

RECYCLE YOUR OLD TV’S & COMPUTERS FOR FREE AT THE WILTON TRANSFER STATION

The Town of Wilton is pleased to announce that the Department of Environmental Protection has officially started Connecticut’s Electronics Waste Recycling Program! Therefore, Wilton residents can now bring computers, televisions, monitors and printers (referred to as ‘covered electronic devices’) to the Wilton Transfer Station at no charge. The cost of recycling is now built into the price you pay when you buy these devices.

Electronic devices that are not part of this program include computer accessories, cell phones, VCRs, radios, stereos, etc.

- A few reminders about the program:
- Only TV’s, Monitors, Computers and Printers from households qualify for this program.
  - Drop-off of ‘covered electronic devices’ is free of charge to residents
  - Microwaves will still be two tickets and all other non-covered electronic devices will continue to be one ticket
  - Residents may drop-off up to seven ‘covered electronic devices’ at any one time

The Wilton Transfer Station is located on Mather Street and is open Monday-Friday from 8am-4pm and Saturday from 9am-12pm.

For questions about Wilton’s Electronics Waste Recycling Program, please call the Department of Public Works at 203-563-0155.

— Dave Hapke

Please visit [www.wiltonct.org](http://www.wiltonct.org) regularly to access trail maps, Wilton’s zoning and wetland regulations, news about community events and more.



RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER  
WILTON, CT 06897

BULK RATE  
U.S. Postage  
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Wilton, CT  
Permit No. 11



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SPRING 2011

Wilton  
Conservation  
Commission  
Newsletter



IS ORGANIC LANDSCAPE CARE RIGHT FOR YOU?

This winter I started researching environmentally friendly options for managing my lawn and garden to minimize my family’s exposure to chemicals and pesticides. After trying to weed through hundreds of ads and amateur websites in the internet, I contacted Lars Cherichetti, owner of Cherichetti Horticulture LLC., specializing in organic and sustainable landscape care in Wilton. The following is an edited version of my interview with Lars, with the full version available at [www.wiltonct.org](http://www.wiltonct.org) :

**What is organic landscape care?**  
Organic landscape care is a combination of improved cultural practices, soil building, and natural control of pests and diseases.

**What are the benefits of organic landscape care over traditional practices of using chemical fertilizers and pesticides?**

Organic landscapes concentrate on growing healthy, great looking plants and turf. We don’t apply chemicals to temporarily kill problem pests. People don’t realize the collateral damage of pesticides. They kill more than the target pest, frequently killing all insects—that’s ladybugs, praying mantis, butterflies, honeybees—you name it, all dead.

Organic landscapes feel great too. Properly maintained organic turf is softer on bare feet and rebounds faster from heat and drought. Organic landscapes don’t contaminate the environment, your home, your pets or children’s toys.

**What is organic fertilizer and is it applied just like chemical fertilizers?**

Organic fertilizer is derived from organic matter. You can understand the label without a degree in chemistry. Organic fertilizers are made from corn, soybeans, poultry manure, and the like. Unlike synthetic fertilizers, organic fertilizer is almost entirely insoluble

in water. Organic fertilizer relies on beneficial microbes in the soil to break it down and make it available to the plants. Because it is insoluble, organic fertilizer cannot leach into your well water or into a nearby stream. This also makes it much more efficient. All of the organic fertilizer we apply to lawns is eventually used by the grass plants, and therefore we can apply less nitrogen for the same results.

**Can you control weeds “organically”?**  
We do three things to effectively manage weeds in turf. First, we get the grass growing early in the spring by applying our first round of fertilizer in early April. Second, we encourage whoever is mowing to raise the mower height to shade out weeds. And third, we overseed the whole lawn once a year and spot-seed whenever there are bare or thin spots to crowd out weeds.

**How do the costs compare between organic land care and traditional fertilizers and pesticide applications?**  
Expect to pay 20-50% more for organic fertilizer applications and a lot less on pesticides. Remember organic landscape care focuses on plant health, and not the application of pesticides to keep unhealthy plants alive. Healthy plants resist pests and diseases.

Take time to understand all of the costs of landscape practices. And more people feel that exposure to chemical pesticides comes at great costs to the health of their children, their pets, and their natural environment.

Lars states, “I encourage potential DIYers to refer to Paul Tukey’s book, “The Organic Lawncare Manual.” It is an excellent book. I am always happy to combine my services with those of folks who want to do most of their own landscape care.”

— Mike Conklin

WILTON GO GREEN

Care for the environment and nature are two of the core values that define Wilton. In keeping with those core values, a group of citizens eager to develop a wide range of sustainable initiatives in cooperation with the Town and other area nonprofits created a 501(c)(3) known as Wilton Go Green, Inc. Some of the current initiatives are:

**BYOBag–Reusable Bag Educational Initiative:** The Board of Selectmen and Wilton Go Green are hopeful that Wilton residents will voluntarily change from single-use plastic and paper to reusable bags.

**Neighbor to Neighbor Energy Challenge:** Wilton Go Green is a proud partner of Neighbor to Neighbor, a community energy savings program with a goal to get 10 percent of the Wilton residences to reduce energy consumption by 20 percent over the next three years. That is about 500 households!

**Food Runners of CT:** Wilton Go Green is proud to support the Food Runners of CT, an organization that is dedicated to alleviating hunger in Connecticut. Food Runners coordinate the pick up of excess food from businesses such as farms, corporate cafeterias, restaurants and bakeries for delivery to community organizations that feed hungry children and families. In doing so, there is a second benefit by reducing input to our waste stream.

**Walk In The Woods:** Wilton Go Green, in partnership with the Wilton Library, Wilton Family Y, Alliance for a Healthy Community, Wilton Conservation Commission, and Wilton Land Trust, is staging a contest for all ages to walk 12 of the key parks and trails around town in order to get a chance to win a Cannondale Bicycle, gift certificates to the Y and many other prizes.

On May 1, 2011, the Wilton community will come together for the second time at the Wilton Go Green Festival to explore the ways in which we can enrich our lives today while leaving a legacy of abundance for tomorrow. Last year the first town-wide energy fair to celebrate "green" living attracted over 80 exhibitors and 1,000 people. Highlights this year will feature a giant Earth Balloon, food tastings of organic beef, exhibits showcasing the latest electric cars, eco-friendly building solutions, as well as family fun activities, including nature hikes along the Norwalk River and a bike race. For a full schedule of the day's activities, visit [www.wiltongogreen.org](http://www.wiltongogreen.org)

—Kristen Begor

DEA’S NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION  
TAKE BACK DAY – APRIL 30TH

As a means of addressing vital public safety and public health issues associated with disposal of unwanted drugs, the Connecticut Drug Enforcement Agency has scheduled the second National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, April 30, 2011, from 10:00 am–2:00 pm. The event will be held at the Wilton Police Station parking lot. Please note that this event is for residents (no doctors' offices) and "sharps" will not be accepted.

Many consumers keep drugs because they do not want the drugs to go to waste or do not know how to dispose of them properly. Flushing medications contribute to the contamination of surface waters, ground waters, and biosolids. The presence of pharmaceuticals has been linked to abnormalities and impaired reproductive performance in some aquatic species. In addition, unwanted medications disposed of in the trash that are not rendered unusable can be stolen, wrongfully used, or accidentally ingested. Having these leftovers around the home also presents a danger to children, animals, and guests of accidental ingestion.

Wilton is currently considering the installation of a permanent lock box located in the foyer of the Police Station for deposition of expired prescription drugs on a year-round basis. Keep your eyes open for more information on this.

—Kristen Begor

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Drug Take Back Program

April 30, 2011 10am – 2pm Wilton  
Police Station Parking Lot

Wilton Go Green Festival

May 1, 2011 11am – 4pm Wilton Center

Norwalk River Valley Trail Planning Workshop

May 10, 2011 6:30pm Wilton High School Cafeteria

Norwalk Wilton Tree Festival

May 21, 11am – 3pm Cranbury Park

ENERGY AUDITS: AN AUDIT YOU’LL LOVE

Last year my household entered the Neighbor to NeighborEnergyChallenge([www.ctenergychallenge.com](http://www.ctenergychallenge.com)); there has never been a better time to focus on reducing our energy usage and the Challenge was a good motivator. We had heard of others undergoing an energy audit but we weren't sure what it was or if it was worth doing. In the end it was quite easy and definitely worth it. The audit does more than just identify sources of inefficiencies; it also includes fixing many of the most common leaks and sources of energy waste.

Listed below are just a few energy-saving fixes and recommendations that the energy audit produced. In addition to saving money by using less energy, there may be available tax credits for some of the bigger tasks. Be sure to visit the Energy Star website ([www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)) to see if your work qualifies.

Attic Insulation and Air Sealing

Minimizing the ways that heat can transfer into and out of your home can often be the most effective way to improve your home's efficiency and comfort. Air sealing focuses on leaks to your attic, through the foundation, and around windows and doors. These leaks can often be sealed with caulk, spray foam, or weather stripping. The Energy Auditors will address the routine leaks as part of the audit.

The Audit made recommendations to add insulation to our attic, which we did for roughly \$600. According to Energy Star, proper insulation and air sealing can often reduce heating and cooling energy costs by about 20%. This past winter we were able to keep the house warmer all night and day for our new baby with no additional oil consumption. We also expect significant savings in cooling our home during the summer.

Compact Fluorescent Lightbulbs (CFL)

You have no doubt heard of CFLs. The costs of these bulbs have decreased dramatically and they can often be found for less than \$1 each now. The Energy Audit includes a generous number of CFLs, which Energy Star claims use 75% less energy than a comparable incandescent bulb, saving \$40 over the life of one CFL. Most retailers will accept old CFLs to dispose of them properly.

Outlet and Switch Draft Gaskets

The audit identified several drafts coming from electrical outlets and light switches along the perimeter of our house. This is typical, especially when there is minimal insulation in the walls. These drafts were minimized by installing inexpensive foam gaskets behind the outlet and switch plate covers.

Programmable Thermostat

A programmable Thermostat was recommended to routinely and automatically adjust the thermostat when nobody is going to be home for long periods of time. We installed two programmable thermostats (one for each zone in our house) and saved 10%. Given that programmable thermostat typically cost \$50 to \$100, the units will pay for themselves.

—Jeff Coppelman

WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION



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Photo by AZAdam