



The DC area's largest thrift store for home improvement!





Instead of donating a couch or clothing to our nonprofit...

you receive a tax deduction for donating building & landscaping materials, tools, hardware, appliances, architectural salvage, etc.

Rule of thumb: if it came from a hardware store or Home Depot, we're probably interested in it.

No, we don't sell forklifts.

Our name refers to our nonprofit mission:

Community Forklift is
lifting up local communities
by...



Reducing waste.

Currently, building materials make up approximately 30% – 40% of our nation's solid waste (by weight)



Creating green jobs.

We've flourished in the tough economy! In less than 6 years, we've grown from 3 to 17 employees.



Making repairs affordable

for tens of thousands of homeowners, low-income folks, small businesses, and nonprofits.

Old materials are worth a lot!

We first realized the value of “harvesting the urban forest” when we reclaimed floors from a rotting public housing complex.



Benefits to the region:



- **Lots of reasons for builders & property owners to donate:**
 - Tax deduction
 - Reduces dumpster and tipping fees
 - LEED points
 - Be a good corporate citizen = good P.R.!
- Makes **repairs more affordable** for low-income homeowners, small businesses, and nonprofits
- Fixing up local buildings makes the community cleaner & safer, and improves the **tax base**.



More benefits!

- **Keeps value of materials here in the community** – don't have to pay to haul them away (saves \$)
- **Reduces waste** – don't have to extract as many virgin materials, manufacture them, and ship them around the world.
- **Reduces wasted energy** – reclaiming materials drastically reduces the use of fossil fuels.
- **Historic Preservation:** Owners of old homes are able to find period hardware and materials. We make it easier to preserve existing historic structures.

Builders & Designers: setting themselves apart

Chuck Witmer of Scale House Design designed and built this shed, which won International Shed of the Year in 2009. "I wanted to be able to build every part of it from scratch...I didn't want to use any fully assembled products." He used old floor joists for the doors and windows, and old shower doors for the glass in the doors



Scott DeGraf & his wife Linda built a one room cottage in WV out of natural and recycled materials for their clients. Most of the reclaimed material is from CF, including the doors, windows, lumber, insulation, woodstove, and stove pipe.







We're not just creating green jobs at our store...

Keeping builders working

- Saving their clients money through **donation**: Builders like Andy Ault of Little River Carpentry even write us into bids.



- Saving their clients money by **shopping**: Despite a tough economy, thousands of small contractors and handymen have been able to continue working due to our low prices



Big & little jobs that wouldn't have existed...

James Ferguson bought a piece of granite to create a kitchen island. The cost of the finished granite, including fabrication, was less than \$100 (Irwin Aguilar fabricated the granite).



Artisans & Craftspeople

Mark Z is one of our favorites –
he uses old trim for beautiful vintage-style signs.



Value – Added Products

Giving new life to old materials!

Old panel doors from
Community Forklift
become bookcases, which
are then sold on
consignment at
Goodwood on U St.

We hope to expand into
value-added work one
day...







Even more economic activity: Consignment

Amy Levin owns the first LEED Platinum residence in DC . She purchased the wood portion of her countertop/bar, coffee table and all the trim throughout her house here at the Forklift, from our consignment partner Marcus Sims of Treeincarnation

Small business owners love us!

- A deli used pallet wood for a beautiful wall treatment.
- A clothing store used old panel doors as partitions for dressing room stalls.
- A diner put a glass top onto a vintage gas stove, and used it as an eye-catching hostess stand
- Even window-display designers from large stores come here (Urban Outfitters and the like)



Serving those who need it most



- Low- and moderate-income residents make up a large share of our customer base
- Seniors on a fixed income.
- In these times of high rates of foreclosure, Community Forklift has helped to keep people in their homes by making it possible for them to afford repairs.
- We see a lot of homeowners who are fixing up spare rooms or basement apartments for rent, so they can use the additional income to make their mortgage payments.

Donations to nonprofits & families in need



In addition to donating to needy families and nonprofits that repair substandard housing, we have donated our materials for dozens of other community purposes

Church pews –have been reupholstered and are now being used by the Capitol Fringe Festival for seating in their temporary theatres each summer.

Commercial carpet tiles: multipurpose rooms, community centers, and church basements around the region

Community gardens: our free lumber has been used in dozens of raised garden beds

Even art & theatre groups!

Prince George's Little Theatre's production of "Steel Magnolias" is set in 1987 in a beauty salon in Louisiana. The salon is supposed to be a converted carport at a private home. Complementing the wall of Faux painted bricks on sheets of luan plywood (yes...the bricks are just paint and plywood!), items from CF include siding, a door & window, all kitchen cabinets and a hair washing sink.



The problem: no one knows we exist!

The majority of builders & homeowners don't know that they can donate leftover renovation materials.



If I see another #@ magazine article called "How to recycle anything" that doesn't mention building materials....*

Even if they know about us, they
don't know how to get it to us.

Yes, we have a truck...



This is where you all come in!



First: Spreading the word



Let's look at Fairfax County's
Recycling & Trash Page...

- 1) You're a homeowner who needs to get rid of a ceiling fan and a bathtub... would you click on "[Materials for Recycling](#)" or "[Materials for Disposal](#)?"
- 2) "[Materials for Disposal](#)" is only going to tell you what the landfill and transfer station will accept.

Next, you go to the Frequently Asked Questions page.

Your choices are:

- [Recycling - General](#)
- [Recycling - Business](#)
- [Trash Collection - General](#)
- [Trash Collection - Large \(Bulky\) Items and Brush](#)
- [Trash Disposal](#)

What would you click first?



The bad news: You have to go specifically to “recycling”, and then to “building materials”, to figure out that your stuff can be donated. Even if they realize that recycling is an option, we’ve found that many homeowners don’t even think of tubs or ceiling fans as “building materials” - they associate that term with lumber and nails.



The good news: Although Fairfax doesn’t list Community Forklift, it does list the smaller reuse stores. Yay!

Second: Diverting materials at the drop-off site



Now, let's look at
Montgomery County's
website.

They still don't mention building materials reuse on their bulk waste page...but boy, do they have a great program at the Shady Grove Transfer Station!

From the Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services website page:

Building materials in usable condition are accepted by our "Don't Dump. Donate!" program.

- The [Habitat for Humanity Restore](#) located very near the Shady Grove Transfer Station, accepts usable building materials, too.
- [Builder's Guide to Reuse & Recycling](#), a directory for construction and demolition materials, was compiled by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Don't Dump. Donate!

[Accepted materials](#) | [Unacceptable materials](#) | [How to participate](#) | [Why use Don't Dump Donate](#) | [How donated items are used](#)

"Don't Dump. Donate!" (DDD) is Montgomery County's program for collecting building and construction materials for reuse. You no longer need to throw out unused or used building materials. You can give them away! In cooperation with The Loading Dock, the Division of Solid Waste Services offers residents and businesses the opportunity to donate used building and construction materials as an alternative to sending them to the waste-to-energy facility. Through "Don't Dump. Donate!" the County also gives these materials to other non-profit, charitable organizations who can prove their non-profit tax status.

Third: You tell me



- **Give out info at the planning office** when people want to pull permits for remodeling or demolition?
 - **Include our info in brochures?**

- **Invite us to things?** For example, we were invited to a ceremony for recycling awards. This led to a donation of HUNDREDS of granite sinks and toilets that were like-new.
- **Have us speak** at green programs? Make us part of your efforts to educate residents about low-cost ways to go green?



- **What else? What are the barriers?**

Other recycling & donation options

- www.BuildersRecyclingGuide.com – FANTASTIC guide!
- We're seeing more C&D waste hauling companies interested in recycling - sorting through dumpster loads.
- www.GreenRecyclingNetwork.com - a private company that specializes in the deconstruction of entire commercial buildings and interiors (cost is competitive to traditional demolition)
- www.Freecycle.org
- The free section of www.Craigslist.org
- DC Materials Exchange for Nonprofits – similar to Freecycle, but intended for large quantities, or non-residential items, that a nonprofit might be able to use.
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DCMaterialsExchange/>

If you do nothing else...

Push Earth911.org!

It gets more comprehensive all the time, and it's easy for groups like us to add info about new donation and recycling options.