



Hausner ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS BULLETIN

Issue 1: March 2007

What's Trash?

(You think you know, but do you?)

The Big Picture

We all think we know what trash is. It's garbage. The stuff we throw away every day. The stuff we don't want or need any more. Waste stuff, right? Well, maybe. Everything that you throw out with your trash will become trash--but a surprising amount of stuff that really isn't trash gets mixed in by mistake!



What do we put in the garbage that shouldn't be there?

Take a look at the picture to the right. This garbage can shows what makes up trash in California. More than a third is organic* waste, which could be put in a compost* instead. Paper, plastics, metal and glass account for nearly half and these can be recycled.* Even most construction* waste can be recycled. That leaves only 5% (<--means five percent*) that is really trash!

WHAT'S IN OUR GARBAGE?



Do you know that everything that you put in the trash can ends up in a dump or landfill? Do you know what a landfill* is? It is where all of our garbage goes--and it is a mess! Ugly, smelly and sometimes hazardous with chemicals.



This is a picture of a dump near us.

What happens to it?

Unfortunately, once garbage is thrown out, it stays at the dump. It can take years, decades* and even centuries* for some types of garbage to decompose*. Some plastics never decompose! This means we have to keep finding more and more space to put all of our garbage.



How Can We Reduce The Amount of Trash We Send to the Landfill?

That's a great question--and there's an easy answer: We can be sure only to put things that can't be reused, recycled or composted into the garbage pail! This could reduce our garbage by as much as 95%.

Here are some pictures of the insides of various garbage pails around Hausner. Can you spot what's wrong with what's in them? Care to guess what Hausner spends on its garbage collection? About \$1,200 per month!



* Word Definitions *

- Organic:** Coming from plants or animals
- Compost:** A process to create healthy soil
- Recycled:** To make suitable for reuse
- Construction:** Building something
- 5 Percent:** A very small amount overall
- Landfill:** Land packed with garbage
- Decades:** Periods of ten years
- Centuries:** Periods of a hundred years
- Decompose:** Breaking down by rotting
- Reused:** Used again
- 95 Percent:** Almost all of it!

Literary References

Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout
Would not take the garbage out!

She'd scour the pots and scrape the pans,
 Candy the yams and spice the hams,
 And though her daddy would scream and shout,
 She simply would not take the garbage out.
 And so it piled up to the ceilings . . .

Q: Do you know who wrote this cool garbage poem?
A: To be provided next Issue!

About GHREEN

We are a group of Parents, Teachers and Students working to build a greater understanding of our environment and its needs here at Hausner. To join us:

- 1) Sign up on the sign-up sheets
- 2) Read Information Posted on Bulletin
- 3) Attend some of our brief meetings
- 4) Help do stuff to turn Hausner Ghreen!