



## *Everyday Environmental Stewardship*

### **Fencing**

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#### **Key issues:**

Material; Transportation; Durability; Waste Management

#### **Stewardship Opportunity**

Green and Appealing

Fences are everywhere — backyards, property lines, parking lots, recreation areas. Most of us can make decisions about fencing for our houses, whether where we live or where we worship. In making a decision about fencing considerations include material, toxic contribution, cost, waste removal and aesthetics.

This EES brief is informed by the experience at our house of worship, All Saints Parish, Brookline. We started with a 20+ year-old wood stockade fence, held in place by wood poles. (See photos at right.) Not a pretty sight! We ended with a wood fence similar to the old one, but via a process that ensures good environmental stewardship.



### **Wood Fencing**

We did not use pressure treated lumber because it leaches toxins to the ground, and beyond. Similarly, we did not want to use preservatives that leach dangerous substances into the ground. While leaching from fencing is unlikely to cause direct harm to humans, it could cause indirect harm to humans through its direct harm to the water table, and to invertebrate aquatic life. Thus we used unfinished (not pressure treated) 3/4" stockade fencing panels of white cedar. (See the photo at the top of this page.) After installation the fence and wood posts were treated with a non-toxic sealant that penetrates and protects the wood. The product used is *Seal-Once Waterproofer*. We did not use bamboo as the fence material because it isn't durable in cold climates for outside use.

### **Fencing from recycled materials**

Aesthetics and high cost were reasons we rejected materials made from recycled materials.



### **Waste Management**

What to do with the old fence? We called a company that recycles such materials. Old fencing in good condition is sold for re-use, but most of the old fencing was not suitable for that and was taken to a recycling plant and ground up for mulch or ground cover.