Charleston County News Release

Release Number: 3068
Date: December 14, 2009

See photos from last year's recycling event:
http://www.charlestoncounty.org/newsimages/tree.htm

Residents Encouraged to Recycle Christmas Trees

Bring a tree to Bees Ferry Landfill Jan. 2 - 9 and receive a free bag of compost.

Charleston County's Environmental Management Department will be recycling real – not artificial – Christmas trees and turning them into compost for residents to use for gardening this spring.

Residents can drop off their tree and receive a free bag of compost at the Bees Ferry Landfill (1344 Bees Ferry Road in West Ashley) between Jan. 2 - 9. Hours of operation are Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

All tinsel and ornaments must be removed from the Christmas trees before recycling.

Charleston County residents who live within a municipality can recycle their trees without going to the Bees Ferry Landfill. These residents can put their Christmas tree on the curb for their municipality's yard waste pick-up or take it to their nearest convenience center. The municipality's haulers will then take the trees and other yard waste to Charleston County's Bees Ferry Landfill, where it is transformed into compost.

Residents should check with their municipality to find out their yard waste pick-up day and other requirements.

"We strongly encourage residents to dispose of their real Christmas tree in the correct way by recycling it at the County's compost facility or by putting the tree out at the curb with other yard debris," said Theresa Martin, a marketing specialist with Charleston County's Environmental Management Department. "One tree can make roughly 10 to 15 pounds of compost, which is valuable to many people who enjoy gardening in the spring."

The results of last year's tree recycling efforts:
- 193 trees were dropped off by residents for recycling (figure does not include curbside pick-up of trees by municipalities)
- The trees dropped off by residents produced approximately 2,800 pounds of compost, which would cover a 50x100-foot area

The process of recycling trees and yard waste into compost:
- At the Bees Ferry Landfill, trees and yard waste are ground in a tub grinder.
- The yard waste is then placed in windrows (long narrow piles), where it is periodically watered and turned.
- After six months, the yard waste breaks down to a nutrient-dense soil amendment called compost.
- The compost is screened and ready for addition to gardens beds or potted plants.
- Charleston County sells compost for $10 per ton and for $2 per bag (1.5 cubic feet) at:
  Bees Ferry Landfill
  1344 Bees Ferry Road, Charleston (West Ashley)

Hours: Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Compost can also be purchased for $2 per bag (1.5 cubic feet) at:

Charleston County Recycling Center
13 Romney Street, Charleston (Downtown)
Hours: Monday - Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For questions about recycling Christmas trees and other yard waste, contact the Bees Ferry Landfill at (843) 571-0929 or visit http://recycle.charlestoncounty.org.