

Composting yard waste fine, but mulching better

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

With summer rapidly approaching, some Oakland officials are hoping residents will consider mulching their grass as a means of reducing the amount of clippings to be composted.

"It would really save a lot of time and money," said Thomas G. Waffin, general manager of the Southeastern Oakland County Resource Recovery Authority.

The authority is a consortium that includes the following communities: Berkley, Beverly Hills, Birmingham, Clawson, Ferndale, Hazel Park,

Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Madison Heights, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak, Royal Oak Township and Troy.

Beginning Monday SOCRRA communities resume picking up leaves and grass clippings, providing they are separated and placed in biodegradable bags.

Once collected, yard waste is collected at SOCRRA's transfer station on Coolidge, between 14 and 15 Mile roads, and transported to the authority's composting center in Rochester Hills.

WHILE SOCRRA communities resume composting Monday, two cities

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— Robert F. Deadman
Farmington City Manager

on the western side of the county will begin separate collection for yard waste in July, according to Robert F. Deadman, city manager of

Farmington. They are Farmington and Farmington Hills.

Deadman is also chairman of the Resource Recovery and Recycling Authority of Southwestern Oakland County. It has eight member communities including Farmington Hills, Southfield, Novi, Lyon Township, South Lyon, Wixom and Walled Lake.

Yard waste, of course, is mixed and allowed to decompose into compost, and subsequently used to fertilize lawns, gardens and parks.

Waffin and Deadman, however, said that by mulching, homeowners can reap the benefits as well as saving time and money.

Mulching is the process by which yard waste is cut into fine pieces by the lawnmower. Mulched clippings are allowed to simply fall on the ground to be absorbed by the lawn as fertilizer.

"Mulching (as opposed to bagging) would save everybody," said Deadman. "The city doesn't have to collect the waste and the mulched grass eliminates the need for at least one fertilizing each season."

SOCRRA COMMUNITIES composted more than 46,000 tons last year, including 24,604 tons of chips and grass clippings and 21,839 tons of leaves, Waffin said.

Students honored for art

Jason Brown of Berkley High School and Staci Kerman of Birmingham Groves were first place winners in the recent "Art in the 90s" competition.

Brown and Kerman each won \$500 for finishing at the top of their respective categories in competition sponsored by Oakland Community College, the Business Consortium for the Arts, Oakland Schools and the Oakland Chapter of Michigan Art Educators.

Brown was the top winner in the two dimension competition that included paintings and photographs. Kerman finished first in three dimension competition that included sculpture, pottery and jewelry.

Shadi Hood of West Bloomfield High School won \$250 for finishing second in two dimension competition and Extra Liang of Southfield Christian won \$100 for finishing third. There were no honorable mention awards.

In three dimension competition, Denise Cawley of Mersey High School in Farmington Hills won \$250 for second place and Jessica Joannides of Waterford Mott won \$100 for winning third place.

Bryan Gall of Cranbrook-Kingswood and Angela Puchalsky of Marston each won \$50, taking honorable mentions.

THE WINNERS were honored at an awards ceremony at the Prudential Town Center in Southfield, where most of the 160 entries were displayed.

"We were very pleased with the contestants and the quality of the work they submitted," said George P. Keith, dean of academic services at the Royal Oak Campus of OCC. "Competition was tough."

Norma Lambert, a spokesperson for the Business Consortium for the Arts, agrees. "There certainly was variety and depth in the competition."

Students at public and private schools were eligible for the competition that began in September and ended March 1.

The judges were Irving Berg of Wayne State University, Edward Talent of the Center for Creative Studies in Detroit, and Thomas Stefan of the Kendall School of Design in Grand Rapids.

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