

CONSERVATION QUARTERLY

SPRING 2020

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

SPRING OUTDOOR CHECKLIST

Make the most of this extra time at home to get your property spring and summer ready! See some tips to get you started below:

- Get your garden or lawn soil tested! (sandy1@cascadiacd.org for free tests or technical assistance)
- Prep your lawn for summer; dethatch, apply fertilizer, re-seed, sharpen lawn mower
- Perform irrigation checks for any breaks or leaks or to upgrade to a more efficient system
- Finish up pruning your trees and shrubs
- Prepare the area around your home to be Firewise! (Prune trees, remove vegetation to close to home, clean gutters, clean under deck. More info at firewise.org)



Pro tip: you can prune and thin your vegetation to reduce fire risk and don't even need to leave your property! We will come chip the material for you.

Register here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GKTNND9>

- Plant any cold hardy vegetables outside, and have all your warm vegetables started inside (plant out around Mother's day)
- Plant some native species and pollinator friendly varieties to reduce your water use and to provide food for much needed pollinators (check our website for our fire resistant/native plant book)
- By now, you should be about done with spraying home fruit trees (ask WSU Chelan Douglas Master Gardeners for a spray list)

We have a lot of material and information. Let us know what you need to be successful! Contact: (509) 436-1601.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL FARMING COMMUNITY

During this stay at home order, what can we do to help our farming community?

- Sign up for CSA – Community-supported agriculture (CSA) is a food production and distribution system that directly connects farmers and consumers. In short: people buy "shares" of a farm's harvest in advance and then receive a portion of the crops as they're harvested.
- Shop locally sourced – or visit your Farmer's Markets (opening in May!)
- Buying direct from farmers you know – roadside stands, calling about picking up food, etc.
- If you are a producer, add your name to a food hub to help market your product; if you are a consumer, visit a food hub to identify small farms near you to purchase from directly at <https://farmfinder.cahnr.wsu.edu/Search/BasicSearch>

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REDUCE RISK OF WILDFIRE DAMAGE

Spring is a great time to get work done around your property, including wildfire preparedness. Please see some great tips from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)/Firewise below:



7 Ways Residents Can Reduce the Risk that their Homes & Property Will Become Fuel for a Wildfire

- #1 Clear**
Clear off pine needles, dead leaves & anything that can burn from your rooflines, gutters, decks, porches, patios & along fence lines. Falling embers will have nothing to burn.
- #2 Store Away**
Store away furniture cushions, rattan mats, potted plants & other decorations from decks, porches & patios. These items catch embers and help ignite your home if you leave them outside.
- #3 Screen & Seal**
Wind-borne embers can get into homes easily through vents & other openings and burn the home from the inside out. Walk around your house to see what openings you can screen or temporarily seal up.
- #4 Rake**
Embers landing in mulch that touches your house, deck or fence is a big fire hazard. Rake out any landscaping mulch to at least five feet away.
- #5 Trim**
Trim back any shrubs or tree branches that come closer than 5 feet to the house and attachments, and any overhanging branches.
- #6 Remove**
Walk around your house and remove anything within 30 feet that could burn, such as woodpiles, spare lumber, vehicles and boats - anything that can act as a large fuel source.
- #7 Close**
If ordered to evacuate, make sure all windows & doors are closed tightly, and seal up any pet doors. Many homes are destroyed by embers entering these openings and burning the house from the inside out.

 NFPA has many more tips and safety recommendations on its websites, including www.firewise.org.

What do you do after you've trimmed all those shrubs and branches to give your home more defensible space?

*Use our **FREE** chipping program instead of burning your tree limbs!*

Burning your piles of tree limbs and small diameter trees can lead to air quality issues and is a safety concern if fires were to get out of control. Registration is open for our chipping program until May 10 here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GKTNND9>.

You don't need to leave your property, just stack your branches on the street or driveway and our contract chipping crew will take care of it!

Chipping will take place in late May. Questions? Please contact Amanda Newell with Cascadia Conservation District: amandan@cascadiacd.org.

Attention Kids: Help your family prepare for wildfire season by creating a Go-Bag

A Go-Bag is an evacuation bag that contains a three-day supply of items you would need to safely evacuate your home. These bags are prepared in advance, before an emergency, and are kept in an easily accessible place.

The Tahoe Network of Fire Adapted Communities offers the following list of necessities for your Go-Bag: (see top of next column)

When creating your Go-Bag, first add the essentials:

- Cash and extra credit cards
- Medications & prescription glasses
- Water & non-perishable food
- Personal toiletries & clothing
- Flashlight and batteries
- First-Aid kit
- Pet necessities
- Contact list of relatives & friends
- Important documents like passport, insurance, photos, etc

**Consider keeping important documents in a fire proof safe or lock box*

Next, add some additional items:

- Hand sanitizer/wipes
- Books and magazines
- Trash bags
- Rain poncho
- Blankets
- Laundry detergent
- Rubber gloves



Survival kit photo from <https://www.tripsavvy.com>

EFFICIENT IRRIGATION FOR OPTIMAL FRUIT QUALITY

Recently, hotter summers have put increasing stress on fruit trees. This is effect is particularly important in pear orchards where declining quality and yields threaten profitability.

Hot summers in Central Washington are important for fruit development, but can lead to issues in fruit trees, such as water stress and cork.

In pears, cork spot is responsible for an estimated loss of 7 to 8 million dollars in just Anjou production every year. Cork results in a bumpy fruit surface, and affected areas are usually more yellow than the rest of the skin, while the flesh has brown or grayish corky lesions. In 2017, cork spot accounted for approximately 33% of Anjou culls.

Cascadia Conservation District has partnered with WSU tree fruit extension, with funding from Bonneville Environmental Foundation, to implement an irrigation and fruit quality study.

This study looked at how irrigation frequency and timing can impact



productivity and fruit quality in pears. Several demonstration plots used soil moisture probes and more efficient sprinklers to target tree water needs more specifically.

These sites will continue to be monitored in 2020, and the data will be applied to future irrigation upgrade projects aiming to both save water and improve overall fruit quality and quantity. Increased water use efficiency is critical in our area, where water resources are limited, and is necessary to maintain a strong, profitable farming community into the future.

Initial results from the summer of 2019 show that, along with significant savings in water use, in some pack-outs the amount of fruit culled due to cork dropped 28% compared to previous harvests.

Questions about cost share irrigation upgrades? Contact Sandy Letzing at sandyl@cascadiacd.org.

AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION IS WORTH A POUND OF CURE: BE SEPTIC SMART

Most homes built outside of city boundaries have their own individual sewage treatment system, otherwise known as septic systems. Well designed and maintained septic systems are essential and an effective method for treating residential waste water and protecting our clean and healthy streams, rivers and lakes. However, failing and poorly maintained systems can contribute to pollution by adding raw sewage and/or harmful pathogens such as fecal coliform to our waterways.

If your home is equipped with a septic system, it is important to understand your system so that you can keep it well maintained and working properly, to protect local streams.

Daily actions at our homes have a direct impact on the quality of the water flowing through our local rivers and streams.

In turn, those lakes, rivers and streams impact the quality of life here in North Central Washington. We may take for granted the health and cleanliness of those waters; however, pollutants may enter those waterways from our yards and home sites. **Approximately 60% of pollutants enter from dispersed locations (non-point sources)** such as oil dripping from cars, runoff from roads, yards and farms, pet waste and failing septic systems. All these can contribute toxins into the surface and groundwater.

There are different types of designs, but a typical septic system decomposes organic matter and separates solids that sink to the bottom. Floatable materials like oil and grease rise to the top. The liquid effluent that is between the solids and the floating material flows out of the tank and into a set of perforated pipes, which are buried in a leach field. The effluent is released into and filtered by the soil. Additional info can be found here: <https://www.epa.gov/septic/how-your-septic-system-works>

Home septic systems require regular checkups.

You may be able to do this yourself. The Washington Department of Health has a set of “do-it-yourself” septic system inspection videos and checklists at: <https://bit.ly/2XqFy0I>. The WA Board of Health requires systems with a tank and gravity drain field to receive a full evaluation every one to three years. All other systems must have a yearly evaluation.

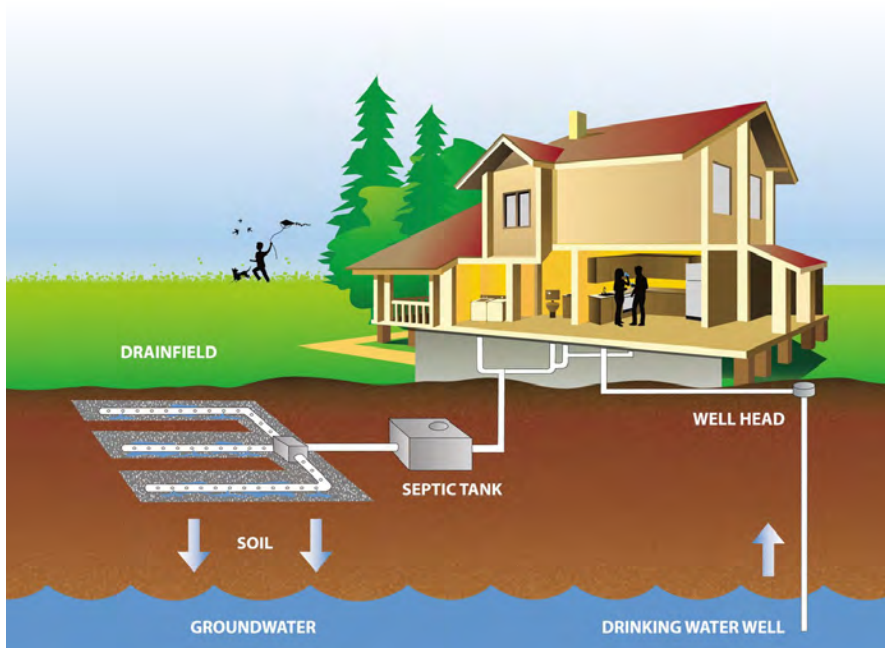


Photo from WA Department of Health: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/WastewaterManagement/OnsiteSewageSystemsOSS/LocalHealthSupport/SocialMarketingTools#Illustrations>

Failing septic systems often provide warning signs. It may be time to call a septic professional if you notice any of the following:

- Wastewater backing up into household drains.
- Bathtubs, showers, and sinks drain very slowly.
- Gurgling sounds in the plumbing system.
- Bright green, spongy grass on the drain field, especially during dry weather.
- Pooling water or muddy soil around your septic system or in your basement.
- A strong odor around the septic tank and drain field.

Information about maintaining your septic system, and its role in water quality in streams and rivers, can be found at the WA Department of Ecology, the WA Department of Health and at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s “SepticSmart Homeowners” website.

REMEMBERING CONARD PETERSEN

Tribute by Rick Edwards. Photos provided by Debbie Harrison.



His family tribute sums it up best: “His legacy is the example he set -following the word of God, having integrity in all things and showing unconditional love to others.”

Conard was an un-assuming Renaissance Man, long before the term became fashionable. A man firmly committed to his “extended family,” which included his actual family, members of his church, Entiat Planning Unit and Landowner Steering Committees and the , and the North Central WA community at large.

He was both a logger and farmer at heart, building the Entiat family orchard from 20 acres of apples to 70 acres of pears. With family and friends, he explored the canyons and mountains of not only the Entiat Valley, but all the major mountain summits in Washington State. He was a voracious reader and pursued knowledge in a wide range of arenas. He had a deep appreciation and love of classical music. He was a 41-year member of the Wenatchee Apollo Club and served as the group’s music librarian.



“Chelan County lost a pillar of the community with the recent passing of Conard Petersen,” said Rick Edwards

Conard was a member of the Entiat Historical Society, and the Knapp-Wham Ditch Association, and most significantly for Cascadia Conservation District.

Conard served on the District Board as a Member from 1992-2000 then as an Associate Member from 2000 until the time of his passing. He

was always available as a consultant to CD staff. He provided critical input and guidance during both the development and implementation of the Entiat Watershed Plan. Conard played a major role in helping shape Cascadia into the pro-active conservation partner that it is today, even before he joined the Board. Conard will be sorely missed.

TIPS TO GET KIDS OUTSIDE

Contributed by Dave Spies, Columbia Breaks Fire Interpretive Center

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 related school closures, Cascadia and partners have cancelled their outdoor forestry experience Kids In the Forest (KITF). We are currently trying to provide alternative ideas to fulfill the mission of that educational objective.

"No child can truly know or value the outdoors if the natural world remains under glass, seen only through lenses, screens, or computer monitors." Richard Louv, Last Child in the Woods

Our top priority has been to get kids outside to experience the forests and shrub-steppe environments in which they live. It is amazing how many young people don't get that opportunity. Their future decision-making about natural resources will be influenced largely upon their personal experiences with the forests.

Just because we can't provide the field experience, doesn't mean that you can't as a family discover your own trails...in the local forests, foothills, parks and in your backyards. There are many online resources that can help you enhance the experience with simple activities for young people. I have provided a few below to get you started.

Examples of online resources for nature discovery:

- Find activities such as: "Backyard Scavenger Hunt", "Examine Nature at Home", "Design a Nature Collage", and "Leaf or Bark Rubbing" from The National Parks Trust: www.parktrust.org.
- Try the scavenger hunt printed below from <https://soeasybeinggreen-blog.com>
- Nature journaling is a great way for students to record their scavenger hunt finds. The Wenatchee Naturalist program has a great example: www.wenatcheenaturalist.com.
- A KITF priority is to help students understand the role that natural wildfire and wildfire management has played in the health of our eastern forest ecosystems. A multi-grade curriculum full of activities on this subject can be found on the USDA/USFS education website, Fireworks, at www.frames.gov/fireworks/home. You can adapt activities to your child's grade level.
- The Kids in the Forest planning team is working on virtual resources for the program. Check out current resources here: https://cascadiacd.org/kids-in-the-forest_368.html



CASCADIA
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Please Remember to Recycle



UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

Cascadia Conservation District Board Meetings

May TBD 14 N Mission St, Wenatchee 3:30 pm

Jun TBD 14 N Mission St, Wenatchee 3:30 pm

Jul TBD 14 N Mission St, Wenatchee 3:30 pm

*Meetings will be call-in only until Governor's order is lifted. Watch our website for updates

Entiat Watershed Planning Unit Meeting

TBD Entiat Grange Hall 10:00 am

Cascadia's 2020 Photo Contest launches May 1. Details and submission form here: www.cascadiacd.org

WELCOME ABOARD! (More on this in the next issue!)

Amy Bridges has joined the Cascadia Board of Supervisors.

Kathleen Deason joined our staff as an Administrative Assistant.

Hal Hawley has returned to the Board of Supervisors as an Associate. Hal had previously served on the Board from 2006-2018.

YAKAMA NATION PROJECT UPDATE

The Yakama Nation is implementing the Upper Burns Side-Channel project at river mile 25.8-26.8 in the Entiat River.

This will be built during the in-water work window of July 16th - 31st.

All work is on river right with a temporary crossing in place during that time. All materials are staged at the Preston Pit, and we will be going out to bid the third week of April. Around 275 pieces of wood will be installed in the channels and along the mainstem, similar to what was done at the Stormy A project last summer. A map of the project area is above.

For additional information on this project please contact Christopher Clemmons at (509) 881-5746 or clec@yakamafish-nsn.gov.



BEAVER RELOCATION PROGRAM

Trout Unlimited Washington Water Project (WWP) is trapping nuisance beaver and relocating them to National Forest lands, with a stop over at Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery. For more information contact Lisa Pelly, Trout Unlimited Washington Water Project Director, at (509) 888-0970 or lisa.pelly@tu.org.



Photo: from US Fish & Wildlife Service