

# The Resource

A Publication of the City of North Augusta  
Stormwater Management Department

## Citizens Making a Difference!

### Sixth Annual Household Hazardous Waste Event to be held May 17

On May 17, 2008, the city will hold its 6th Annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection event at the Kroger Shopping Center in North Augusta from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Over the past five years, residents have collected and brought tons of hazardous waste to the event. The participation has been tremendous and the stormwater management department (SWMD) would like to offer our thanks to all that removed wastes from their garages, barns, storage buildings, and even the space under the kitchen sink! The collection of these hazardous materials ensures that they will never impact our environment. The wastes are properly processed and disposed of, and not land filled. By bringing your wastes to this event, you are personally involved in the long-term protection of our natural resources.

The SWMD conducts a survey on the day of the events. A least 626 residents (vehicle count) have participated to date. We accept most residential household hazardous wastes at the events. We don't accept radioactive or biological wastes. As you can see by the chart, most of what is collected include paint, oil and fuel,



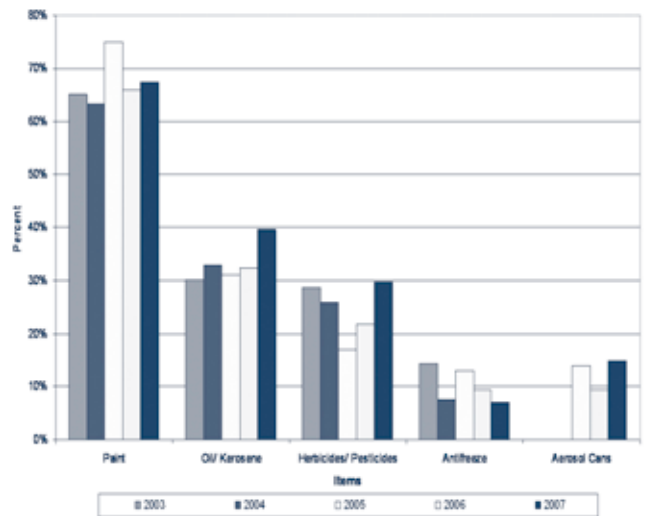
Paint wastes most collected item

and pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers wastes. The chemicals collected so far have included DDT, mercury, chlordane, muriatic acid, propane, tars, and household corrosive substances. The variety and integrity of the containers that are brought indicate that these substances could easily impact our environment. Rusted out cans, ripped bags, and leaking containers are commonly found in the mix. If these chemicals had reached our land fill, imagine how many years these pollutants would have been carried by stormwater to the groundwater, ditches, and waterways located near them.

When participants are asked what would they do with these wastes had the event not been held, the most common answer is that they would hold on to them (60%). Many participants explained that they were holding on to the wastes for 10, 20, and even 30 years. If these wastes are stored outside and are leaking or slowly spilling to the ground, they are impacting the environment already. That is why it is important to bring them to the event. The second most common response was that participants did not know what to do with the wastes (25%) and many stated that they would put them in the garbage for pickup (15%) thus sending them to the landfill.

If you have wastes that you need to dispose of, the process is simple. After

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Summary 2003-2007  
(Items brought by participants)



collecting the wastes safely in your vehicle (placed on tarps, covers, or in additional bagging and stored in the trunk, truck bed, trailer, etc.), drive up to the collection point. You can remain in your vehicle while city staff unloads the waste. The waste is separated into containers by the processing company. It only takes a few minutes to drive through the line. Within a couple of hours of the event, the waste is loaded and the trucks haul it away for processing.

The SWMD department is proud of the efforts of the citizens of North Augusta. Properly disposing household hazardous wastes is the safest way to keep it from polluting the environment. The importance of this program for the long-term protection of our natural resources can not be measured. Please contact us at [stormwater@northaugusta.net](mailto:stormwater@northaugusta.net) or (803) 441-4246 if you have questions.

March 15th

## North Augusta Organizes an Electronics Recycling Event

For those that have asked, the city is now offering an electronics recycling event. The North Augusta Sanitation Department has organized an event on March 15th, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at the Crossroads Market (Kroger) Shopping Center in North Augusta. Recycle old computers, monitors, CPUs, CD, floppy and zip drives, scanners, printers, fax machines, cell phones, adding machines and more. No TVs, electric or microwave ovens. For more information visit our events calendar at [www.northaugusta.net](http://www.northaugusta.net) or contact Kurt Zollinger at (803) 441-4331 or call (803) 441-4245.



## Species profile:

# Chinese Tallow Tree “Popcorn Tree”

## *Sapium sebiferum/Triadica sebifera*

The Chinese Tallow tree has heart shaped colorful autumn foliage and is native to Asia. It is resistant to flooding, drought, and fire. Because of its beauty and tolerance, it has been a popular choice for use in landscapes. The fruit of the tree resembles popcorn, thus the common name, the popcorn tree. The first record of its introduction into the United States is found in a letter from Benjamin Franklin written in 1772 to Dr. Noble Wimberly Jones of the Georgia colony. In a letter published by M. Bell in 1966, Franklin wrote: “I send also a few seeds of the Chinese Tallow Tree, which will I believe grow & thrive with you. ‘Tis a most useful plant”. The tallow was also introduced in Charleston, South Carolina (1700’s) as an agricultural crop for use in the soap industry. While the tree is a beneficial crop in China, it has now become an invasive species in the southeast. Chinese tallow trees can be found growing in North Augusta.

The Chinese Tallow tree is sold as an ornamental in some states. In others it has been classified as a nuisance species because of its ability to invade and destroy natural ecosystems. It can thrive in well-drained uplands as well as in bottomlands, shores of water bodies, and even on floating islands. The seeds can be dispersed by birds and also by moving water including stormwater. If a tallow tree is located near storm ditches, waterways, or streams, the seeds can travel to germinate.

When tallow invades an area, it takes over and creates a tallow forest. It is

believed that the tallow (milky white oil) from dropped leaves contains chemicals that can change the soil chemistry below it, barring other plants from growing there. To make matters worse, the tree reproduces in as little as three years and can remain productive for up to 60 years. Researchers say that in coastal South Carolina, an individual plant can produce more than 100,000 seeds in a year. When tallow replaces native vegetation, it negatively affects birds and insects by degrading habitat. It can shade out grasses and is potentially harmful to humans and animals because of the toxins in the berries. It is not safe to handle the berries of this tree.

There are some positive things about this tree. The fruit of the tree is a white seed that contains 40% extractable material. It can be used to produce valuable products. Tallow is being studied by researchers as a source of biodiesel fuel from its seeds. Mississippi State and the University of Louisiana concur that making biodiesel from Chinese Tallow oil would make the invasive tree useful and at the same time would help the United States produce a domestic source of biodiesel fuel. They are still trying to determine how to keep the invasive tree in check while trying to produce alternative fuels from it.

Currently, tallow trees are one of six trees listed by the SC Exotic Pest Plant Council as a “severe threat” to South Carolina. The tree is known as the “terrible tallow” and has been added to The Nature Conservancy’s list of the “Dirty



*Dozen, Americas Least Wanted*”. The spread of the Chinese tallow across the southeast has been rampant. The tree is now found in Louisiana, Texas and parts of Arkansas. It is also found in California. Researchers at the US Geological Services (USGS) National Wetlands Research Center (NWRC) and the National Air and Space Administration (NASA) are using infrared imaging to map the spread of the tallow tree in the southeast.

Chinese tallow is very hard to get rid of. Trees can be chopped down, roots can be dug up and removed, and herbicides can be used and the seedlings will still return. Tallow can sprout even if the top is killed and new plants can emerge from the roots some distance from the stem. If you have popcorn tree growing in your landscape, it is important to remove it. Mature trees should be cut down. The final cut should be made close to the ground and as level as possible to create an area to apply a herbicide. Stumps that are not treated with a herbicide will sprout to form multiple-trunked trees. Please contact the SWMD at [stormwater@northaugusta.net](mailto:stormwater@northaugusta.net) to learn what works best to eradicate this tree from your landscape.

## UPCOMING EVENTS!

### Professional Landscaping & Lawn Maintenance Seminar Luncheon

Thursday, March 13, 2008  
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

North Augusta Community Center

Professional landscapers and lawn maintenance firms are invited to join us for a free lunch seminar! The stormwater management department is hosting the seminar for firms that do business in North Augusta. There will be an overview of stormwater “do’s & don’ts” regarding application of pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizers in the city. If you have questions or are interested in signing up for the luncheon, please call 803-441-4246 or email us at [stormwater@northaugusta.net](mailto:stormwater@northaugusta.net). The deadline for registration is **February 29, 2008!**

### Electronics’ Recycling Event

Saturday, March 15th  
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Crossroads Market  
(Kroger) Shopping Center

803-441-4331 or  
803-441-4245.

### 2008 Kids Earth Day Celebration

Saturday, April 19  
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

North Augusta’s Lions Memorial Field  
Come enjoy the fun and celebration of Earth Day in North Augusta. For more information visit our website at [www.northaugusta.net](http://www.northaugusta.net) or contact Allison May at (803) 441-4224.

### Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event

May 17, 2008  
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

At the Crossroads Market (Kroger) Shopping Center on Martintown Road.  
Contact us at (803) 441-4246 if you have questions regarding the event.



For additional information contact:

Tanya Strickland, Environmental Coordinator  
City of North Augusta  
Stormwater Management Department  
P.O. Box 6400 • North Augusta, SC 29861-6400  
(803) 441-4246  
[stormwater@northaugusta.net](mailto:stormwater@northaugusta.net)

