

# The Buzz



## EARTH DAY: REDUCE, REUSE, AND RECYCLE

This year marks the 49<sup>th</sup> annual Earth Day! Although we should be environmentally conscious all year round, this time of year is great for spreading more awareness about how our actions can impact the environment and human health.

According to the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA), in 2015 the U.S. generated 262.4 million tons of municipal solid waste. Municipal solid waste (MSW) refers to the trash that consumers throw away and includes things like bottles and corrugated boxes, food, grass clippings, computers, tires and refrigerators. Of this amount, about 137.7 million tons of MSW were landfilled. All of our trash has to end up somewhere, and when it ends up in landfills, it can have a negative impact on the environment and human health. Not only are MSW landfills smelly and not pleasing to the eye, they also have the potential to contaminate groundwater and release greenhouse gases into the air such as methane and carbon dioxide. The good news is that rates of recycling and composting are on the rise. In 1960, only about 6% of MSW generated was recycled compared to over 34% 2015. This has led to a reduction in the amount of waste disposed to landfills over the last 50 years. Recycling is very clearly beneficial, but the EPA sites another strategy as the *preferred* method of waste management: [source reduction](#). This refers to the elimination of waste before it is created through practices such as using less materials, using

more eco-friendly materials, and reusing products.

The average American generates 4.48 pounds of waste each day, which is up from 2.68 pounds per day in 1960. There are many things you can do in your own household to [reduce the amount of waste you produce!](#)

It's a good idea to buy used as often as possible. Refraining from buying new prevents pollution that results from the production of a new item and allows items to be used to their fullest extent. Similarly, when you no longer want an item, try selling or donating it to a local church, school or thrift store so somebody else can get more use out of it. You also try to take good care of items like clothing and appliances and repair them when they get damaged so that you don't have to throw them out and replace them as often. Purchasing reusable items and limiting your use of disposable items like paper plates and silverware is a great way to lessen your waste production. Try bringing reusable cups, silverware and snack containers to work! Buying products with less packaging can also reduce your waste and save you money.

Out of all the MSW that is sent to landfills, [food waste](#) is the largest component. Reducing the amount of food waste your household produces begins at the grocery store. Try to create your shopping list keeping in mind how many meals you will be eating at home that week. If you know you will be eating out several times, it's a good idea to buy

less perishable food items. Before you leave for the grocery store, check your fridge and pantry and see what items you already have to avoid buying duplicates. Also, plan meals around foods in your fridge that need to be used up. Planning your meals ahead of time and buying only the things you need for those meals will help you avoid letting food spoil. If you can't reduce your food waste, then composting is a great way to prevent this waste from ending up in a landfill. Composting is the process of recycling organic material like food scraps and yard trimmings and allowing them to naturally break down into a nutrient-rich material known as humus. This material can be used in your garden to enrich the soil and reduce the need to use chemical fertilizers. Composting also helps to reduce your household's carbon footprint by reducing methane emissions from landfills. To learn more about how to start a compost pile at your home, [click here](#).



## HAPPENINGS AROUND TOWN

**Mansfield Drive-in:** The marketplace is open for the season! The flea market takes place every Sunday from 8 am-2 pm, indoors and outdoors rain or shine. Opening night for movies is Friday April 5th!

**Monthly Meditation w/ Kathy Grinol-** Join Kathy Grinol for a monthly meditation group that meets the second Tuesday of the month in the library's program room. These sessions are free and open to all. The event will take place Tues. April 9th 6:30- 7:30 pm. Visit their [website](#) to register!

**Spirit of Spring Tolland 5K Road Race** will be taking place Saturday April 13th! The event also includes a non-competitive fun run for all ages and activities for children including an Easter egg hunt! For more details visit their [website](#).

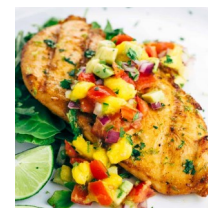
**Trashy Movie Series :** There will be a screening of the documentary "No Impact Man" on Tuesday April 16th at 7 pm in Buchanan Auditorium at Mansfield Public Library. Click [here](#) for more information.



### Mango Salsa with Chicken

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 fresh, ripe mango, diced
- 1/2 red onion, diced finely
- 1 bunch cilantro, chopped
- 1/2 green bell pepper, minced
- 1 red chili pepper, seeded and minced
- 2 T lemon or lime juice
- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup skim milk
- 1 cup bread crumbs



#### DIRECTIONS

1. Make the salsa by combining the first six ingredients together in a small bowl. Set aside until serving time.
2. Mix the egg and milk in a small bowl. Pound the chicken breast until flattened. Dip the chicken into the egg mixture, then into the bread crumbs.
3. Cook breaded chicken pieces in a pan over medium heat after spraying with cooking spray. Cook until the chicken is cooked through. Serve with mango salsa on top.

## National Public Health Week (April 1-7, 2019)

National Public Health Week is an event organized by the American Public Health Association every year. The purpose of the event is to bring awareness to the contributions of this important field. Public health is the science and art of preventing disease and promoting health and wellness. The goal is to ensure the conditions in which people can be healthy and reach their full potential. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, from 1900 to 1999, the life expectancy in the U.S. improved by more than 30 years. In a famous report published by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), it was revealed that about 25 years of this gain are due to advancements in public health. Some of these great achievements include the development of vac-

cines to prevent infectious diseases, improved motor vehicle safety, improved sanitation and access to clean water, and the recognition of tobacco as a health hazard which has prevented many from starting smoking cigarettes, caused many to quit, and reduced exposure to second-hand smoke for all. The efforts of public health can be seen in many aspects of our lives from seatbelt laws and taxes on tobacco products to flu vaccination clinics and cancer screening for early detection.

One of the themes for this year's National Public Health Week is [healthy communities](#) and the idea that where we live, work, learn and play has an impact on our health. These conditions are known as the [social determinants of health](#). Some examples include access to

healthy foods and grocery stores, neighborhood safety and exposure to violence and crime, availability of quality education and job training, and access to health care services. In recent years there has been more emphasis on the SDOH through the use of [Health Impact Assessments](#) which review needed, proposed and existing social policies for their likely impact on the health of communities.

Be Well is an employee wellness program provided through the Eastern Highlands Health District with funding from the CT Department of Public Health. The goal of the program is to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

