

REAL News Release
May 15, 2013

Backyard Composting Workshops

Learn how to compost, troubleshoot, and make inexpensive home composters

Composting is nature's way of recycling valuable materials. Humans have learned how to do it and the benefits to us are enormous: we get "gardener's gold", the best supplement for our gardens and lawns; we reduce garbage going to landfill by 30%; and our garbage no longer stinks!

It's been many years since backyard composting was promoted in the region, so REAL has decided to hold some Backyard Composting workshops and create a demonstration Backyard Composting site at its Environment Centre.

The workshops will be led by Cheryl Nash of ecoPerth. Cheryl has a 25-year history in backyard, large scale and commercial composting and has managed dozens of centralized composting facilities across North America, Europe and Thailand.

A decade or so ago, many municipalities in the region provided subsidized composters. Many people took advantage, some tried and gave up. Some of the subsidized composters were not the best, so if you had struggles it may not be your fault.

These workshops are intended to help new and experienced composters, and those in between, who may have tried and stopped, or who might have a rather inactive pile in the backyard, or those who just have questions about managing their existing pile.

They will be held Sat. June 1 and Sat. June 22, from 10 am to noon at the REAL Reuse Store and Environment Centre with a third planned for late September. Cheryl will explain how to compost, and how to address various problems, including some tips for managing food waste in the kitchen and winter challenges. Participants will also build various styles of inexpensive composters that can be used as is, or to augment existing systems. They will be made from readily available materials such as pallets, chicken fencing and tarps. These composters will then be used in the demonstration site.

Registration is required so we can plan appropriate materials. Please either email Cheryl@ecoperth.on.ca or call the REAL office at 613-283-9500. REAL is subsidizing the workshops, but there is a \$10 fee to offset some costs. As a bonus, REAL is providing participants with a free membership for 2013. REAL is also pleased to provide some completely subsidized workshop spaces on request.

REAL is also asking that if anyone has a composter that they don't plan to use, that they consider donating it so it can either be put to use at the demonstration site, or provided to another user. Please drop it at the REAL Deal Reuse Store at 85 William St. West in Smiths Falls, opposite the Railway Museum.

The Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL) is a 24-year old community based environmental organization focused on practical solutions. Visit us at REALaction.ca

