

Poste^{visu}
bottle

"See glass
Several items

01-141

TB

Kenai

Peninsula's

Sea Glass

01-141

“Waste not, want not,” is an old saying that is more important today than it was yesterday. With a population growing exponentially, we are producing more waste now than ever. On the Kenai Peninsula this is especially true because we have no system to recycle economically.

Remember that glass bottle you threw away today? It will take 1,000,000 years (Church & Miller, 2006) to break down in the landfill. Each of the 55,400 people (Bureau, 2010) who live on the Kenai Peninsula will throw away approximately 3 glass jars per week. (Tales of Goodness, 2011) That’s about 2 ½ pounds of glass per week or 7,202,000 pounds per year, again, per person! We, who live in the Borough, produce 55,599 tons annually of solid waste, (Mayor, FY 2012) which includes glass. The Borough’s projected revenues for fiscal year 2012 is \$8,574,900 (Mayor, FY 2012) while the expenditures are \$8,781,197 (Mayor, FY 2012), which result in a deficit of \$206,297. Recycling the 7,202,000 pounds of discarded glass could easily take care of the deficit.

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Tourism is big business on the Kenai Peninsula. Tourists come here for its fishing and beauty. Homer is a popular tourist destination. At the ‘other’ end of the road in Nikiski, tourism is said to be ‘predominantly dormant’, according to the Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

Livestock owners who live here also enjoy the Peninsula’s beauty and its natural resources. Feeding livestock brings its own kind of waste. In 2011 23,960 plastic bags (Green, 2012) from livestock feed were thrown away. These plastic bags clogging up the landfill take 10-20 years (Nemve, 2001) to break down.

Sea glass is a green ecotourism attraction that people will want to see and purchase; one that uses nature and beauty while putting Nikiski on the tourist map. Creating sea glass could

save money in the borough solid waste budget and bring tourists through Kenai to Nikiski. The creation of Kenai Peninsula's Sea Glass could become a destination for tourists to see, experience and buy our waste. In addition, it would be easy to sell the Sea Glass on the internet. Therefore, instead of paying money to bury the glass and plastic bags, these items can be used to create ecotourism to beautify our Peninsula in a safe, earth-friendly, economical way.

Sea glass is easy and inexpensive to make. Using all recycled material, you can create your own sea glass. By means of discarded feed sacks, glass and the ocean waves, beautiful sea glass is created by Mother Nature and you. Simply place the glass in the plastic feed sack with a handful of sand. Clamp the neck of the sack to a rope which is tethered to a stake where the ocean waves can agitate the glass. The result of this process has many purposes and is beautiful.

Sea glass has many uses, such as landscaping, interior design, jewelry, and crafts, just to name a few. Schools can produce and use sea glass to create art projects. Sea glass is used in the bottom of fish tanks or in flower vases. Two inches of sea glass around flowers take care of weeds. A sprinkle of sea glass down a path or trails renders them magical. In home construction, Kenai Sea Glass can be used in place of tiles in bathrooms and kitchens.

The response to Kenai Sea Glass by businesses and individuals has been overwhelming! Every business (Krogseng, 2012) (Griffith, 2012) contacted about using recycled sea glass has indicated that they would love to incorporate it into their landscaping or artwork. The jewelry created from sea glass is in high demand. Snow River Body Essentials (Krogseng, 2012) is interested in the jewelry as well as wind chimes. XTO Energy wants to use it for landscaping and in a piece of artwork with their logo. AA Dan's Construction is interested in sea glass for their landscaping. Although my first bag from the inlet won't satisfy all those needs, my next 50 bags will.

The earth is becoming polluted; the glass you throw away today will be here long after your great great-grandchildren: 1,000,000,000 (Church & Miller, 2006) years to be exact. You can be the change by recycling and creating beauty instead. Commit to recycling. I can see the headlines of the paper: *Kenai Peninsula: Gone Green!*

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