

## End of the line - for the deck

[Gardening Gone Wild](#) is having its last photo competition for the year. The topic is "[The End of the Line](#)." I wasn't going to enter but with the deck-removal project in full swing, thought this might be interesting.

We rarely think about the end of the line when we are at the beginning. What happens to things we make and build when they get old? The plans for the deck were created by a landscape architect in 1984 for the previous owners of the house, who were good enough to pass them along to us when we bought it. Twenty-five years ago the deck was built with pressure-treated wood. The wood probably was treated with chromated copper arsenate (CCA). We will rake up all of the pieces and the top soil in an effort to remove this highly toxic stuff and I may have the soil tested afterwards to see what we have.

But more importantly we need to think about what we are doing. It is time to stop using poisonous materials in what we make. Plastics have been in the news this week ([NY Times: Afloat in the Ocean, Expanding Islands of Trash](#)) - though it is not new. Even Nicholas Kristof wrote a piece about the [health effects of plastic bottles](#). As I move ahead with gardening I am becoming more committed to the idea that everything I use must be "natural." It needs to be made of materials that are not re-engineered in the lab. That means no pvc pipe, no plastic bender board for borders, no plastic at all (may be hard to do!), no pesticides, no herbicides, and no fertilizers, except to use up the ones I already own.

So here's my entry to the GGW photo competition, and here's to thinking about the beginning, the middle, and the end.

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