

## A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO RECYCLING

As you settle into life in Germany, the environment-caring habits of the area will be less confusing to you as they become a natural part of your own routine. Here are a few simple guidelines to get you started.

**ALTGLAS:** Used glass includes most non-deposit bottles as well as normal drinking glasses and bottle jars (remove lids!). These are separated by color into containers found in central locations of your neighborhood. Window panes, mirrors, fluorescent lamps, light bulbs, plastic bottles, ceramic, stoneware and porcelain do not belong in these containers.

**ALTPAPIER:** Used paper includes newspapers, magazines, catalogs, cardboard and paperback books. Not included are very dirty paper, wallpaper, wax paper, juice or milk cartons, carbon paper or photos.

**GELBER SACK/TONNE:** These yellow bags are for the disposal of a variety of synthetic packaging materials such as aluminum, food cans, soft drink cans, bottle lids, fruit juice and milk cartons, plastic wrap, Styrofoam, plastic bags, plastic containers or cups. Anything which is stamped with "die grüne Punkt" can be placed in these bags (except those items made of paper or glass which follow their own recycling route). A detailed diagram of what goes in the bags is stamped on them. Extra bags can be obtained from your local city hall, recycling center and in most "reformhaus" shops which sell natural or untreated foodstuffs.

**SPERRMÜLL:** This category includes large items such as old furniture, carpets, refrigerators, mattresses, toys, mirrors, window panes, radios and televisions. Your contributions should be set out on the sidewalk the evening before the designated pick-up date and you will see recycling at its best as people stroll or drive past and retrieve much of which is still reusable. Do be aware that this is an accepted practice and anything not intended for disposal should be put away.

**COMPOST:** Composting is the recycling of raw or organic wastes such as vegetable peels, egg shells, even coffee grounds in their filters. It is an art and can be used in your own garden to improve the quality of your soil. In some areas, it can be collected or disposed of through a municipal service.

**MÜLL:** With a few exceptions such as medicines (return to any pharmacy), chemicals (special collections called SONDERMÜLL), and garden trimmings (by apartment or on special collection days), most of the rest of your garbage will be collected on a specified day in the official container provided by your landlord. These are available in various sizes and the cost of this collection is included in your monthly utility charges. Contact your landlord if you require a larger sized container.