

A HOMETOWN STORY:

Circular Supports Recycling and Reuse

Circular, across 6th Avenue from Nordstrom, brings Anchorage a chic and modern earth-friendly shopping alternative. Owner Kim Stalder opened Circular in November 2007. Inspired to bring an environmentally responsible shopping experience to Anchorage, Kim began researching unique and beautiful products made from recycled, organic or otherwise sustainable materials.

True to Circular's eco-conscious mission, minimal changes were made to the space the store occupies. The existing sales counter and room configuration was not changed during remodeling so the amount of trash sent to the landfill was ZERO! The walls were painted (with low-VOC paint, of course), the floors were cleaned, and an existing wall that separated the sales counter from the back of the store was cut in half and the top moved to the rear of the store to create a display area. The long-term hope is that Circular will locate in a sustainably designed building—maybe an entirely “green” building of its own.

Circular researches all of the products in the store to be sure they are as “green” as possible and that the creators are paid a fair wage. Products are made primarily in the United States, but also come from Canada, Brazil, Nepal, Vietnam, China, and Peru. All products are fair trade, eco-friendly, organic, and fun.

Circular also carries the work of local artisans, both to reduce the environmental footprint associated with shipping to Alaska and to showcase the talent and creativity of Alaskans. From gorgeous fire pits by local metal artist Jody Barton, to photography framed in recycled books by Kim's daughter, Megan, Circular intends to be a venue for local artists to show beautiful works made from materials that would otherwise go into Anchorage's landfill. If you know of any artists—or if you are one—who would like to show their wares at Circular, Kim would love to hear from them.

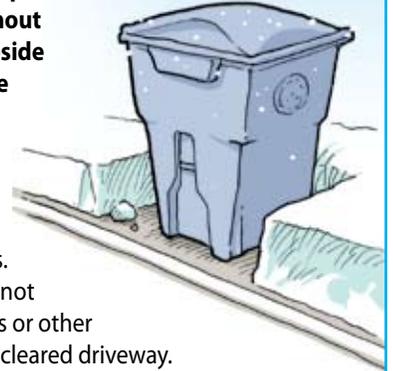


Circular, 274-2472 and at www.circularstore.com

See page 4 in past A to Z Guide issues for other businesses that reuse and recycle our offcasts. Visit the Recycling blog at www.adn.com/recycleblog to post information about other businesses in Anchorage and the region that are going green. Tell us about your favorite vintage shop, thrift store, found or reused art gallery, or sustainable products outlet.

WINTERIZE YOUR RECYCLING

Don't let the snow and cold hinder your recycling and trash disposal efforts. Here are some tips to help you successfully recycle throughout the year, whether you have curbside service or are dropping off at the recycling center.



CURBSIDE

- 1) Be sure to clear the way for your recycling and trash carts or cans. Shovel a small area so they are not blocked by snow banks, vehicles or other obstacles, or place carts in your cleared driveway.
- 2) Do not put wet items into your recycling cart and be sure to contain wet items in a bag in your trash. This will reduce the potential for the items freezing in your cart and not properly emptying on collection day.
- 3) Keep your cart lids closed not only to reduce odor and discourage animals but also to keep the snow out. A secure storage location for your carts or cans not only keeps bears out of trash in the summer but keeps snow and ice at bay in the winter.

DROP-OFF

- 1) Store your recyclables in manageable containers that can be easily lifted into and out of your vehicle, reducing your potential for injury, especially on snow and ice.
- 2) Consolidate trips so you aren't making a special trip to the recycling center. Drop off recyclables first and use your empty bins to carry your groceries or other purchases instead of using bags!
- 3) Be courteous at the recycling center – don't idle, leave space for others, and pull up as far as possible.
- 4) Be reflective if recycling during our many hours of winter darkness. Be sure to watch for others as well.

Green Streets and Sidewalks

Salt melts snow and ice by lowering the freezing point. However, basic rock salt or road salt (sodium chloride) is not effective when pavement temperatures are below 18 degrees F. It also corrodes metal on vehicles, kills roadside vegetation, pollutes salmon streams and attracts moose to roadways. At the lower temperatures that Anchorage usually sees throughout the winter, salt can cause more problems than it solves.

- When de-icing, be sure to use only the quantities of de-icer necessary to do the job. And remember that the purpose of salt is to break the bond between snow/ice and the pavement so the snow/ice can be removed. It is not meant to melt away the snow/ice so don't expect this to happen or add more salt if it is not happening.
- If you use a de-icer on your sidewalk or driveway, read the package and look for products made from magnesium chloride or calcium chloride instead of sodium chloride.

- Calcium chloride is recommended over sodium chloride because it can be used in lower concentrations, it works at lower temperatures (-20 to -25°F), and is less environmentally damaging, although it is still very corrosive.
- Magnesium chloride is less corrosive and even less impacting on the environment. Its ice-melting temperature threshold falls between road salt and calcium chloride.
- Both calcium chloride and magnesium chloride are more expensive per unit than road salt but also are more effective so you can use less to get the same or better results.
- Visit Watershed Management Services at <http://wms.geonorth.com> for more information on keeping toxic substances off our streets and out of our streams.