



**Public Works Department  
(831) 420-5160**

www.ci.santa-cruz.ca.us/

**Fall 2008**



In August, the City of Santa Cruz received the **2008 Outstanding Recycling Program of the Year Award** from the California Resource Recovery

Association! The mission of this organization is to promote waste reduction, reuse, recycling, pollution prevention, and composting. Receiving this award is a significant honor because it recognizes that the City of Santa Cruz Resource Recovery Program is the best in the state! Since California leads the nation in waste

## City of Santa Cruz Wins Outstanding Recycling Program of the Year!! Awarded by the California Resource Recovery Association

### How do we measure success?

- Landfill diversion has increased—from 35% in 1995 to 62% in 2006.
- Tons of garbage landfilled have decreased—from 72,066 tons in 1995 to 54,140 in 2006.
- Amount of materials recycled has increased—from 6,923 tons in 1995 to 14,880 tons in 2007.
- We continue to add new items to our list of materials accepted for recycling, such as bagged plastic bags in curbside carts; fluorescent bulbs, rigid plastics, and sheet rock at the Resource Recovery Facility; and pharmaceuticals at drop-off sites.

### What does it take to be a winner?

#### Single-Stream & Same Day Service

In 2006, the City installed a single-stream recycling system to process co-mingled containers and paper. Removing dividers from the blue carts made more room for recyclables and improved customer convenience by eliminating sorting.

Changing to single-stream allows us to collect all three carts in one day—Same Day Service! Split trucks collect garbage in one side and GreenCycle! material in the other on the first pass, and recyclables in both sides on the second pass. One less pass means fewer trucks on our streets, saving fuel and emissions, while providing more convenient service. Plus, the noisier recycling collection happens later in the morning.

#### Construction and Demolition (C&D) Materials

The Resource Recovery Facility offers construction contractors reduced gate fees for separating recyclables from material that is landfilled. The public is also offered reduced roll-off box rates for sorted loads. Our staff is always looking for new markets for our C&D material. Recently, they identified a market for used sheet rock. Clean wood is ground up and used as bio-fuel. Material that can't be recycled, such as painted wood, plywood, roofing paper, and shingles, is ground and used to cover garbage in the landfill at the end of every day.

#### Community Partners

A 12-year partnership with *Hope Services*



Mark Dettle, Director of Public Works, and Mary Arman, Public Works Operations Manager, proudly display the California Resource Recovery Association Award.

reduction and recycling efforts, this is high praise, indeed.

The City has owned and operated the Dimeo Lane Landfill since 1926 and started collecting refuse in the 1940s. By 1987, the City was collecting newspapers, glass bottles, and cans curbside, which marked the beginning of our current recycling program. City residents are provided curbside refuse, recycling, and GreenCycle! collection. Commercial refuse customers are offered unlimited recycling containers to encourage them to recycle more. An extensive public outreach and education program is provided, as well as a drop-off recycling center, a household hazardous waste facility, convenient community drop-off sites for specialty items, and special pickup days for appliances, e-waste, and holiday greens. The City, businesses, and residents have all worked together to achieve a 62% diversion rate.

## Materials Recycled in 2007

News/Mixed Paper.....	4,143 tons	<b>Home Composting</b>	
Mixed Paper (<65% news) .....	465 tons	Homes participating.....	850+
Old Corrugated Cardboard.....	2,870 tons	Diverted from disposal.....	1,600 tons
Magazines .....	15 tons	<b>Household Hazardous Waste</b>	
Glass.....	2,284 tons	Households participating .....	3,306
PET Plastic.....	102 tons	Safely disposed .....	120+ tons
Mixed Plastic .....	137 tons	<b>Pharmaceuticals</b>	
Film Plastic .....	19 tons	Safely disposed .....	650 pounds*
Aluminum .....	22 tons		
Tin/Steel Cans .....	169 tons		
Scrap Metal .....	2,287 tons		
Waste Oil.....	37 tons		
Oil Filters .....	2 tons		
Auto Batteries .....	33 tons		
Tires .....	51 tons		
CRT's .....	90 tons		
E-waste (non-CRT).....	45 tons		
Household Batteries .....	2.5 tons		
Mattresses .....	72 tons		
Green & Clean Wood.....	2,035 tons		
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>14,880.5 tons</b>		

*\*In first six months of program*

Make a Difference  
**RECYCLE**

## Save the Date!

### Garage Sale Weekend

**October 18 & 19**

Call 420-5160 by October 6  
for free signs and packet.



### Appliance Pickup

**November 15**

Call 420-5220 by November 13  
to make an appointment.

# 10 Tips *for a* Frugal Fall

We're reusing some old advice in this edition—namely, sayings that are well-known and full of common sense. Whether you're trying to live a greener lifestyle or just a more frugal one, you'll find that this advice can save you money and reduce your waste.

- 1. Waste not, want not.** There's a reason why the word for trash is "waste." What we throw away is "wasted" rather than being put to good use. If you take care of what you have, it will still be yours to use and enjoy in the future. When we reuse and recycle, we use our resources more efficiently, rather than letting them go to waste.
- 2. An apple a day keeps the doctor away.** By choosing durable products, properly maintaining appliances and furniture, and making minor repairs as needed, you can keep the things you own in tiptop shape. Wouldn't you rather get more use out of what you already own than spend money to replace it with something new?
- 3. There is no place like home.** Children form lifelong habits when they are young. If the habits in your home include conserving resources, saving energy, spending wisely, reducing waste, reusing, recycling, and composting, your children will become good stewards of the environment and productive members of our economy.
- 4. If it "ain't" broke, don't fix it.** Don't replace it, either. Whether it is a cell phone, a TV, or a bookshelf, if what you have works, keep it and keep using it.
- 5. One person's trash is another person's treasure.** This is one of our favorites, of course. The things you no longer want or need may be exactly what someone else is looking for. Or, someone else's "trash" may become your treasure.
- 6. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.** Choosing non-toxic cleaning products creates less indoor air pollution and eliminates the need to dispose of products as household hazardous waste. When you reduce your use of hazardous paints,



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cleaners, automotive fluids, and lawn and garden products, you help prevent pollution and reduce the costs of hazardous waste disposal.

- 7. Many hands make light work.** The "little things" that you do make a difference. Think about it — if every person in America were to recycle one plastic bottle today, that would be over 305 million plastic bottles recycled! And that's just today!



- 8. What goes around comes around.** By recycling, you ensure that your discards become someone else's new stuff. In the process, you help save energy, reduce pollution, and conserve natural resources.

- 9. Knowledge is power.** Do you know what can be recycled locally? Do you know where the closest second-

hand store is? Do you know where and how to dispose of household hazardous waste or old electronics properly? If not, contact us. We have the answers to these and many other questions.

- 10. Better late than never.** If you've been a spender in the past, there is no reason why you can't be more frugal in the future. Being a "sustainable consumer" means spending your money wisely, using durable goods longer, reusing what you have, and recycling all you can.

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## Read more about it!

New American Dream's Carbon Conscious Consumer Project  
[www.newdream.org/c3](http://www.newdream.org/c3)

EcoConsumer  
[www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/ecoconsumer/](http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/ecoconsumer/)

Simple Living Network  
[www.simpleliving.net](http://www.simpleliving.net)

*The Complete Tightwad Gazette* by Amy Dacyczyn (Villard, 1998)

*Get Satisfied: How Twenty People Like You Found the Satisfaction of Enough*, edited by Carol Holst, Simple Living America (Easton Studio Press, 2007) – [www.getsatisfied.org](http://www.getsatisfied.org)

*30 Days to a Simpler Life* by Cris Evatt and Connie Cox (Plume, 1998)

# The choice is yours

According to the U.S. Postal Service, American companies sent out 100 billion pieces of unsolicited advertising mail in 2005. That's more than 333 pieces for each person in your family—or almost one mailing each day. Because you weren't expecting most of this mail and most likely didn't want much of it, your family probably refers to it as "junk mail."

You can reduce the amount of junk mail that your family receives. When you apply for a credit card, order a product, fill out a warranty card, or donate money, check the box that says, "Please do not provide my name or address to other organizations." If there is no box, write this message in large letters. If you are already a customer or donor, contact the companies and organizations through their toll-free phone numbers or websites and ask them not to rent, trade, or sell your name and address. Don't forget online vendors!

Another way to reduce your junk mail is to sign up for "preference services." These services provide a "do not mail" list to businesses and other organizations. The lists work because the businesses and organizations don't want to waste their money sending advertising to people who don't want it and won't look at it. Here are some of the preference services that are available. There may be some fees.

- All Types of Mail: [www.dmachoice.org](http://www.dmachoice.org) (Click on "Remove My Name From Those Lists.")
- Credit Card Offers: [www.optoutprescreen.com](http://www.optoutprescreen.com) or 888-567-8688
- Catalogs: [www.catalogchoice.org](http://www.catalogchoice.org)
- Additional Resources: [www.stopjunkmail.org/links.htm](http://www.stopjunkmail.org/links.htm)

If your family regularly orders from companies or donates to organizations, you will not be removed from mailing lists for those businesses and organizations. This is "solicited" mail because you buy from the company or support the organization.

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# Measuring the human footprint

How big a footprint does the average American boy or girl leave behind over the course of a lifetime? National Geographic set out to answer this question. The result was the *Human Footprint* project, which premiered on the National Geographic Channel last spring.

During the film, a lifetime supply of potatoes spills from the back of a dump truck, a lifetime supply of bread is laid out to make an enormous American flag, and 28,433 rubber ducks represent the number of showers the average American will take in a lifetime. There are many other striking images of the sheer mass of consumption that goes into a single American life.

From your morning newspaper to the bananas on your breakfast cereal, you'll see how much one person uses. For instance, over the course of a lifetime, an American will read 5,054 newspa-



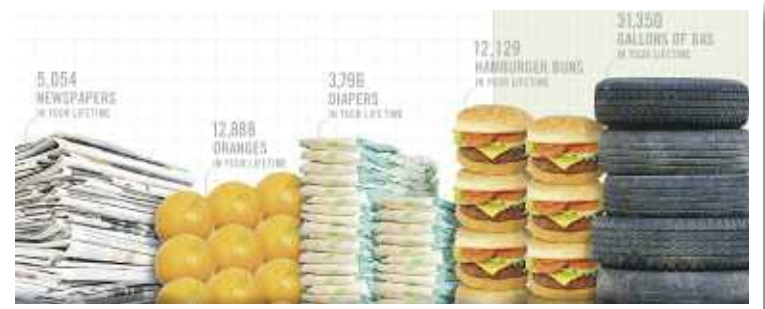
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pers, which is 43 trees' worth of paper. This same American will eat 5,067 bananas, which will travel a total of 11 million air miles to arrive on the breakfast table.

At the website devoted to the project, you can read a short essay entitled "Trash Talk," which introduces you to the facts and figures of America's waste habits. You can watch three short videos, which are excerpted from the 90-minute program, to get an idea of what "mass" consumption looks like. You'll also find "Consumption Interactive" (at the bottom of the web page). Click on this and you'll be able to see how your own consumption of eggs, milk, bananas, soft drinks, potatoes, and bread, as well as newspapers, the diapers from your early childhood, your regular showers, and your car, compare with national and international averages. You can also click through to watch the video about each of these items. Go to [www.nationalgeographic.com/channel/human-footprint](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/channel/human-footprint) and explore.

Teachers, there is a nine-page Educational Resource Guide at the website for downloading, as well as additional information on National Geographic's Preserve Our Planet series.

The DVD of *Human Footprint* is available for \$24.95 at [www.shopngvideos.com](http://www.shopngvideos.com).



Source: National Geographic Channel, 2008

## FAST FACTS

Total Annual Waste Generation in U.S.  
**251.3 million tons**

Per Person Waste Generation  
**4.6 pounds per day**

Total Annual Recycling & Composting in U.S.  
**81.8 million tons**

National Recycling Rate  
**32.5%**

Nationwide Benefits of Recycling & Composting  
**Equivalent to conserving 10 billion gallons of gasoline and removing 39.4 million passenger cars (and their emissions) from our roads**

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "Municipal Solid Waste Generation, Recycling, and Disposal in the United States: Facts and Figures for 2006"

## GARBAGE: THE MOVIE



Canadian filmmaker Andrew Nisker set out to learn about trash. He enlisted the help of the five-member McDonald family for his documentary project. The McDonalds were asked to collect every piece of trash that they generated over three months and store it all in their garage. (They didn't keep "wet trash," such as rot-

ting food waste, as that would have been a health hazard.) As you can imagine, it turned out to be a huge pile of waste!

The 76-minute documentary, *Garbage: The Revolution Starts at Home*, explores the waste created by the McDonald family, as well as where the materials came from and where they will go after leaving the garage. During the project, the McDonalds and the viewers begin to see that each action in the home has a reaction in the environment.

To learn more about the film, visit [www.garbagerevolution.com](http://www.garbagerevolution.com). Online, you'll find a list of upcoming viewing opportunities, information on ordering the film, 12 things you can do right now to make a difference, and more.



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## Save the Planet

What happens when two creative teachers join forces to teach their students about the environment? In the case of singer Jeffrey Walker and musician Michael Droste, who both teach in Illinois, the result was the "Save the Planet" song and video.

The song and video focus attention on the ways that humans have damaged the earth. However, the song isn't gloomy and doesn't scold anyone. Instead, it reminds each of us that our everyday habits—from conserving water and saving energy to recycling—can make our planet better and healthier for all of us. The chorus of the song reminds us all to "Save the Planet from Destru-u-uction." You'll still be humming long after the music stops.

Several versions of the song are available for download at Amazon.com. To watch the video, go to [www.YouTube.com](http://www.YouTube.com) and search for "Save the Planet Song." To learn more about Walker and Droste's project, visit [www.savetheplanetsong.org](http://www.savetheplanetsong.org).

While you're at YouTube, also check out "Kids 2 Save the Planet."



## QUOTES REQUOTED



We should all be concerned about the future because we will have to spend the rest of our lives there.

Charles Franklin Kettering, 1876–1958  
American inventor and engineer

# From Pumpkins and Seals to Bulbs and Batteries

Fluorescent light bulbs, household batteries, medications and needles, electronics, rigid plastics, hazardous chemicals—these items need special handling when it's time to get rid of them. None of these items should be placed in your garbage or recycling cart. Frustrated residents ask, "Do you expect me to drive to the Resource Recovery Facility every time I have one light bulb to get rid of?" Our answer is, "Absolutely not." Instead, we encourage you to make a trip to the City's Dimeo Lane Resource Recovery Facility (RRF) once or twice a year to drop off your "hard to handle" items. Organize your trip to be easy, safe, and fun!

How can you make a trip to the RRF fun? Once or twice a year on a Saturday, gather your fluorescent bulbs, old medications, batteries, rigid plastics, electronics, and household hazardous waste (HHW), and make a trip to 605 Dimeo Lane to recycle or safely dispose of all of them. Enjoy the beautiful view of the coastline on the three-mile trip north of town on Highway 1. Check the local events calendar in advance and plan your Saturday trip to include some of the great activities on the north coast, such as:

- U-Pick strawberries and fruits on Swanton Road (summer)
- Living history demonstrations at Wilder Ranch State Park (varies)
- Open studios of north coast artists (October)
- Pumpkin picking (fall)
- Elephant seal walks at Ano Nuevo State Park (February)
- Swanton Pacific Railroad train rides and picnic (spring)
- Davenport Cinco de Mayo Celebration (May)

Here are some tips to help you properly prepare and store your hard to handle waste in between your trips:

- ◆ Fluorescent tubes, compact fluorescent bulbs, high-density discharge bulbs, metal halide bulbs, and sodium or neon bulbs should be put into the box or container that held the replacement bulb or taped together and wrapped in padding such as newspaper so they don't break. Tubes and bulbs are accepted at no charge at the RRF, Monday-Saturday, 7:30-3:30.

- ◆ Store household batteries in a plastic container or zippered plastic bag. Batteries are accepted at no charge at the RRF, Monday-Saturday, 7:30-3:30. There are drop-off locations at City libraries, City Hall, Loudon Nelson Center, and Water Department Customer Service. Stores selling rechargeable batteries normally accept spent rechargeables at no charge.
- ◆ Place outdated or unwanted medications into a sealed plastic bag. Place needles



Stash fluorescent tubes in a corner or closet until you make a trip to the RRF.

and other sharps into an approved, red sharps container (available from your pharmacy or online). Drop-off sites are Bruce's Medical Plaza, Horsnyder's Pharmacy, and Westside Pharmacy. The City Police Station has a drop-off for medications *only*. The RRF accepts medications and needles on Saturdays only, 7:30-3:30.

- ◆ Rigid plastics, such as chairs, toys, buckets, and storage tubs, should be dropped off at the RRF for recycling, Monday-Saturday, 7:30-3:30.
- ◆ Donate working computer monitors, televisions, and other electronics to a thrift store or non-profit. Computer monitors and TVs can be picked up curbside (by appointment) during May and November Appliance Pickup Days. The RRF accepts monitors, TVs, and other electronics at no charge, Monday-Saturday, 7:30-3:30.
- ◆ Household Hazardous Wastes, such as paints, solvents, pool chemicals, cleaners and polishes, automotive additives, pesticides, fertilizers, art supplies, and other items containing toxic materials, should be kept in their original, labeled, sealed containers. The HHW Drop-Off Center at the RRF is open on Saturdays only, 7:30-3:30.



Under-sink storage is handy for used batteries and CFLs.



## Outstanding Recycling... Continued from page 1

*Inc.* provides the City with a reliable work force and Hope clients with steady jobs in a friendly, group setting. The City was honored to receive the **2007 Employer of the Year Award** from the San Andreas Regional Center.

As a partner in the *Monterey Bay Area Green Business Program*, City staff inspected and certified 15 local Green Businesses in 2007, based on waste reduction, water conservation, energy efficiency, and pollution prevention, and expects to certify as many as 50 this year!

Santa Cruz, along with other local communities, created the *Central Coast Recycling Media Coalition* to plan and share the cost of regional ad campaigns for recycling and waste reduction.

### Program Economics

The Santa Cruz Resource Recovery Program must generate sufficient funds to pay for operating costs. Revenue comes from refuse and recycling collection fees, gate fees, and the sale of recycled materials. Our refuse rates are "Pay-as-You-Throw," which means the more garbage you throw away, the more you pay. This creates an incentive for customers to reduce and recycle. For instance, a 20-gallon refuse cart costs \$15.30 a month, while a 68-gallon refuse cart costs \$52.89. All price levels come with a 68-gallon recycling cart and a 68-gallon GreenCycle! cart at no extra charge.

## A Model That Others Can Follow

This year the City Council passed the *Environmentally Acceptable Food Packaging Ordinance*, which prohibits polystyrene foam "to-go" food packaging in the City and requires that disposable food service ware be biodegradable, compostable, or recyclable. The ordinance is now in effect.

City staff helped create and fund an environmental portal website, [www.EcoCruz.org](http://www.EcoCruz.org), which is Santa Cruz County's green gateway to environmental events, organizations, jobs, volunteers, and more.

Waste reduction staff installed *cell phone* and *battery recycling* in all city/county public libraries.

A \$40 discount is available to City residents who purchase a *compost bin*, *worm bin*, or *related supplies* through our convenient online site, [www.composters.com/santacruz](http://www.composters.com/santacruz).

## Public Awareness and Participation

Staff work with over 7,000 students in local schools. Schools have received over 3,000 recycling containers, and Lifelab gardens have received compost bins. The City provides resources to teachers, study trips for classes, school-wide assemblies, fun contests for students, and newsletters and activities especially designed for youth. Winners of the "Santa Cruz Recycles" Poster Contest see their art turned into signs for the City refuse and recycling trucks. Our refuse and recycling trucks are great public outreach tools, carrying signs highlighting litter, household hazardous waste, holiday tree recycling, and appliance pickup.

"One Person's Trash..." is a quarterly newsletter researched and written by City waste reduction staff. 33,000 copies are inserted into the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* and *Good Times*, and it's available online! City residents are mailed the informative *Refuse & Recycling* brochure annually, along with free service tags and disposal coupons. A handy City of Santa Cruz recycling guide is now available in the *AT&T Yellow Pages* book.

## Walking the Walk

The City employee holiday luncheon is a zero-waste event, using compostable service ware. After feeding 800 employees, there was only one-quarter of a bag of trash. For council members, staff purchased real dishes, utensils, and a small table-top dishwasher to reduce waste from frequent meetings.

City offices have "Give 'N Take" drop-off containers to reuse polystyrene packing peanuts. City offices purchase products containing recycled content.

The City of Santa Cruz participates in the Fryer-to-Fuel Program. Grease is collected from local restaurants and turned into biodiesel, which runs all City diesel vehicles and equipment. City vehicles also use retread tires and re-refined motor oil.

**Congratulations and thanks to the Resource Recovery Program's employees and partners, as well as residents and businesses, who have all contributed to the achievement of this award!**

**We want your suggestions,  
questions and comments!**

**City of Santa Cruz  
Public Works Department  
809 Center Street, Room 201  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
831-420-5160  
[www.ci.santa-cruz.ca.us/](http://www.ci.santa-cruz.ca.us/)**

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