ENVIROTALK



A LOOK BACK: CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF ENVIROTALK

p. 8-9

Winter 2023

HOW TO: FELTED WOOL DRYER BALLS

p. 2

FOCUS ON THE SOUTH SOUND SUSTAINABILITY EXPO

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2024 COLLECTION CALENDAR

p. 4

How-To Make Felted Wool Dryer Balls

Supplies:

- 1-2 skeins of 100% wool yarn.
- Crochet hook or blunt-tipped needle
- Scissors
- Knee-high nylons or legs cut from pantyhose
- Cotton string or acrylic yarn to secure wool balls in nylon stocking

Note: 100% Worsted Wool is good. Roving Wool is thicker, lightly spun, and felts very well. Do Not Use synthetic yarns with acrylic or blends or wool that is labeled "machine washable" or "superwash." They Will Not Felt.



How-To make felted wool dryer balls: (Ideal to use 4-7 per load)

TIP: Pull wool from skein while working (don't cut yards off).

- 1. Wrap yarn around your first two fingers 10-12 times.
- 2. Pinch wrapped yarn in the middle, remove fingers, wrap 5-6 times around the middle bundle.
- 3. Wrap yarn tightly around the entire bundle, turning the ball to cover all sides. Continue wrapping tightly to reach your preferred size. Tennis ball size saves yarn; bigger size cuts drying time.
- 4. Use a crochet hook or blunt-tipped yarn needle to pull end of yarn under several layers in yarn ball, repeat from different direction, then pull yarn out and cut the end.
- 5. Using pantyhose legs or knee-high nylons, put a yarn ball in the toe, twist and tie the nylon with string or cotton/acrylic yarn to separate, add another ball, tie, and repeat.

Felting the Dryer Balls:

Toss the yarn caterpillar in with towels using a hot wash cycle with a cold-water rinse. Then dry with towels on the hottest setting. To test, remove the end ball from the nylon when dry and gently scrape over the ball to see if strands separate. If they stay intact and the surface is smooth, it's felted. If not, repeat the washing and drying cycles.

See the EnviroHouse How-To video on making felted wool dryer balls, visit http://y2u.be/PQenlxdfn2o. Community members can also register for upcoming EnviroHouse workshops at cityoftacoma.org/workshops or call (253) 573-2426.



Discovering the 16th Annual South Sound Sustainability Expo

The South Sound Sustainability Expo will return to downtown Tacoma on Saturday, April 13, 2024. Sustainability Specialist Carson Brock talks about what attendees can expect at this 16th annual event.

What is the South Sound Sustainability Expo all about?

The Expo is a free, family-friendly event that brings together neighbors, non-profit organizations, businesses, and government agencies who share a commitment to fostering an environmentally sustainable South Sound region. For 16 years, it has been one of the largest celebrations of environmentalism in the area.

When and where is the 2024 Expo taking place?

The 16th Annual South Sound Sustainability Expo is scheduled for Saturday, April 13, 2024, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The event will take place on the University of Washington Tacoma campus, spanning the picturesque Prairie Line Trail and into Tollefson Plaza.

What can attendees expect at the Expo?

Attendees will enjoy connecting with nearly 100 vendors and learning more about the wide variety of environmental initiatives, programs, and perspectives in our region. Folks should expect to learn something new and be inspired to take active roles in promoting sustainability and community resilience in their daily lives!

How does the Expo support and contribute to the community?

The Expo is meant to serve as a platform for networking, learning, and collaboration. Every aspect of the event is designed to encourage individuals to take active roles in promoting sustainability and resilience in their communities. The Expo also offers free vendor registration (regardless of for-profit status) to any organization owned, operated, or that directly serves frontline or historically underrepresented communities.

How can people get involved or find more information?

If you're interested in participating, attending, or learning more about the 16th Annual South Sound Sustainability Expo, visit **southsoundsustainabilityexpo.org** or call the Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability at (253) 591-5172. See you at the Expo!

Collection Schedule

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= set out garbage (green) and recycling (blue) containers on your regular collection day

= set out yard/food waste (brown) containers on your regular collection day

This calendar, specific to the area of the city in which you live, shows the weeks you set out your garbage and recycling and your yard/food waste containers. Garbage and recycling are set out on the same day and yard/food waste is set out by itself on alternating weeks. To find your collection day and the holiday collection schedule specific to your address, go to TacomaRecycles.org/collectionschedule.

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HOLIDAY COLLECTION SCHEDULE									
	If your regular pickup day is	Your pickup day will be							
Christmas Day 2023	Monday, December 25 Tuesday, December 26 Wednesday, December 27 Thursday, December 28 Friday, December 29	Tuesday, December 26 Wednesday, December 27 Thursday, December 28 Friday, December 29 Saturday, December 30							
New Year's Day 2024	Monday, January 1 Tuesday, January 2 Wednesday, January 3 Thursday, January 4 Friday, January 5	Tuesday, January 2 Wednesday, January 3 Thursday, January 4 Friday, January 5 Saturday, January 6							
Fourth of July 2024	Thursday, July 4 Friday, July 5	Friday, July 5 Saturday, July 6							
Thanksgiving 2024	Thursday, November 28 Friday, November 29	Friday, November 29 Saturday, November 30							
Christmas Day 2024	Wednesday, December 25 Thursday, December 26 Friday, December 27	Thursday, December 26 Friday, December 27 Saturday, December 28							

Green Recipe Revisited: Spicy Red Thai Curry Using Bits and Ends

In Tacoma there are many amazing options for local seasonal foods. Despite this bounty, food is one of the most abundant things that ends up in the landfill. Jennifer Johnson from Happy Belly Eatery & Juice Bar was featured on Urban Green where she shared a delicious curry recipe made up of bits and ends that typically goes to waste.

To view this Urban Tabletop segment from episode 21, visit cityoftacoma.org/UrbanGreen.

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Liquids and Spices:

Mix together in a large cooking pot before adding vegetables.

- 1.5 cups coconut milk
- 3/4 cup water
- 2 tsp powdered vegetable stock
- 1/4 cup peanut butter
- 1 tbsp red curry paste
- 2 tsp garlic puree
- 1 tsp ginger paste
- 3 tsp curry powder
- 2 tsp sea salt
- 1/4 cup chopped unsalted peanuts

Vegetables:

Add to liquids and spices mixture. Reserve edible trimmings from cut vegetables.

- 2.5 cups carrot (sliced)
- 1/4 cup jalapeños (fine dice)
- 1 cup water chestnuts (roughly cut)
- 1 cup onion (diced)
- 1/2 cup green onion (dice white part of onion and retain green part for garnish)
- 4 cups red bell pepper (2 cups reserved for blending)

Cooking:

Stir mixture frequently while cooking for 1 to 1.5 hours on medium to medium-high heat.

Final Blending Process:

Once curry is cooked, use a slotted spoon and put 2 cups of curry vegetable chunks into blender with reserved 2 cups red bell pepper and any vegetables trimmings (onion bits, carrot peels, etc.) with 1 cup liquid curry sauce from cooking pot. Blend until semi-smooth (30 - 60 seconds). Add blended mixture back to curry pot and stir well to incorporate.

Serve over fresh spinach and one 8 oz scoop of brown rice or preferred cooked grain and garnish with peanuts and green onion.



Holiday Light Recycling

Don't forget that the Tacoma Recycle Center (3510 S. Mullen St.) accepts holiday lights year-round. If lights are part of a decoration, they must be removed and recycled separately.

Call (253) 502-2100 for more information.

Inclement Weather Resources

The City's inclement weather page offers a number of helpful tips and tricks for this winter weather season. For instance, if residents need to report the location of a downed tree or a landslide in the right-of-way, they can call (253) 591-5495. Or, if a storm drain on a city street is clear, but there is still street flooding, a resident can report the location to (253) 591-5585. And when the weather turns snowy, this page offers winter weather resources, including the City's snow routes map and a listing of weather-related street closures.

For more information on this and more, visit cityoftacoma.org/inclementweather.

Free Sandbag Supplies

The City's Public Works and Environmental Services departments are providing free sandbag supplies to the public for personal use. While supplies last, community members can come to one of two locations to shovel and load their own sandbags. Both locations are now open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. until March 30, 2024.

- Tacoma Asphalt Plant, check in at the front office at 3010 Center St. in Tacoma.
 Call (253) 591-5495 for more information.
- CTP TAGRO facility at 2301 Cleveland Way, gate 6 of the Central Treatment Plant.
 Call (253) 502-2150 for more information.



Tackling Food Waste:

A Sustainable Step for Tacoma

Food waste is a persistent yet often underestimated issue with far-reaching consequences that extend beyond our plates. The average family of four spends around \$1,600 annually on food that ends up in the trash. Every year, billions of dollars are wasted on food that goes uneaten in America. Beyond the financial aspect, wasted food puts an unnecessary strain on natural resources and contributes to climate change – with nearly 25% of our shared methane emissions coming from wasted food that ends up in a landfill.



The City of Tacoma understands the importance of tackling this issue head-on. Together, we can work to both reduce avoidable food waste, and handle unavoidable food waste responsibly. Avoidable waste includes edible food that is discarded, like leftovers or expired items.

Unavoidable waste consists of inedible parts such as eggshells, bones, and coffee grounds. Unavoidable waste can be responsibility disposed of in an in-sink grinder (or garbage disposal) or by being placed in your Solid Waste Management brown food and yard waste bin.

Avoidable food waste can be reduced by making smart shopping, cooking, and eating choices at home. Plan to make sure you have the appropriate ingredients on-hand for weekly meals. Shop your fridge, freezer, and pantry to see what you already have before buying new. Freezing extra portions for a future meal and tidying your refrigerator regularly can also help reduce the amount of avoidable food waste that ends up in a landfill.

For more information about preventing food waste in Tacoma, visit cityoftacoma.org/foodwaste or call (253) 591-5172.



DECEMBER

- **25 City Services are Closed to Observe Christmas Day.** Curbside pickup schedules for the week of December 25 will be one day later than your normal scheduled collection day
- 26 Tacoma Recycling Center, 3510 S. Mullen St., begins to accept unflocked, undecorated Christmas trees without stands

JANUARY

- **O1 City Services are Closed to Observe New Year's Day.** Curbside pickup schedules for the week of January 1 will be one day later than your normal scheduled collection day
- 14 Last day to drop off your unflocked, undecorated Christmas tree without a stand at the Tacoma Recycle Center, 3510 S. Mullen St.

FEBRUARY

- **O3 Pruning Fruit Trees**, FREE, 10 a.m., EnviroHouse, 3510 S. Mullen St., Advance Registration required at cityoftacoma.org/workshops, or call (253) 573-2426
- **03** Fruit Tree Selection & Care, FREE, noon, EnviroHouse, 3510 S. Mullen St., Advance Registration required at cityoftacoma.org/workshops, or call (253) 573-2426
- **10** Pruning Landscape Trees, FREE, 10 a.m., EnviroHouse, 3510 S. Mullen St., Advance Registration required at cityoftacoma.org/workshops, or call (253) 573-2426
- **24** Grow Living Soils for Healthy, Productive Gardens, FREE, 10 a.m., EnviroHouse, 3510 S. Mullen St., Advance Registration required at cityoftacoma.org/workshops, or call (253) 573-2426



A Look Back:

Celebrating 15 Years of EnviroTalk

In 2024, the Environmental Services Department will celebrate 15 years of EnviroTalk. This quarterly newsletter has played a crucial role in informing and engaging the Tacoma community on sustainability initiatives, projects, sustainable household improvement ideas, recipes, and resources. As we look back at the past 15 years, we are proud of the role that EnviroTalk has played in fostering a greener, more sustainable Tacoma.

Practical Sustainability for Daily Life

From its inception, EnviroTalk has aimed to make environmental options practical and accessible to everyone. The newsletter has been a valuable resource for residents seeking sustainable solutions for their daily lives. Whether it's tips on reducing energy consumption, conserving water, or recycling effectively, EnviroTalk has consistently provided readers with actionable advice to minimize their environmental footprint.



Pictured: Pages from the very first edition of EnviroTalk.

Comprehensive Coverage of Utilities

EnviroTalk has been committed to covering all three Environmental Services utilities – Stormwater, Wastewater, and Solid Waste – and strives to educate residents about the critical infrastructure that sustains our city. Articles on these topics have not only explained the inner workings of these critical systems but also highlighted the importance of responsible consumption, waste management, and pollution prevention.

Impactful Policies and Plans

EnviroTalk has covered the development and implementation of larger city-wide policies and plans that directly impact its readers. The Environmental Action Plan and Climate Action Plan, for instance, have been covered in this newsletter, helping residents understand the City's strategic approach to environmental sustainability. By providing insights and explanations, EnviroTalk has encouraged active participation in these initiatives.



Showcasing New Programs

Over the years, EnviroTalk has introduced readers to innovative programs like Grit City Trees and Tidy-Up Tacoma. These initiatives have not only improved the City's green infrastructure but have also actively engaged residents in meaningful environmental work. EnviroTalk's coverage has played a crucial role in spreading awareness and encouraging participation in these community-building projects.

Connecting Residents with Workshops

EnviroTalk has been a go-to resource for information on hundreds of free EnviroHouse workshops over the years. These workshops have facilitated hands-on learning experiences for countless residents and covered topics ranging from sustainable gardening to energy-efficient home improvements, empowering individuals with the knowledge and skills to make eco-friendly choices in their daily life.



Local Resources and Spotlight on Organizations

EnviroTalk has been a timely resource for Tacoma residents, offering information on local sustainability resources and showcasing organizations and non-profits dedicated to environmental causes. By featuring the work of these organizations, the newsletter has encouraged community involvement and support for their vital efforts.

Looking ahead, EnviroTalk will continue to be a source of information for the Environmental Services Department programs, policies, and services. In the spirit of innovation and continuous improvement, we're also considering new ways to reach our audience. As we move forward into 2024 and beyond, the possibility of EnviroTalk going digital is on the horizon. While we remain committed to our print edition for the time being, we also recognize the importance of staying in step with evolving technology and changing communication preferences. Stay tuned for exciting developments as we explore new ways to share EnviroTalk!

To explore past editions of EnviroTalk going back to 2009, visit cityoftacoma.org/EnviroTalk.



Pictured: Various editions of EnviroTalk through the years.

Left to right: Fall 2009, Summer 2012, Winter 2015, Spring/Summer 2016, Winter 2018, Fall 2021, Spring/Summer 2022

Enviro Kids

What's that Word?

Complete the sentences below (you'll find the answers in this issue of EnviroTalk), and then find the word or phrase in the word search below. If you get stumped, the answers are at the bottom.

- In 2024, the Environmental Services
 Department will <u>CELEBRATE</u> 15 years of EnviroTalk.
- 2. Avoidable food_____ can be _____ by making smart shopping, cooking, and eating choices at home.
- The Environmental Services Department works closely with the _____
 Services Commission and the ____
 Tacoma Commission.
- 4. For 16 years, the South ______
 Sustainability Expo has been one of the _____ celebrations of environmentalism in the area.
- 5. The National Association of Clean ______ Agencies recently recognized the City's Environmental Services Department's stormwater and wastewater utilities with a Platinum award for excellence in ______.

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1.) CELEBRATE 2.) WASTE, REDUCED 3.) ENVIRONMENTAL, SUSTRINABLE 4.) SOUND, LARGEST 5.) WATER, MANAGEMENT

COMMUNITY TREES PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Lisa Kenny

In this role, Lisa works to engage, support, and inspire environmental action, specifically tree-action, throughout Tacoma. The programs and events that Lisa runs and supports provide trees, tree care and education throughout the community.

"There are a lot of fun aspects of this job. I enjoy caring for trees at the City's nursery, teaching people how to plant trees correctly, and hearing stories from the community about why trees matter to them," Lisa said about her job.

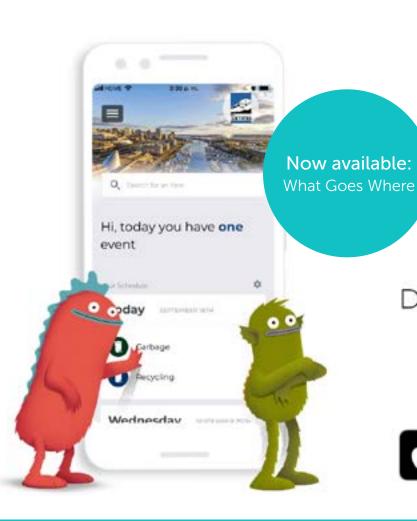
Having a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies and gaining hands-on experience primarily in habitat restoration and community engagement are helpful to becoming a Community Trees Program Coordinator.





Waste Less and Recycle More

Confused when it comes to recycling? You're not alone. The City has partnered with Recycle Coach to provide instructions for the proper disposal of thousands of items—from plastic cups to bowling balls. Recycle Coach users can also sign up to receive collection day reminders, calendars, and instant news notifications to a mobile phone, so you never forget to put out your bin.





Never miss a collection again.

Download the **FREE** app on your app store today!





Guiding Tacoma's Environmental Future:

The Environmental Services & Sustainable Tacoma Commissions



The City of Tacoma relies on the support and guidance of over 30 committees, boards, and commissions that make recommendations to City leadership on issues that impact our community. The Environmental Services Department works closely with two – the Environmental Services Commission and the Sustainable Tacoma Commission. Although each operates with unique goals in mind, they both positively impact the City through community engagement, environmental stewardship, and effective governance.

The Environmental Services Commission (ESC) plays a pivotal role in shaping the City's approach to waste and resource management. Charged with reviewing and offering recommendations on wastewater, stormwater, and solid waste rates, the ESC represents a diverse cross-section of Tacoma's stakeholders. With members from business, regulatory, residential, and governmental backgrounds, the ESC ensures that the City's environmental policies are comprehensive, balanced, and reflective of various perspectives. The commission has 13 voting members and two ex-officio non-voting members, all appointed by the City Manager.

The Sustainable Tacoma Commission ensures transparency and accountability for implementation of the 2030 Climate Action Plan. By coordinating and communicating initiatives aligned with the City's vision, the commission bridges the gap between administration and residents, making sustainability a shared endeavor. The Sustainable Tacoma Commission consists of 13 members who are appointed by the Mayor and City Council.

Both commissions underline the City's dedication to community collaboration. The relationship between the City and residents is vital for equitable utility rates, programs, and engagement efforts. Together, these commissions establish a framework for Tacoma's environmental future. The expertise, community input, and visionary leadership that these commissions provide helps drive progress towards an environmentally and economically responsible future.

The Environmental Services Commission meets on the second Thursday of each month at 4 p.m., both virtually and in-person, at the Center for Urban Waters at 326 East D Street. The Sustainable Tacoma Commission meets on the third Thursday of each month at 5 p.m., both virtually and in-person, at the Tacoma Municipal Building at 747 Market Street.

Members of the public are welcome to attend either in-person or virtually each month. Visit <u>cityoftacoma.org/STC</u> or <u>cityoftacoma.org/ESC</u> for more information and opportunities to apply to serve on either commission.



Earth Day 2024

The City of Tacoma will celebrate Earth Day on Monday, April 22, 2024. Through the Earth Day South Sound partnership, community members are invited to participate in dozens of environmentally related activities and events throughout the month of April. Examples of activities include habitat restoration work parties, beach cleanups, educational webinars, depave events, and more. Visit **earthdaysouthsound.org** to find an event near you.

Environmental Services Receives an Excellence in Management Award

The National Association of Clean Water Agencies recently recognized the City's Environmental Services Department's stormwater and wastewater utilities with a Platinum award for excellence in management. This award celebrates its member partners who demonstrate an exemplary commitment to the sustainable and successful management of their utilities. The Environmental Services Department believes that healthy neighborhoods and a thriving Puget Sound equal a better Tacoma for all. This award, along with other recent national recognitions, supports this belief and is also a way to recognize the outstanding work of employees at all levels of the organization.

Call-2-Haul Services are Available to Residential Customers

Residential Solid Waste Services customers receive two Call-2-Haul services per year. The service is redeemable by calling Solid Waste at (253) 502-2100 to schedule your curbside pickup of up to three large items like couches, ovens or exercise equipment and up to 15 boxes or bags of small items like lawn chairs, broken toys or small household appliances. Learn more about the Call-2-Haul service at cityoftacoma.org/Call2Haul.

Grease Goes in the Garbage

Forty percent of all sewage blockages in Tacoma are caused by grease clogs. That's why it's important to remember that cooking grease should never go down the kitchen sink. Avoid messy, expensive backups and damage to pipes by placing cooking grease in a jar or bottle and allowing it to solidify before putting it in the trash. Up to 10 gallons of liquid grease (from residential sources) can be disposed of per visit at the Household Hazardous Waste facility at (3510 S. Mullen St.) Learn about the proper disposal of household grease at cityoftacoma.org/grease or call (253) 591-5418.

TIP OF THE DAY Air Freshener

Ingredients:

1 cotton ball Pure vanilla extract (not imitation) Small jar, dish or bowl

Put the cotton ball into the container and soak thoroughly in the pure vanilla extract. Place the container behind a plant or picture frame.

Tree Coupon Program

Help contribute to the City's goal of 30% tree canopy cover by 2030 by participating in the Tree Coupon Program! Eligible Pierce County Residents can receive a coupon for \$30 off of up to three trees at local participating nurseries. To request a coupon and view program details, visit cityoftacoma.org/treecoupon or call (253)-502-2138 for more information.

You may qualify for a bill credit of up to \$80 a month

Whether you face a short-term financial issue or are on a limited or fixed income, paying your bills can sometimes be challenging. If your household meets the requirements below, you may qualify for our Bill Credit Assistance Plan.



Have a current TPU account in your name.



Live in the dwelling full-time as your primary residence.



Your household must meet the income guidelines.



Have residential single-metered service (meter cannot be shared with another unit or structure).

*Credit is based on the number of services billed directly through TPU.



EVents

MARCH

- **01 TAGRO Spring Hours Begin**, Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., 2301 Cleveland Way, Central Treatment Plant, Gate 6, call (253) 502-2150 or visit tagro.com
- **Mason Bees: So Easy, so Productive**, FREE, 10 a.m., EnviroHouse, 3510 S. Mullen St., Advance Registration required at cityoftacoma.org/workshops, or call (253) 573-2426
- **O9** Heat, Cool, Save with Efficient Heat Pumps, FREE, 10 a.m., EnviroHouse, 3510 S. Mullen St., Advance Registration required at cityoftacoma.org/workshops, or call (253) 573-2426
- **16** Rain Gardens: Plan, Prep, Plant, Maintain, FREE, 10 a.m., EnviroHouse, 3510 S. Mullen St., Advance Registration required at cityoftacoma.org/workshops, or call (253) 573-2426
- **16 Depave and Plant Natives**, FREE, noon, EnviroHouse, 3510 S. Mullen St., Advance Registration required at cityoftacoma.org/workshops, or call (253) 573-2426
- **Yard Waste and Worm Bin Composting**, FREE, 10 a.m., EnviroHouse, 3510 S. Mullen St., Advance Registration required at cityoftacoma.org/workshops, or call (253) 573-2426

APRIL

- **06** Native Plants to Enhance Your Habitat, FREE, 10 a.m., EnviroHouse, 3510 S. Mullen St., Advance Registration required at cityoftacoma.org/workshops, or call (253) 573-2426
- **South Sound Sustainability Expo**, FREE, 10 a.m. 3 p.m., University of Washington Tacoma campus, 1900 Commerce St., for more information, visit southsoundsustainabilityexpo.org, or call (253) 591-5172
- 13 City Chickens and Ducks: Getting Started, FREE, 10 a.m., EnviroHouse, 3510 S. Mullen St., Advance Registration required at cityoftacoma.org/workshops, or call (253) 573-2426
- 13 Chickens and Ducks: Build a Secure Coop & Run, FREE, noon, EnviroHouse, 3510 S. Mullen St., Advance Registration required at cityoftacoma.org/workshops, or call (253) 573-2426
- **22 Earth Day,** Celebrate Trees in the South Sound All Year Round by visiting earthdaysouthsound.org
- **27 Spring Gardens, Prep, Plant, Grow**, FREE, 10 a.m., EnviroHouse, 3510 S. Mullen St., Advance Registration required at cityoftacoma.org/workshops, or call (253) 573-2426



City of Tacoma Center for Urban Waters 326 East D Street Tacoma, Washington 98421



