

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 10, 2009

CONTACT: Marguerite Jordan, (850) 245-2112 or (850) 528-8206 (cell)

DEP'S TOP TEN WAYS TO CELEBRATE AMERICA RECYCLES DAY

~DEP encourages Floridians to count the ways to be good environmental stewards~

TALLAHASSEE –Governor Charlie Crist recently signed a [proclamation](#) acknowledging November 15 as America Recycles Day and encouraging citizens to rethink their habits and increase recycling at home, school and work, as well as purchase products made of recycled materials. To celebrate America Recycles Day, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has compiled a list of ten easy tips to encourage Floridians to recycle.

Recycling provides benefits besides reducing the trash in our landfills and preventing pollution in our land, water and air, it also offers recyclers a feeling of personal satisfaction.

“Just a small amount of time spent doing research can help Floridians and visitors incorporate easy and long-lasting recycling habits into their everyday lives,” said Mary Jean Yon, Director of DEP’s Division of Waste Management. “America Recycles Day is a perfect opportunity to remind ourselves that each recycling accomplishment, no matter how small, should instill a sense of pride as we work together to preserve our nation’s limited resources.”

DEP’s top ten list of handy recycling tips for Floridians includes some ideas suggested by Earth911.org:

1. *Know what you’re recycling and where to recycle it:* Driving around to five different recycling centers to find a home for your electronics, for example, can easily be avoided with some research. Find out where to recycle almost anything using Earth911.org.
2. *Recycle in groups:* If you are dropping off recycling, you’ll need a car instead of relying on a bike or public transportation. Get some friends together and recycle on the same day with one car-load to reduce your carbon footprint.
3. *Donate items you no longer need:* Wearable clothes can be donated to charity organizations or local shelters. Women's business clothing can be donated to Dress for Success, which offers them to

disadvantaged women looking for employment (www.dressforsuccess.org). Un-wearable clothes may be donated to pet shelters for bedding.

4. *Use reusable retail bags for shopping:* Invest in reusable retail bags that can be used over and over, eliminating the one-time use of plastic or paper bags. Keep reusable bags on your car seat or near your door so it's easy to remember to grab them when you exit the car.
5. *Pre-cycle when you shop.* Nearly everything you buy at the grocery store will come in some sort of container. Look for products in containers that are easy to recycle or reuse.
6. *Start green-cycling.* What happens to all the waste you create while gardening? Some communities have yard waste pick-up services, but an alternative is composting your leaves and yard clippings.
7. *Reuse before you recycle.* Plastic containers can be washed and used to store leftovers before they are recycled. Paper can be recycled no matter how many times it is written on.
8. *Pass along the message.* The current recycling rate in Florida is around 28 percent. By passing on some recycling knowledge, you can help raise that rate, and that is worth talking about.
9. *Travel green.* Look for hotels that are committed to recycling and other waste reduction measures. To find hotels designated as Florida Green Lodges, please visit www.dep.state.fl.us/greenlodging.
10. *Take simple steps to create less waste.* From reducing junk mail to buying waste free gifts, there are a number of ways to reduce and prevent waste.

One unique feature of America Recycles Day is the opportunity for people to sign a personal pledge to recycle. For the sixth consecutive year, DEP, along with Recycle Florida Today, Creative Recycling Systems, Inc. and Publix Super Markets are sponsoring the Florida (K-12) Schools Recycling Pledge Card Contest. The three schools that submit the most recycling pledge cards will be awarded with a refurbished computer and monitor. Last year, more than 18,000 pledges to recycle and buy more recycled products were collected by elementary, middle and high school students.

Encouraging Florida's residents and visitors to recognize the importance of recycling will also help the state achieve the new statewide recycling goal of 75 percent by 2020.

For more information on America Recycles Day 2009 and events, visit

www.dep.state.fl.us/waste/categories/recycling/AR/2009/ar09.htm.

Each community has different recycling guidelines. To learn about recycling in your county or city, contact your local recycling coordinator by visiting:

www.dep.state.fl.us/waste/categories/recycling/pages/contact_counties.htm.

For more information on the new statewide recycling goal of 75 percent, and to share your comments on ways to achieve this goal and view comments from others on DEP's web-based forum, visit

www.dep.state.fl.us/waste/recyclinggoal75/.

[View the Governor's proclamation.](#)