



Good Neighbor News

Working together to improve our community's environment

June 2014

July 4th: If you blow it up, clean it up.

July 4th is a time for parades, backyard barbecues and of course, fireworks. With the focus on fun, an important part of the celebration gets left until after the holiday or forgotten altogether. Every year following Independence Day, Lincoln and other Lancaster County communities are littered with fireworks debris. This summer Keep Lincoln & Lancaster County Beautiful encourages residents to be responsible community members with one simple request: ***if you blow it up, clean it up.***

Preventing litter is essential to a clean, healthy and safe community. Litter tends to accumulate in places that are already littered, and in littered communities property values go down, crime rates go up and businesses stay away. Local governments spend millions each year keeping communities clean. Cleaning up your litter is part of being a good neighbor. Litter rarely stays in one place and someone else may get stuck cleaning up your mess. Litter is also harmful to the natural environment. Left unattended, it can be washed down storm drains and into streams, rivers and lakes. This makes our natural areas look bad and can harm wildlife. Fireworks in particular are made from several potentially harmful substances, including gunpowder and various metallic compounds. These substances can pollute air, water and soil.

Before the holiday starts, have a plan to safely clean up your fireworks debris. Here's a few helpful tips:

- Have the right cleanup equipment ready.
- Allow spent fireworks to sit for several minutes.
- Ensure fireworks are completely extinguished before approaching. Consider wetting fireworks with water before picking up.
- Use a broom to sweep up debris.
- As a final precaution, temporarily place in a metal bucket or a bucket with sand or water.
- Place cool fireworks in regular trash for disposal.

What We're Doing: KLLCB is working with community partners to prevent fireworks debris and get it cleaned up after the holiday. This includes distributing educational material reminding residents to clean up, providing resources for Neighborhood Associations to conduct a cleanup after the Holiday and conducting surveys to determine the extent of the fireworks debris problem. In addition, KLLCB is partnering with retail fireworks stands to promote fireworks debris cleanup and making cleanup information available through local media outlets. Volunteers are needed. Contact KLLCB if you are interested in being part of the Fireworks Debris Prevention Program.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: Help clean up after the largest 4th of July celebration in Lincoln, the Uncle Sam Jam. The fourth annual Oak Lake Cleanup is scheduled for July 5th at 10am. Each volunteer receives a free reusable water bottle and lunch (while supplies last) and will be entered for a chance to win prizes in a raffle drawing. In 2013, over 200 pounds of trash and fireworks debris was collected by volunteers. For more information contact Erin Kubicek at ekubicek@lincoln.ne.gov or 402-441-7075.



Community Cleanup Corner: Sources of Litter

In each issue of Good Neighbor News, the Community Cleanup Corner focuses on a litter prevention or waste reduction issue that impacts the natural environment of Lincoln & Lancaster County. The topic for this issue is sources of litter.

Where does litter come from? To prevent litter it's helpful to know where litter comes from in the first place. A study by Keep America Beautiful on litter along roadsides shows people's individual actions are the main reason for litter, with a majority of litter coming from motorists and pedestrians.

If you see someone littering from a vehicle, take action. Contact the Nebraska Litter Hotline and report the offense. The Hotline is in partnership with the Lancaster County Sheriff's Department.

52.8% motorists

22.8% pedestrians

16.4% vehicle loads

2.3% vehicle debris

1.5% trash containers

*4.2% unknown

Litter Hotline: 877-No-Littr

www.knb.org

Remove Unwanted Chemicals from Your Home

The Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department hosts household hazardous waste (hhw) collection events several times per year in locations throughout Lincoln.

Find upcoming event information and a complete list of accepted items at lincoln.ne.gov (keyword: household). For information on recycling unaccepted items, check the "Waste Reduction and Recycling Guide" at lincoln.ne.gov (keyword: recycle).

Did you know everyday household cleaners can be toxic? Safely store all cleaning products out of reach of children and pets. If you have cleaning products in your house that are no longer used, bring them to a hhw collection. Instead of buying more cleaning products, consider making your own non-toxic alternatives. For example, vinegar makes a great streak-free glass cleaner. Put the needed amount in a spray bottle, spray on glass surfaces and wipe clean with a microfiber cloth. Vinegar not only cleans well, it is inexpensive and can save you money compared to store bought cleaners.



KLLCB News

** Winners have been announced for KLLCB's annual Cleanest High School Campus Competition. The cleanest campuses were Norris High and East High. Southeast High was recognized for student service and North Star High was recognized as the most improved school.

**On May 22nd KLLCB's Advisory Committee surveyed 12 sites throughout Lincoln for the Community Appearance Index. The Index is a tool designed by Keep America Beautiful to visually assess the appearance of communities using a scoring system ranging from 1-4, with "1" being minimal or no litter and "4" being extremely littered. Lincoln scored a 1.3 on the assessment, with a majority of the surveyed sites showing little to no litter.

Keep Lincoln & Lancaster County Beautiful

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