

Going Green in Londonderry **Freecycling: Trash to Treasure!**

Ready to get rid of something that can still function? We usually donate unwanted items to Goodwill or the Salvation Army, but what if they won't accept it?

You've heard of recycling; now try *freecycling*. It's as simple as e-mailing friends or family, posting notes on bulletin boards at work, or listing them on online sources such as Craigslist or **Freecycle.org**.

Freecycle.org was created in 2003 to "keep good stuff out of landfills," and has since spread to over 85 countries with thousands of local groups and millions of users. The Freecycle Network claims it diverts nearly 500 tons a day out of landfills.

Got some clothes your kids have outgrown?: Old but serviceable school supplies? An extra mattress? Old tools from your workshop? A used VCR or DVD player? A ping pong table or exercise equipment that's just collecting dust? The list is endless.

You'll be surprised what has value for people: trophies, kiddy swimming pools, wooden shelves, Xmas decorations, old push mowers, comic books, pieces of furniture, arts and crafts, Jello molds, hamster supplies, crutches, laundry baskets, a pile of bricks...you never know until you ask.

Freecycling even works in reverse: tell the online community what you need and chances are there's someone out there trying to get rid of exactly what you're looking for. Best of all, it's all free!

Perhaps your daughter danced ballet last year but now she wants to try soccer; see if you can find someone to trade their cleats for her old ballet slippers. Even if you can't barter a trade, don't toss those old tutus. Freecycling isn't just about getting new (old) stuff; it's about reducing the amount of waste we burden the earth with each time we drag our trashcans to the curb.

One practice that's becoming more popular is freecycling paint. Say you have leftover paint from renovating your kitchen and you want to tackle the bedrooms next; maybe your neighbor could use your paint, or has a color you're looking for.

It's easy to get started

Just Google "Freecycle NH" or "Trash Nothing!" and you'll find local groups in Derry, Manchester and many other towns that you can join instantly – no approval is needed. The only requirement is that anything you list must be **legal** and **free**.

So next time you go to throw something out, remember that just because the garbage truck took it away, it doesn't mean it's gone. Instead, it's sitting in a landfill, along with the other millions of tons of garbage we generate. Before tossing it, try freecycling it. And you'll probably make somebody else very happy with the deal, too.

~ Courtesy of Londonderry's Solid Waste and Environment Committee and NH Department of Environmental Services ~