



Sustainable Solutions: Your Guide to Healthier Homes and Communities

February 2024



Green Lents Community Tool Library removes barriers and increases educational opportunities

For over a decade, [Green Lents](#) has worked to build resilience through community outreach, engagement, education, and resource sharing. The organization runs a community tool library serving Lents and surrounding neighborhoods in East Portland. [Tool libraries](#) help communities reduce waste and save money by offering home and garden tools that can be borrowed at no cost.

In 2022, Green Lents received a \$45,500 grant from Metro's [Investment and Innovation grant program](#) to expand access to the community tool library for residents that speak a language other than English at home.

Green Lents developed educational and outreach materials using videos, illustrations, and infographics to convey information without relying as much on written text. New signage and instructional displays in the tool library make it easy for anyone to find the right tools and learn how to use them safely.

This visual navigation features QR codes throughout the tool library linked to a [digital resource hub](#), fully integrated with translation for 100+ languages. Visitors can navigate by text or image to find tool descriptions, safety guidelines, and curated short video tutorials.

Other tool libraries or libraries of things* in greater Portland include:

- [North Portland Tool Library](#)
- [Northeast Portland Tool Library](#)
- [Southeast Portland Tool Library](#)
- and the new [East Portland Tool Library](#)
- Clackamas County hosts several [libraries of things](#)
- Washington County hosts libraries of things in [Hillsboro](#), [Beaverton](#) and [Tigard](#)

*Libraries of things often include items such as board games, AV equipment, small kitchen appliances and sporting goods.



Statewide mattress stewardship program to ramp up in 2024

In 2022, Oregon joined California, Connecticut and Rhode Island as the fourth U.S. state to enact a law establishing a statewide [mattress recycling program](#). The Mattress Stewardship Act, or [Senate Bill 1576](#), requires mattress manufacturers to establish an extended producer responsibility, or EPR, program that will make it easy for consumers to recycle their unwanted

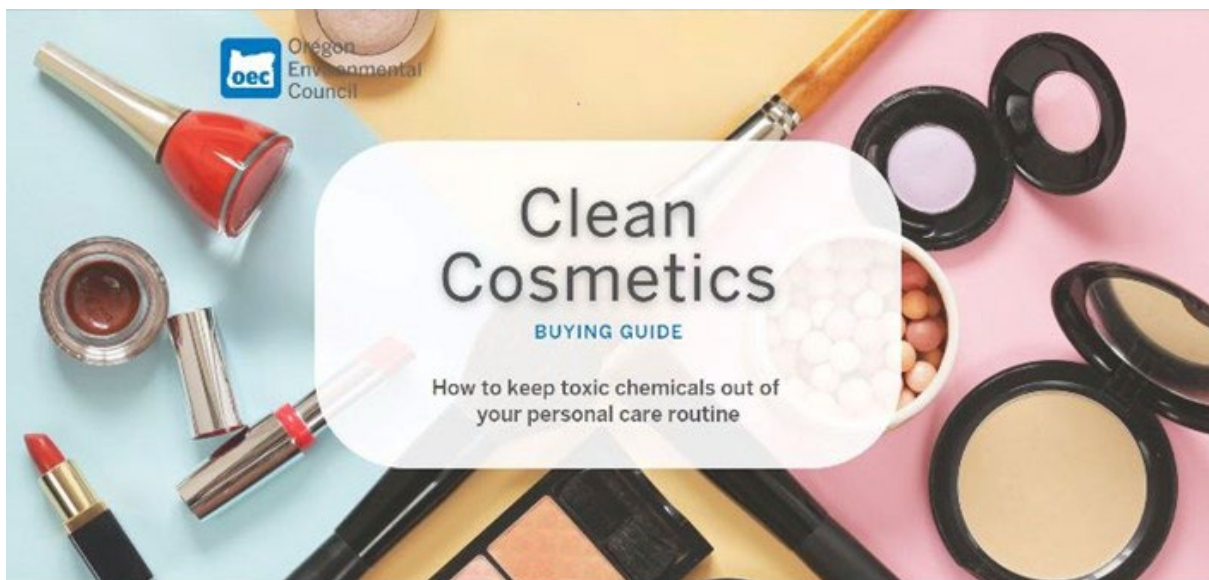
mattresses.

The law aims to increase mattress recycling, establish new convenient locations in every county for residents to drop off their mattresses, reduce illegal dumping, and create recycling-sector jobs. The program will be funded by a small fee collected during retail sales of mattresses.

Metro is currently assessing the feasibility of serving as a collection site for mattresses as a part of the new mattress stewardship program. As part of the assessment, staff discovered over 1000 mattresses come into the transfer stations each week.

More information about this new program can be found in the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) [mattress stewardship program fact sheet](#). Also, check out the DEQ GreenState podcast [episode covering this new program](#).

In the episode, DEQ staff visit a mattress recycling facility in Eugene run by the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County. Learn all about the program from their mattress stewardship expert, Rachel Harding, and hear perspective from the agency's emeritus director, Terry McDonald.



Tips to reduce waste and choose healthier personal care products

We all use products daily to help keep ourselves clean, attractive and smelling nice. On average, people use 12 different personal care products a day. Some of these products include ingredients that are unhealthy and many product containers and packaging are made of materials that end up in the garbage.

The Oregon Environmental Council has developed a [Clean Cosmetics Buying Guide](#) to keep toxic chemicals out of our personal care routine.

There are many healthy products available to purchase, and you can save money and reduce waste by making your own at home. Here are some tips for saving money, reducing waste and buying safer products:

- Choose products with less or no packaging.
- Use refillable containers and purchase refills when needed.
- Reduce the number of products you use daily by using versatile cosmetics that fulfill more than one function.
- Choose unscented products whenever possible and pick products that are paraben and phthalate free.
- Avoid aerosol products like spray-on deodorants, sunscreens, hair sprays and dry shampoos that contain toxic ingredients.
- Check the safety of your products by using The Environmental Working Group's [Skin Deep online database](#) or use their [Healthy Living App](#).



Blemish cream recipe

- 1 tsp – baking soda
- 1 tsp – water or olive oil

Mix water or olive oil with baking soda until it forms a paste. Gently apply the paste on the affected area and leave for 5 -10 minutes. Slowly scrub the paste off and rinse with clean water.



Spring cleaning

Spring is a good time of year to go through your old cleaners and chemicals at home and get rid of products that aren't safe or you don't need. Fortunately, disposing of these products is easy if you follow these simple tips.

Tips for disposing of harmful chemicals

- Leave all waste in its original container whenever possible.
- Make sure caps and lids are tightly secured.
- Label all containers with the name of the product using a permanent marker. If you do not know the contents, write "UNKNOWN" on the container.
- Never combine different chemicals into a single container.
- Bring containers to your local disposal facility ([Metro Central Hazardous Waste](#) or [Metro South Hazardous Waste](#)) in a sturdy, rigid container, such as a storage box or bin, so staff can easily remove it from the vehicle. Do not bring containers in bags.
- Keep small items like compact fluorescent bulbs and miscellaneous batteries in separate containers during transport to prevent leakage and breakage.

Calendar of community events

With warmer months on the horizon, Metro outreach and education staff are in the process of planning events and activities for the upcoming year! [Check back every so often to see what community events are happening in your community.](#)

Connect with our community partners

Follow the links below to connect directly with our community partners to find out how you can

support their work, find upcoming events, classes and volunteer opportunities in your neighborhood.

Green Lents hosts regular [workshops](#) at the tool library, including some with instruction in Spanish. Workshop topics have included tool sharpening, power saw basics, drywall techniques, mending, leatherworking, bicycle repair, seed saving, native planting, cover cropping and more.

East County Learn Share Do Fair. Enjoy fun hands-on activities for the whole family, free food, and massages on [Saturday, February 24 from 10 am - 2 pm at Centennial High School](#). Visit exhibitor tables and learn how to prepare for extreme heat and emergencies, save energy and money on your utility bills, care for trees and plants, make non-toxic cleaners, garden tips, transportation options, and much more!

Stay informed

Subscribe to Metro's quarterly newsletter, Sustainable Solutions, which provides resources for waste prevention from Metro and community partners. Learn helpful tips for recycling, gardening and reducing toxic chemicals in your home and yard.

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