

the **sou'wester**  
Circulation 36,538

Published weekly by:  
**Canstar Community News**  
1355 Mountain Avenue  
Winnipeg, Man. R2X 3B6  
Ph: 697-7009  
www.canstarnews.com

## MANAGEMENT

Publisher  
**Bob Cox**  
Director of Sales  
**Walter Lytwyn**  
Managing Editor  
**John Kendle**

## ADMINISTRATION

Main Switchboard: 697-7009  
Delivery Service: 697-7200  
Display Advertising Sales: 697-7009  
or [sales@canstarnews.com](mailto:sales@canstarnews.com)  
Classified Advertising: 697-7050  
Fax: 953-4300

## EDITORIAL

Deputy Editor  
**Jim Timlick, 697-7098**  
[jim.timlick@canstarnews.com](mailto:jim.timlick@canstarnews.com)

Sou'wester Staff Reporter  
**Simon Fuller, 697-7111**  
[simon.fuller@canstarnews.com](mailto:simon.fuller@canstarnews.com)  
facebook.com/TheSouwesterWpg  
@SouwesterWPG

Sports Reporter  
**Avi Saper, 697-7142**  
[avi.saper@canstarnews.com](mailto:avi.saper@canstarnews.com)  
@avisaper

Events Calendar:  
**www.CanstarNews.com**  
click on the Events Calendar

Fax: 953-4305

The Sou'wester welcomes letters to the editor by e-mail or regular post. All letters must include a name, address and phone number for verification of authorship. E-mail letters to [letters@canstarnews.com](mailto:letters@canstarnews.com).



Publisher's Liability for error: The publisher shall not be liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. The publisher's liability for other errors or omissions in connection with any advertisement is strictly limited to publication of the advertisement issue or the refund of any monies paid for the advertisement.

# Do's and don'ts of composting



Raimy Gallant

NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Nutrient-rich, dark soil comes in plastic bags from the garden centre. Or does it? Take kitchen scraps and yard waste, throw it in a compost bin, wait a year or so and presto — soil our farming ancestors would probably rather use.

It's cheaper than store-bought and sustainable, but do-it-yourself-dirt knowledge might be the biggest hurdle preventing more would-be composters from diverting their kitchen scraps from the dump to their backyard. Luckily, composting experts have knowledge to share and can be found by looking over your fence.

"What I put in is what I get out," says Getty Stewart, a 10-year composting veteran and Riverview community resident. She laughs as she talks about how her composter doubled as a pumpkin patch last year. Stewart says it's fine to put weeds in a composter, but only before the seeding stage. Putting seeds or seeding plants in a compost bin could result in unwanted plant life wherever the harvested compost is spread.

Sylvie Hebert, composting co-ordinator with the Green Action Centre, says the biggest don't when it comes to composting is, "adding the wrong foods such as meat, pet waste, dairy products or fish, and anything with oils." But do add dry materials such as yard waste, sawdust or shredded paper to the wet materials, which are kitchen scraps.

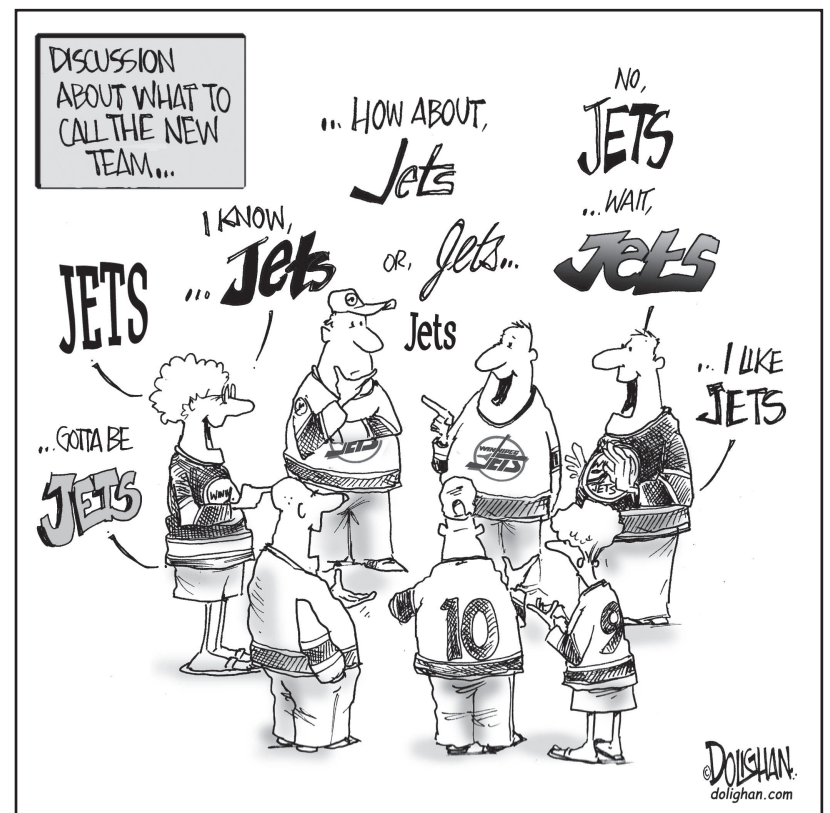
Hebert also stressed how important it is to make sure the compost bin is in an accessible location, even in the winter. "If you want to put your composter further away and in the winter not clear a path, what you can do is store your compostables in a five-gallon bin or a garbage bin near your door, and in the spring, dump that in your compost bin before it thaws or as it's thawing," she says.

Choosing the right bin might also seem a daunting task, but "a bin's a bin," Hebert says. Compost bins can be purchased through the city or at your local hardware store. You can also choose to save a few dollars by building your own out of scrap material.

Experts from the Green Action Centre will dole out heaps of homemade soil advice at two free backyard composting workshops in June. Lord Roberts Community Centre will host a workshop on Sat., June 11 from 1 to 2:30 p.m., and Riverview Community Centre will host a workshop on Sat., June 25 from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Riverview and Lord Roberts residents who attend can have a wooden composter built on their property for \$30 instead of the usual \$105 price tag.

Raimy Gallant is a communications co-ordinator with the Community-Led Emissions Reduction program in Riverview and Lord Roberts.

Neighbourhood Forum is a readers' column. If you live in The Sou'wester area and would like to contribute to this column, contact [john.kendle@canstarnews.com](mailto:john.kendle@canstarnews.com).



## Misguided minimum wage increase misses the mark

### Readers' roundup

#### To the editor:

It wasn't a matter of if, but when the Manitoba government was going to increase the minimum wage.

However, it's interesting the provincial government decided to increase Manitoba's minimum wage from \$9.50 to \$10 per hour, effective Oct. 1, 2011 — coincidentally just three days before election day.

So make no mistake, this is a politically-motivated decision that leaves Manitoba small business owners picking up the tab.

Let's be clear: an increase in the minimum wage translates into two things — more taxes for the government and fewer hours for low income earners. This is the 12th consecutive increase in Manitoba's minimum wage and the 12th consecutive time the government will have you believe a minimum wage increase will help alleviate poverty.

At a time when small business optimism levels in Manitoba have

improved, the last thing government should be considering are policies that hinder job creation.

One Manitoba small business owner said it best: "Raising minimum wage is an easy way for the government to get some positive headlines and claim they're helping to fight poverty."

The bottom line is small business owners believe in improving the standard of living for low-income workers, but there are far better ways to accomplish this.

Increasing the minimum wage is a pretty blunt tool for helping low income workers and certainly less effective than putting real dollars into low income earners pockets and concentrating on helping people upgrade their skills to qualify for better paying positions.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has always advocated for the government to focus on practical and effective solutions to helping low-income earners.

**Marilyn Braun-Pollon,**  
vice-president  
**Canadian Federation of Independent Business**