them to a conveyor belt. Trash and corrugated cardboard are pulled out by hand and dropped into separate chutes that go to large bins below. Trash is trucked to the landfill and cardboard goes to the fiber baler.

2. Glass sorting rollers
Slotted rollers pull out and crush glass bottles. The glass bits are tumbled and smoothed so they can be used as aggregate for development projects at the landfill.

3. Container/paper sorting machine
The conveyor feeds the remaining stream of recyclables to a rake-like separator that allows plastic and metal containers to drop off to a side conveyor. Paper and cardboard roll over the top.

4. Manual sorting lines
On three conveyor lines, fiber items including paper, cardboard, and boxboard are pulled out by hand and dropped into chutes over separate bins. Then they are ready to be fed to a conveyor that goes to the fiber baler. On a similar container line, various types of plastic bottles are pulled off by hand and dropped into bins for the container baler.

5. Magnetic can sorters
After plastics are removed from the container line, a rotating magnet below the line grabs steel metal cans and pulls them into a bin. After steel cans are removed, an eddy current separator (above) is used to remove aluminum cans from the line. This separator uses a magnetized rotor under the conveyor that repels non-ferrous aluminum cans, causing them to jump off the belt and drop into a bin. That’s Jimmy Gregory, a TDS owner, who led the facility tour.

6. Fiber baler
Paper and cardboard are fed to a fiber baler, which runs continuously. Bales of paper and cardboard are stacked and stored. TDS sells the bales and they are loaded on trucks and shipped to paper mills. Recycled paper and cardboard are used in thousands of consumer products. Pictured are Gabriel Dominguez, Ken Arnold, and Rachel Osgood.

7. Metal and plastic bales
Plastic containers and metal cans are fed to a separate compactor and baler for containers. Bales of compacted bi-metal cans (made of steel and tin) and aluminum cans are sold to metal processors. The metals are used to make a wide variety of metal products. Bales of PET (no. 1 plastics), HDPE (no. 2 plastics), and mixed plastics are sold to manufacturers that make thousands of products including lumber, bottles, and carpeting.

To see a more detailed online tour of the recycling facility, go to recycle.georgetown.org.
April Events

The Palace Theater
Dirty Rotten Soundtraps, April 1 – May 1
Details at GeorgetownPalace.com, or call (512) 869-7469.

Georgetown Quilt and Stitchery Show, April 1 & 2
Under the Big Top, presented by Handcrafts Unlimited is 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days at the Community Center, 445 E. Morrow Street in San Gabriel Park. Admission is $6. For more information or to register your entries go to GeorgetownQuiltshow.org.

First Friday, April 2
Downtown live music, shops and restaurants are open late. See the Downtown Georgetown Association website at TheGeorgetownSquare.com.

Market Days, April 9
Handmade arts and crafts, food, and more on the Square from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Details at TheGeorgetownSquare.com.

Animal Shelter Garage Sale, April 15 & 16
The 12th annual sale will at the Community Center in San Gabriel Park from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day. All proceeds benefit animals at the Georgetown Animal Shelter.

Egstravaganza!, April 16
Bring your basket for the annual free Easter Egg Hunt at the McMaster Athletic Complex softball fields sponsored by Georgetown Parks and Recreation. The egg hunt starts promptly at 8:30 a.m. See parks.georgetown.org for details.

Red Poppy Festival, April 16 – 17

Classic country performer Mark Chesnutt will headline the Saturday night concert at the Red Poppy Festival, held on the downtown Square April 16 – 17. Chesnutt performs at 9:30 p.m. Also on Saturday night, “red dirt” country singer Dean Seltzer plays at 6 p.m. and classic country singer Ricky Calmbach plays at 7:30 p.m. A special Friday night concert on April 15 features energetic 80s cover band Radiostar from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. The Biscuit Brothers will play Saturday at 2:30 p.m. Other music groups on Saturday and Sunday include Off the Record, Georgetown High School Jazz bands, and local talent showcases.

For a full schedule of events, go to RedPoppyFestival.com.

There is no admission charge for any of the festival concerts.

Other festival events include the Red Poppy Bike Ride on Saturday at 8 a.m., the Red Poppy Parade on Saturday at 10 a.m., the Car Show that starts on Saturday at 11 a.m., and the Red Poppy 5K Run that starts on Sunday at 8:00 a.m. The official 2011 Red Poppy Festival poster will be on sale April 1 at the Visitor Information Center at 101 W. Seventh Street. T-shirts will be available at the Festival. Cost is $5 for the poster and $10 for the t-shirt. For all the details, go to RedPoppyFestival.com.

Earth Day at the Poppy Festival

To celebrate Earth Day, Georgetown350, Georgetown Utility Systems, and Southwestern University will sponsor interactive, hands-on exhibits at the Red Poppy Festival in the Safe Place Kids Village. Also appearing on the Red Poppy Stage will be the Earth Day Players, a troupe of accomplished local student actors who will present an entertaining and thought-provoking show about Earth Day. For more information, contact Georgetown350 at (512) 930-0542 or www.georgetown350.org.

Georgetown Reads! 2011

The Georgetown Public Library’s one-book, one-community program, Georgetown Reads! will kick off in late March. Already Home, by Susan Mallery is set in Georgetown and our downtown Square is featured! Copies of the book will be available for checkout beginning in April. Visit the library’s website at library.georgetown.org for full details about Georgetown Reads! events, including a scavenger hunt, canned goods drive, cookbook giveaway, wine-tasting, cooking demonstration, author visit, and an evening with Susan Mallery. Let’s read together!

April Events

Fishing Derby, Saturday, April 30
In San Gabriel Park near the low-water crossing from 7 to 11:30 a.m., sponsored by Georgetown Parks and Recreation. Cost is $2 for 12 and under and $3 for 13 and over. Fishing permit required for those 17 and older. See parks.georgetown.org for details.

Picture Circus, April 30
An event for children celebrating illustrators of children’s books. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Georgetown Public Library, 402 W. Eighth Street.

Warrant Round-up

Warrant Round-up is underway. Those with outstanding warrants should act immediately to avoid going to jail. To make a payment on an outstanding class C offense, go to the Municipal Court location at 101 E. Seventh Street. Money orders and cashier’s checks are accepted. Personal checks are not accepted. Payments can be made online at any time using a credit card through the City’s website at www.georgetown.org.

The Georgetown City Reporter is a publication of the City of Georgetown Public Communications Department, P.O. Box 409, Georgetown, Texas, 78627. For questions or comments, contact Keith Hutchinson, public communications director, at (512) 930-3609 or by email at keith.hutchinson@georgetown.org.