

# Tomorrow's energy is yesterday's trash

Until a few years ago, most communities considered solid waste a solid and growing expense. Proper incineration or dumping cost several dollars per ton of waste material, and an expanding population was contributing to a growing pile of municipal solid waste. Fortunately, experimentation and technology have paid off to the point where solid waste disposal, while not yet a money maker, can be far less costly in a total environmental sense.

Today, clean incinerators that reduce most municipal solid waste to ash and generate steam in the process are beginning to meet the environmental needs of resource recovery and fuel conservation. This development creates a new use for resources already used once, and it conserves natural resources that normally would be needed to generate energy. It also saves on another fast dwindling resource, the taxpayer's dollar.

While the current trend is toward "heat recovery" through methods that create steam for direct application to heating and cooling buildings, some cities - Paris is one - are using steam to run electrical generators, while at least one other city, St. Louis, Mo., is mixing solid waste with more traditional fuels such as coal to raise heat levels for a more efficient generation of electricity.

If you live in Southwest Chicago, or Hempstead, Long Island, or any of more than a dozen other American or European cities, the time is fast approaching when that paper plate or plastic cup you put in the trash yesterday will be helping to light your home tonight.

There are problems to be worked out yet, but city trash, known to environmentalists as municipal solid waste, is being used more and more as a fuel to generate heat and steam, and, in some instances, to create electricity.

Most Americans are familiar with the problem of solid waste. Restrictions on burning to prevent air pollution, the growing scarcity of sanitary landfill sites and other problems created by the residue of our abundance have brought it into the news.

Most Americans, also, are familiar with some of the methods used to cope with solid waste: recycling of newspapers into more newsprint, reprocessing of steel and aluminum cans and changing old glass into new glass.

While these recycling and reprocessing efforts have met with some success, they do not solve the volume problem of the population centers because, at their highest efficiency, they deal only with 20

per cent of municipal solid waste. The problem remaining is that of food wastes, wood, discarded packaging materials, yard clippings and other burnable items which make up the other 80 per cent.

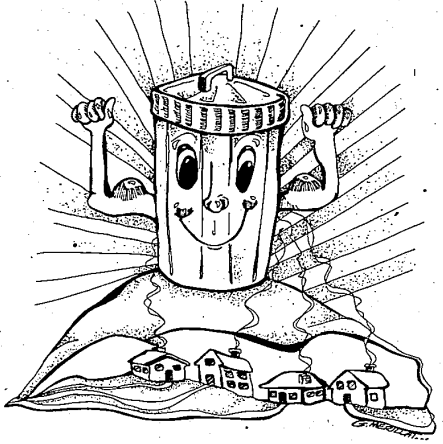
Municipal waste does not burn with the same intensity as do most conventional fuels and, for that reason, much of it is shredded before incineration to spread the slower burning materials among the more efficient burnables.

High quality paper waste (packaging, paper food service items, etc.) works as an excellent starter for the slower-to-ignite materials. Plastic waste (bubble packaging, disposable meat and produce trays, cups and plates) ignites at a higher temperature, but helps burn wet waste and other hard-to-dispose-of materials. By shredding and mixing these two materials with the other refuse, the new energy producers achieve more efficient burning.

Municipal governments are not alone in the search for ways to change waste into energy. Power companies around the country are exploring the possibilities of not only buying steam from municipalities, but of running their own plants and having the cities deliver waste directly to them. New York City has such a relationship already under way.

Industry, not to be outdone, has developed equipment that will take in solid waste at one end and deliver pellets of fuel at the other. Manufacturers claim these little pellets will burn with half the heat-producing ability of coal while costing less than a third of the price of a ton of coal.

While solid waste would not be the fuel of choice for these new applications without the environmental and energy pressures of today, it does have one major benefit over some conventional "fossil fuel." It is an extremely low sulfur fuel, containing less than 9 per cent of the sulfur found in coal and requiring far less management to meet air pollution standards in this area than either coal or most fuel oils.



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The pamphlet includes a listing of developmental landmarks and the approximate age ranges in which they should occur.

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to pick up objects? At what age does a child first attempt to sit, crawl or walk?

If a child is behind in development, he should be seen by a doctor and other qualified specialists for further diagnosis and if necessary, treatment. Early diagnosis and treatment is essential.

Contact the Metropolitan Society, 17330 Schaefer Highway, Detroit, for a free pamphlet.

## Meditation lecture set

A free lecture on Transcendental Meditation, known as TM, will be given in Bentley High School, Livonia, Thursday, Jan. 24, at 7:30 p.m. Guests will assemble in room 118.

The lecture is sponsored by the International Meditation Society which introduces a full course on the subject for a fee of \$75.

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