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Tuesday, April 6, 2004

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Recycle your unwanted plastic plant pots

[SARAH JACKSON](#) THE OLYMPIAN If you garden, even a little, you know it doesn't take long to accumulate plastic plant pots.

Unless you use them for basic-black container gardening, every new plant you buy from a nursery builds your collection of soil-sprinkled buckets.

Thurston County doesn't have a curbside recycling program for pots, but you don't want to throw them away, either.

Fortunately, there are a few nurseries and organizations willing to accept them for reuse for free.

Be courteous, however, with your donations. Drop off only the requested sizes and do it during business hours.

It's a good idea to check in with staff before leaving anything at a business.

Dumping unwanted, unorganized pots will only cost someone else money in disposal fees. Don't bring anything other than nursery-grade plastic pots unless you check with the nursery first.

- **Community Recycle Days** for Thurston County will be from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 17 at South Sound Speedway and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 24 at the Thurston County Fairgrounds. Event staff will accept only 2-gallon pots (roughly 8 inches in diameter) for no charge. See [www.co.thurston.wa.us/wwm](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/wwm) or call 360-786-5494 for more information.

- **South Puget Sound Community College's** horticulture program accepts 4-inch diameter pots, square or circular. Drop them off at the main campus, 2011 Mottman Road S.W., Olympia, at the picnic table under the overhang at the potting shed, which is next to the campus greenhouse near Building 29 (across from the gymnasium) on the outer loop road. Visit [www.spscc.ctc.edu](http://www.spscc.ctc.edu) for a map of the campus or call 360-754-7711 for more information. Write Brent Chapman at [bchapman@spscc.ctc.edu](mailto:bchapman@spscc.ctc.edu) with questions.

- **Bark and Garden Center** -- 3334 Mud Bay Road N.W., Olympia; 360-352-2955 -- accepts used plastic pots if they're the 1-gallon size or larger. Be sure to check in with a staff member before dropping off items.

- **Boulevard Nursery** -- 2021 Boulevard Road S.E., Olympia; 360-352-1728 -- accepts the 1-gallon size or larger.

"We give a lot away to different causes," said Boulevard Nursery owner Jeff Nevin. "We have new

ones that we sell."

- **College Street Nursery** -- 3613 College St. S.E., Lacey; 360-491-1688 -- accepts 2-gallon and larger pots. Rick Pattison, a manager at the nursery, said the business is inundated with several thousand 1-gallon pots.

- **Gordon's Garden Center** -- 308 Yelm Ave. E., Yelm; 360-458-2481 -- accepts 1-gallon and larger pots. Bring in 10-gallon and larger pots, and you'll receive a coupon for \$1 off anything in the store for each pot.

Call your favorite nursery or garden club about their policies on reusing pots if you don't see it listed here. Raising the issue with nurseries might help with recycling programs in the future.

Agri-Plas, a small operation in Salem, Ore., recycles plastic plant pots from about 50 of the state's 2,000-plus nurseries. Those 50 create about 80,000 pounds of waste every week for the company to clean, chip and resell, according to GreenScapes, a newsletter of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

At Agri-Plas, plastics are fed into large machines, where they are chipped and cleaned with high-pressure air and later sold as plastic pellets to a variety of manufacturers to be melted into new products.

- **Agri-Plas:** Call Dari Jongsma at 503-390-2381 for more information.

*Every Tuesday in Living, we'll help you find places to dispose of household items. If you have any creative ideas for reducing, reusing or recycling, contact Sarah Jackson at 360-704-6871 or [sajackso@olympia.gannett.com](mailto:sajackso@olympia.gannett.com).*

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