

NICOLLET COUNTY

A to Z DISPOSAL & RECYCLING GUIDE

- **ADHESIVES**

Glues, caulking compounds, epoxy resins, pastes, joint fillers, wood putty, grout, spackling compounds, rubber cement. Water-based glues can be disposed of in the trash. Any adhesives that are flammable, poisonous, corrosive, or contain petroleum distillates, should be brought to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or a mobile collection event. If the container is completely empty or the substance is completely dried out, it may be disposed of in the trash.

- **AEROSOL CANS**

Aerosol cans contain propellants that may be harmful. Burning aerosol cans creates a safety hazard and should not be a method for disposal. Instead, aerosol cans may be brought to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or a mobile collection event for proper disposal.

- **AGRICULTURAL PESTICIDES**

Through a partnership with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Nicollet County is able to accept agricultural pesticides from facilities free of charge. To ensure good service to all Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or mobile collection event visitors, residents are encouraged to schedule an appointment by calling Blue Earth County (507-304-4381) or Tri-County (507-237-4321) Solid Waste offices.

- **ALUMINUM**

Cans and other aluminum may be recycled at all four Nicollet County Rural Recycling drop-off sites. Aluminum may also be redeemed for cash at scrap metal dealers. See Recycling and Solid Waste page of Nicollet County Property Services Website for contact information of these dealers.

- **AMMUNITION**

Unused or unwanted ammunition, including fireworks and flares, should be brought to Nicollet County Sheriff's Office, 501 S. Minnesota Ave., St. Peter (507-931-1570).

- **ANIMALS**

Dead animals can be picked up by a rendering service (see Rendering Companies in the phone book) or call the Minnesota Department of Health (888-345-0823).

- **ANTI-FREEZE**

Antifreeze can be brought to Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or a mobile collection event for disposal. Many auto service centers will also accept antifreeze and other automobile wastes. When storing your used antifreeze prior to disposal, please avoid mixing with oil or other solvents. Empty containers may be placed in the trash.

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- **APPLIANCES**

Major appliances are required by Minnesota State Statute to be recycled including: clothes washers and dryers, dishwashers, hot water heaters, heat pumps, furnaces, garbage disposals, trash compactors, conventional and microwave ovens, ranges and stoves, air conditioners, dehumidifiers, refrigerators and freezers.

Many new appliance dealers will take your old appliance when you purchase a new one. Make sure that they are using an authorized appliance recycler. Scrap metal and electronics recyclers will also take your appliance. A list of these recyclers can be found under 'Recycling' on the Recycling and Solid Waste page of Nicollet County Property Services Website

Appliances are also accepted at the mobile Tire, Appliance & Electronic Collections. Check the Recycling and Solid Waste page of Nicollet County Property Services Website for dates and locations.

- **ASBESTOS**

Asbestos is a name given to a group of minerals that occur naturally in the environment as bundles of fibers that can be separated into thin, durable threads. These fibers are resistant to heat, fire, and chemicals and do not conduct electricity. For these reasons, asbestos has been used widely in many industries. It has been used in building and construction for insulation, roofing, fireproofing, and sound absorption.

In 1989, the Environmental Protection Agency banned all new uses of asbestos; however, uses developed before 1989 are still allowed. The primary concern with handling asbestos is exposure to airborne asbestos fibers. These fibers, if inhaled, may cause lung damage and may increase the risk of lung cancer and other types of cancer.

Asbestos is accepted at the Ponderosa Landfill in Blue Earth County as well as the Brown County Sanitary Landfill and the Spruce Ridge Resource Management Facility in Glencoe, MN. Before you start an asbestos removal project, call the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Asbestos Hotline at 1-800-657-3864.

- **ASH**

Ashes retain enough heat to ignite other combustible materials for several days after the fire from your fireplace or wood burning stove has been put out. So only place cold or damp ash with your regular household garbage for disposal. More preferably, you can use your wood ash as a fertilizer in home gardens. It can be used in your compost pile to maintain neutral conditions and it can also be used to repel insects, slugs and snails because it draws water from invertebrates' bodies.

- **ASPHALT/TAR or PITCH (for Roofing)**

These materials may be brought to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or a mobile collection event for proper disposal.

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- **ASPHALT SHINGLES or ROOF TAR PAGER**

These materials will need to be taken to a demolition landfill. See Recycling and Solid Waste page of Nicollet County Property Services Website for locations of these facilities.

- **BAGS**

Paper bags can be recycled with other paper recycling. Plastic bags are accepted for recycling at several large grocery and retail stores in the County. Alternatively, plastic bags can be reused for shopping or for a variety of other household reuses. The best solution, however, is to bring a durable, reusable bag with you into the store to place your purchases in.

- **BALLASTS**

You should assume ballasts from fluorescent lamp fixtures contain polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) unless they are marked or tested to show otherwise. Those that are marked as containing PCBs must be managed as hazardous waste and can be brought to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or to a mobile collection for recycling.

- **BATTERIES**

Some batteries contain metals such as mercury, lithium, nickel, or cadmium, which is harmful to the environment if not disposed of properly. If possible, purchase items that can be plugged into an outlet.

Alkaline batteries – non-rechargeable batteries (i.e., size A, AA, AAA, C, D, or 9-volt) purchased after 1991 have much smaller amounts of mercury and require no special handling. These may be safely thrown in the trash.

Auto (lead-acid) batteries – Do **NOT** throw lead-acid batteries in the trash or bury them! They need to be recycled. By Minnesota law, any business that sells new batteries and replaces them in your car is required to collect batteries (up to five per person) for recycling. They are also accepted, free of charge, at the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or at mobile collections.

Button batteries – These are commonly found in hearing aids, watches, digital thermometers, calculators, toys, and cameras. Silver oxide batteries should **NOT** be placed in household trash but taken to Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or a mobile collection. Lithium batteries and zinc oxide batteries are not hazardous and may be placed in the trash. If you cannot tell the difference, bring all button batteries to a hazardous waste facility or collection for disposal. Never burn these or other types of batteries in a burn barrel.

Rechargeable batteries – These are typically nickel-cadmium (Ni-CAD) and are required to be recycled according to Minnesota State Law. Do **NOT** place them in with the household trash but take them to Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or a mobile collection.

- **BOOKS**

Books can be shared with friends, neighbors, co-workers, or donated to libraries or charities.

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They can also be sold at garage sales. Consider the library or a used book store before purchasing a new book. Books can be recycled with other paper recycling. Hardcover books must first have their covers removed.

- **BOXES**

Corrugated boxes – Cardboard with two thin layers separated by a wavy layer in the middle are recyclable. If the cardboard is contaminated with food or oils (ex. pizza delivery boxes), has a waxy coating on it (ex. frozen food boxes), or has attached Styrofoam supports, it cannot be recycled and must be placed in the trash. Flatten boxes prior to recycling.

Chipboard/boxboard – Cardboard that consists of one layer that is usually white or grey on the inside are recyclable with other paper recycling. Examples of this type of cardboard are cracker, cereal, shoe, and gift boxes. As above, if the box is contaminated with food waste, it should go in the trash.

- **BRUSH, BRANCHES, TREE, & HEDGE TRIMMINGS**

These materials are prohibited from going to the landfill and should be composted. Nicollet County residents may utilize the Riverbend Recycling Center in North Mankato or take materials to SMC Compost facility.

- **BUILDING MATERIALS**

These are categorized as waste materials that result from new construction and remodeling. Leftover materials can be donated to organizations such as Habitat for Humanity. They can also be donated to the Product Reuse Room at Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility. Carefully measure and purchase only what you can use will help to reduce the amount of left over material.

Building materials cannot be burned and items such as concrete, sheetrock/drywall, wood, plastic, metal, insulation, roofing/shingles, siding, bricks, etc. may be taken to a landfill or demolition landfill.

However, the following may contain chemicals that are unsafe in a demolition debris landfill and should be separated from other building materials before being disposed of. If they are not separated, you may be required to pay a fine for an improperly sorted load or a higher fee if the entire load has to be disposed of as garbage. See individual listings for disposal information.

Tires	Paint
Garbage	Caulk
Tar & Adhesives	Appliances
Carpet	Treated Wood (plywood, particle board)

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- **BURNING**

Burning garbage has been **illegal** in Minnesota since 1969.

Even non-hazardous materials, such as paper products, painted items, and brightly colored plastics, now contain harmful compounds that they didn't have many years ago. Burning these types of items now will release cadmium, mercury, lead, dioxins and other chemicals in the ash, which get into the air and create health and environmental risks.

Dioxins are carcinogens. These and other compounds produced when garbage is burned in a burn barrel can cause cancer as well as other health problems. The ash and smoke from your burn barrel or your neighbor's does not travel far! The chemicals released from this type of burning land on your garden and on your farm fields.

One burn barrel creates **80 times** more pollution than an industrial incinerator. Burn barrels have low-temperature fires and no emission controls. In contrast, the incinerator at the Wilmarth Waste to Energy Facility in Mankato utilizes careful combustion practices to maximize destruction of potential contaminants. The facility is strictly regulated by state and federal law. In addition, the heat produced from burning garbage also creates steam for electricity and the ash goes into a landfill specifically designed to prevent groundwater pollution.

Reduce, reuse, and recycle all that you can. The rest can be collected by a licensed hauler or taken to an appropriate facility. Nicollet County ordinances prohibit the burning of any material other than vegetative material or untreated lumber. Rural residents must contact the Nicollet County Sheriff's Department (507-934-7100) prior to burning brush, leaves, or other yard waste.

- **BULBS**

Compact fluorescent, fluorescent, high intensity discharge (HID) and neon light bulbs – contain small amounts of mercury. In Minnesota, it is **illegal** to place them in the trash. Instead, burned out or broken compact fluorescent, fluorescent, HID, and neon bulbs can be recycled in order to prevent the release of mercury. Recycle these types of bulbs for free at any Menards, Lowes, or Home Depot stores in Minnesota. You can also bring these bulbs into the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or a mobile collection.

Incandescent bulbs – can be disposed of in the trash.

- **CANS**

Steel or tin cans are recyclable and can be placed in any of the four Nicollet County Rural Recycling drop-off sites. Cans may also be redeemed for cash at scrap metal dealers. See Recycling and Solid Waste page of Nicollet County Property Services Website for locations of these facilities.

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- **CARDBOARD**

See **BOXES** above

- **CATALOGS, MAGAZINES, AND JUNK MAIL**

Catalogs and magazines made from shiny or glossy paper are recyclable and can be placed in any of the four Nicollet County Rural Recycling drop-off sites.

There are also websites that will remove your name from direct mailings (catalogs, magazines, and other mail offers) www.dmchoice.org and phone books www.donttrashtheponebook.org as a way to reduce the amount of material coming into your home.

- **CAULK**

Caulk cannot be disposed of with building demolition debris. If the caulk is generated from household use and it has labeling marked 'danger,' 'warning,' 'caution,' 'flammable,' 'combustible,' or 'corrosive,' it should be brought to Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or a mobile collection.

- **CELL PHONES**

See **ELECTRONICS** below

- **CHRISTMAS TREES AND HOLIDAY DECORATIONS**

Live Christmas Trees – Live trees, wreaths, and greenery can be composted at the Riverbend Recycling Center or SMC Compost Site where they will be chipped into mulch. They must be free of ornaments, lights, wire, tinsel, and other decorations. Trees that have been flocked (sprayed with glitter or other material) **cannot** be composted.

Holiday Lights – Lights can be recycled at participating facilities. Check for local listings. Blue Earth County Hazardous Waste Facilities will also accept strings of light for recycling.

- **CLEANERS**

Cleaning products, corrosive cleaners, and solvent-based cleaners, or products that are toxic, flammable, or poisonous should be brought to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or a mobile collection. Never mix different cleaning products.

- **CLOTHING**

Clean, dry, and usable clothing and other textiles can be donated to local charities and thrift stores. There are USAgain and other drop boxes for clothing placed around cities in and near Nicollet County. If clothing is not usable, it can be disposed of in the trash.

- **COMPOST**

Nicollet County residents may bring their brush, branches, trees, and hedge trimmings to the Riverbend Recycling Center in North Mankato.

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Alternatively, home compost piles can also be easily constructed and maintained to provide free natural fertilizer for home garden use.

- **DEMOLITION DEBRIS**

Concrete, sheetrock/drywall, wood, plaster, metal, insulation, roofing/shingles, siding, etc. that have been removed from existing households can be brought to a demolition landfill. SMC, Alter Metal Recycling, Hansen Recycling & Transfer Station, and Valley Demolition & Recycling are some of the options for Nicollet County residents to dispose of demolition debris. See Recycling and Solid Waste page of Nicollet County Property Services Website for contact information of these facilities.

Please see **BUILDING MATERIALS** for a list of items that will need to be separated in order to avoid higher fees for disposal.

- **ELECTRONICS**

Electronics, can be recycled at several facilities within or near Nicollet County, including Riverbend Recycling Center, LJP Enterprises, Waste Management Recycling Center, Green Tech Recycling, and Minnesota Waste Processing Co. Each facility has its own set of fees and it is recommended to call for hours, location, and fees. The contact information for these facilities can be found on the Recycling and Solid Waste page of Nicollet County Property Services website.

In addition, Nicollet County provides the opportunity for residents to dispose of the electronics along with tires and appliances each year at the mobile Tire, Appliance & Electronic Collections. Check the Recycling and Solid Waste page of Nicollet County Property Services Website for dates and locations.

Alternatively, many retailers and manufacturers are providing consumers the opportunity to recycle electronics for free or at a reduced charge. Be sure to check with where you purchased your equipment or the manufacturer's website before disposal.

- **EXPLOSIVES**

See **AMUNITION** above.

- **FERTILIZER**

Fertilizer purchased for household use can be brought into the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or to a mobile collection. Fertilizers that do not contain herbicides or pesticides do not require special disposal. Those with words such as 'pre-emergent,' 'weed preventer,' 'weed and feed,' 'plus 2,' 'insect control,' 'disease control' contain pesticides and should be brought to the Blue Earth Count Household Hazardous Waste Facility or to a mobile collection.

As a word of caution, please apply fertilizers only on the targeted plants. If fertilizer falls on hard surfaces such as pavement or cement, be sure to sweep it up before it is washed down

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storm drains. When fertilizer reaches local lakes and rivers, it can trigger excessive algae growth, which in turn leads to depleted oxygen conditions for other aquatic life.

- **FIRE EXTINGUISHERS**

Check the pressure gauge to note if it is EMPTY and in need of a recharge or if it is NOT EMPTY and possibly overcharged or at the correct pressure:

Not Empty – Contact your local fire department. You may be able to exchange your extinguisher or get it recharged. You may also take it to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or a mobile collection.

Empty – Remove the head to indicate that all the contents have been removed. The steel body can then be recycled with other metal recycling.

- **FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS**

Gasoline, kerosene, lamp oil, butane, propane, gas/oil mixtures, or other fuels should be brought into the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or to a mobile collection.

- **FLUORESCENT LIGHT BULBS**

See **BULBS** above

- **GARBAGE**

Nicollet County residents can choose a garbage hauler licensed for the County for collection services or self-haul. A list of licensed haulers and places accepting self-hauled garbage is provided on the Recycling and Solid Waste page of the Nicollet County Property Services Website.

- **GASOLINE**

See **FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS** above.

- **GLASS**

Clear, green, and brown glass food and drink bottles and jars are recyclable and can be deposited at any of the four Nicollet County Rural Recycling drop-off sites. Labels do not need to be removed but the bottles should be rinsed and the caps or lids removed.

- **GRASS**

Nicollet County residents may bring grass clippings and other yard waste to the Riverbend Recycling Center in North Mankato or to SMC Compost Facility in Mankato. An even better alternative is to compost grass clippings at home. When added to other garden wastes and organic material, a natural soil amendment is produced.

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- **HAZARDOUS WASTE**

A material is considered hazardous if the container states 'Danger,' 'Warning,' 'Poison,' 'Flammable,' 'Toxic,' 'Corrosive,' 'Combustible,' or 'Caution,' or if it contains acid, lye, petroleum distillates, or if it contains hazardous chemicals.

Store these products properly and use according to directions and for intended purposes. If the container is empty, and the product is completely gone, the container may be placed in the trash.

Any hazardous material that comes from a household may be taken to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or to a mobile collection. ([Blue Earth County Hazardous Waste Facility](#))

- **INSULATION**

See **DEMOLITION DEBRIS** above.

- **LEAD PAINT**

About 75% of homes built before 1978 contain some lead-based paint – the older the home, the more likely it contains lead-based paint. Ingesting material with lead can lead to poisoning causing permanent problems with health, learning, and behavior in young children and high blood pressure, kidney damage, and fertility problems in adults.

Paint cans/containers with lead-based paint may be brought to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or to a mobile collection for proper disposal.

- **LEAVES**

Nicollet County residents may bring leaves and other yard waste to the Riverbend Recycling Center in North Mankato or to SMC Compost Facility in Mankato. An even better alternative is to compost yard waste at home, producing a free, natural soil amendment.

- **LIGHT BULBS**

See **BULBS** above

- **MATERIALS EXCHANGE**

Materials Exchange is a service that matches unwanted, but usable materials with other businesses that have a use for those items, such as office furniture, office supplies, pallets, packing peanuts, etc. The statewide Materials Exchange uses a computer network to publicize the program and connect waste generators with potential users of the materials. For more information, visit their website at www.mnexchange.org

- **MEDICINE & PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**

Unused drugs can be safely and anonymously disposed of at several locations throughout the County, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Locations include the Nicollet County Sheriff's Office

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(501 S. Minnesota Ave., St. Peter), North Mankato Police Dept. (1001 Belgrade Ave., North Mankato), and the Brown County Sheriff's Office (15 S. Washington St., New Ulm). Remove as much of the packaging as possible. Containers with liquids should be placed in a sealable, plastic bag to prevent leaks.

- **MERCURY**

Mercury may be harmful if swallowed, inhaled or touched. One broken thermometer releases enough mercury to contaminate a small lake. In Minnesota, it is illegal to throw away a mercury thermometer or thermostat, even if it is not broken. Always transport mercury thermometers in a rigid container to avoid breakage.

Mercury thermometers and thermostats can be disposed of at the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility and at any of the mobile collections.

If someone breaks a mercury-containing device or spills mercury, do not vacuum the mercury or do anything to heat it.

Follow the directions in the MPCA factsheet or call the Minnesota Duty Officer at 1-800-422-0798.

- **METAL**

Scrap metal (tin and steel) can be recycled to create new products and is a valuable material. Many scrap metal dealers in the area will accept a large variety of metals. Please call ahead for pricing and for materials accepted. See Recycling and Solid Waste page of Nicollet County PROPERTY SERVICES Website for locations of these dealers.

- **MOTOR OIL & OIL FILTERS**

Used motor oil is a valuable resource. Because it never wears out, it can be recycled into new oil products. If you change your own oil or have used oil and filters, make sure they are stored properly prior to disposal. Label your used oil containers clearly in order to avoid mixing the oil with other automotive fluids. Other fluids mixed with the used oil makes it more expensive to recycle the oil. Never place used motor oil and filters in the garbage, dump on the ground, in water, down a sewer or storm drain. It is **illegal**.

For disposal options, contact the retailer where your oil was purchased from. In Minnesota, any place that sells motor oil must post a sign listing a phone number for disposal options or the location of the nearest collection site. Some collection facilities may charge a fee so it is recommended to contact the facility for information. A list of retailers that accept certain automotive wastes, including used motor oil, is also available from Nicollet County Environmental Services. Please phone (507) 931-7070 for a copy of this list or for more information. Used oil, oil filters, and oil-contaminated materials are also accepted at the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility and at mobile collections

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- **PESTICIDES**

Homeowners can take unused pesticides to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or to a mobile collection. For information on how to dispose of agricultural pesticides, contact the Minnesota Department of Agriculture at 1-800-657-3986.

- **PAINT**

Reduce the amount of leftover paint from a project by first calculating how much paint you need to buy. As rule of thumb, purchase 1 gallon of paint for every 400 square feet of area to paint. Keep left over paint in its original container, fitting the lid on tightly after use. This will also prevent it from becoming contaminated with debris. Do not allow latex paint to freeze. Store your paint in a dry area at a temperature above 40⁰F. Do not keep paint in an unheated garage.

Unwanted paint, latex or oil, can be taken to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or to a mobile collection. Empty plastic cans may be thrown in the trash as long as the can is empty and dry. Paint rollers and brushes that are not reusable may be dried out and placed in the trash.

- **PAINT THINNERS & SOLVENTS**

Common solvents include paint thinner, remover and stripper, nail polish remover, rubbing/wood alcohol, spot and stain removers, gasoline additives, and deicers. Solvents can be very harmful and there are some precautions you should take before using them. Avoid breathing vapors and work in ventilated areas when using these products. Do not mix solvents or fill containers full. Solvent require room to expand as temperatures fluctuate. Never smoke near solvents and keep flames, sparks, or heat sources away from solvents. Solvents are flammable and could be toxic so they should never be thrown away, poured down the drain, or dumped on the ground.

Bring unused or unusable paint thinners or solvents to the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility or to a mobile collection.

- **PAPER**

You may not realize but 40% of our trash is paper and of that, about 90% of that could have been recycled. Paper, such as mail, office, magazines, newspapers, phone books, and other types of cardboard (see **CARDBOARD** above) can be recycled and can be placed in any of the four Nicollet County Rural Recycling drop-off sites. Paper is also accepted at Riverbend Recycling Center in North Mankato and at other recycling facilities as listed on the Nicollet County Environmental Services webpage.

- **PLASTICS**

On plastic containers, there is a small triangular symbol made of arrows with a number in the middle of the triangle. The symbol, and the number contained within, helps identify the type of plastic the container is made from.

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The number on the bottom of a container indicates the general category of plastic it is made from, but does not contain any information on the details of the plastic composition. Plastic containers often contain different dyes, plasticizers, UV inhibitors, softeners, and other chemicals. Those additives change the properties of the plastic and make it incompatible with other categories of plastic.

Plastics #1 and #2 are accepted at the four Nicollet County Rural Recycling drop-off sites as well as other facilities accepting recycling as listed on the Nicollet County Environmental Services webpage. Please rinse and remove caps and rings.

- **SHARPS**

Sharps, including needles, lancets, and syringes and safe disposal is necessary to prevent injury and disease transmission from needle-sticks. To keep everyone safe, never place containers with used needles or syringes or loose needles in a recycling bin or garbage. There are several options for sharps disposal in Nicollet County including Nicollet County Health and Human Services (622 S. Front St. St. Peter) and Hy-Vee Pharmacies in New Ulm (2015 S. Broadway St.), and Mankato (401 S. Riverfront Dr.). Other options include the following:

- Checking with your healthcare provider – some healthcare providers collect needles, lancets, and syringes used by their patients at home. Learn and follow your healthcare provider’s instructions for safe sharps disposal.
- Destroying your needles at home – purchase a destruction unit or contact Safeguard Medical Technologies at 877-797-4277
- Using a mail-in program – contact Stericycle, Inc. (866-783-7422) or Sharps, Inc. (800-772-5657)

- **SMOKE DETECTORS**

There are two types of smoke detectors, ionizing and photoelectric. Look for photoelectric when you are purchasing a smoke detector because ionizing detectors contain a small amount of radioactive material. In some cases, this can be a hazardous amount and the detector will need to be brought to the Blue Earth County Hazardous Waste Facility or to a mobile collection for disposal. Photoelectric detectors can be disposed of in a trash bag after removing and recycling the batteries.

- **STYROFOAM**

Styrofoam from disposable dining ware (cups, plates, etc.) and packaging materials cannot be recycled. If the material is starch-based, the Styrofoam will dissolve in water and can be disposed of this way if they will not be reused. If the material is polystyrene, can be stored and reused for future mailing needs or given to others to use. It can be used to store or move fragile items. If no other option is available, the Styrofoam can be disposed of in the trash.

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- **TANKS, HELIUM OR PROPANE**

Because gas cylinders and tanks contain a compressed gas, if they are thrown in the trash, they can explode and cause injury. Even if the tank may seem empty, enough flammable gas remains to cause an explosion even if it no longer supports a flame. There are two varieties of propane and helium tanks; reusable and one time use. For both, attempt to use all fuel in the tank prior to disposal to reduce the chance of an explosion. Call the retailer where the tank was purchased to inquire about a “take back” or recycling program. If this is not an option the Blue Earth County Household Hazardous Waste Facility accepts these tanks. However, fees may apply so please call first for information.

- **TELEPHONES**

See **ELECTRONICS** above

- **TONER & INK JET CARTRIDGES**

Toner and Ink Jet Cartridges can be recycled at most office supply stores.

- **TIRES**

It is **illegal** to burn tires, throw them in the garbage or dump them along the roadside. Most tire dealers will accept and recycle used tires for a small fee, regardless of where the tires were purchased. To receive a list of retailers that accept tires, please call Nicollet County Environmental Services at 507-934-7070.

In addition, Nicollet County provides the opportunity for residents to dispose of tires along with electronics and appliances each year at the mobile Tire, Appliance & Electronic Collections. Check the Recycling and Solid Waste page of Nicollet County Property Services Website for dates and locations. Alternatively, tires can be taken to a landfill for a fee.

- **VACUUM CLEANERS**

Metal parts of vacuum cleaners can be recycled for scrap metal and if the vacuum contains rechargeable batteries, they can be removed and recycled with other **BATTERIES** (see above). Electric wire can also be recycled. The rest can be thrown in the garbage

- **WATER HEATERS**

See **APPLIANCES** above