



RECYCLE OFTEN, *Recycle Right!*

What makes something recyclable? Just because we want something to be recyclable doesn't mean it is. The City of Santa Cruz operates its own recycling center and our goal is to find consistent, local end markets for recycled materials whenever possible. We do not add a new material to our curbside recycling program until we know that we can market it.

We have operated a single-stream residential recycling program for ten years, whereby you put all of your recycling (paper, plastic, aluminum cans and glass) into one cart to be

sorted and processed by workers at the City's Resource Recovery Facility.

Single-stream recycling encourages you to recycle more by making it easy. This system gets more of the right materials into the blue bin. Unfortunately single-stream collection has led to more contamination, meaning that more

incorrect, non-recyclable materials end up in the recycle bins, too.

Placing non-recyclable material in the blue bin jeopardizes the success of our recycling program. We send you this newsletter each year to help

inform you of proper recycling procedures. Please use your recycle guide on Page 4 and *Recycle Right*, by placing only the right materials in the blue bin.



PLASTIC BAGS?

Much has happened since our last feature article on plastic bags in 2010. The City passed a single bag reduction ordinance in 2013. We have seen a significant drop in the number of grocery/merchandise bags in the waste stream, but there are still lots of plastic bags, including produce bags, bread bags, newspaper bags and Ziploc bags. We began accepting plastic bags in our curbside recycling carts in 2007 and from day one the message has been the same: **Bag Your Bags!**

Why are we still getting so many loose, single plastic bags in the recycling bins? Plastic bags jam sorting equipment, contaminate paper bales and require extra labor at every stage of operations. Every day extra staff time is needed to hand sort thousands of loose plastic bags, remove them from jammed equipment, pluck them from finished paper bales and pick them up when they become litter. We then transport single plastic bags to the landfill, where once again they can become litter to be picked up a second or third time.

Are we painting a clear picture? We only want plastic bags that are clean, dried, bagged and tied. Single, loose bags should go in the trash.

Tips to Reduce Recycling Contamination

- **No food or yard waste in the recycling bin**
- **Bag Your Plastic Bags!** No loose, individual plastic bags in the recycling bin
- **Empty your bottles, cans and plastic containers—wipe and lightly rinse**
- **Remove metal lids from glass jars and add them separately**
- **Do not conceal items:**
 - *Don't place bottles and cans inside a plastic bag*
- **Flatten and fold clean cardboard**
- **Separate elements of multi-material products:**
 - *Remove inner plastic bag from cardboard cereal box*
 - *Remove plastic wrap around cardboard case of water bottles*



IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS THAT CAUSE BIG PROBLEMS IN RECYCLING

1. Loose plastic bags –

Plastic bags can jam equipment, slow down sorting, contaminate other materials and become litter. Remember to Bag Your Bags! Single, loose bags should go in the trash.



2. Food waste –

Keep food and liquids out of the recycling bin. We want the bottles, jars, and cans, but not the food or beverages that were in them. Make sure that your containers are empty, wiped clean and lightly rinsed whenever possible.



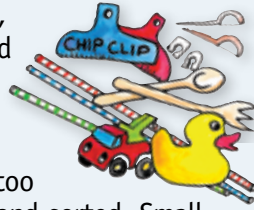
3. Paper used for sanitary purposes –

Napkins, paper towels and tissues are not recyclable. They should all go in the trash.



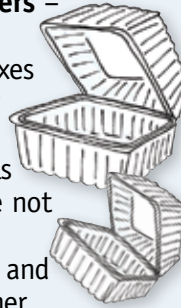
4. Small bits and pieces of plastic –

Plastic straws, utensils, bread clips, floss picks, pens, glue sticks and toys are too small to be hand sorted. Small plastic bits and pieces should go in the trash.



5. To-go food containers –

Clear lightweight, low-grade plastic boxes that hold everything from deli salads and produce to sushi rolls and baked goods are not recyclable. They are very difficult to sort and can contaminate other materials. There is no viable market for this “low-grade plastic” so it should go in the trash.



6. Cartons (milk & shelf stable aseptic) –

Currently there is no viable market for cartons, so they should go in the trash.



7. Shredded paper –

It's too small to be sorted and falls through the cracks of the sorting equipment, requiring extra staff time for cleanup. You can compost shredded paper at home, deliver it to the Resource Recovery Facility or place it in the trash.



8. Polystyrene #6 foam plastic (often called Styrofoam™) –

including block packaging, packing peanuts, egg cartons and meat trays are not recyclable and should go in the trash.



SHARP SOLUTIONS!

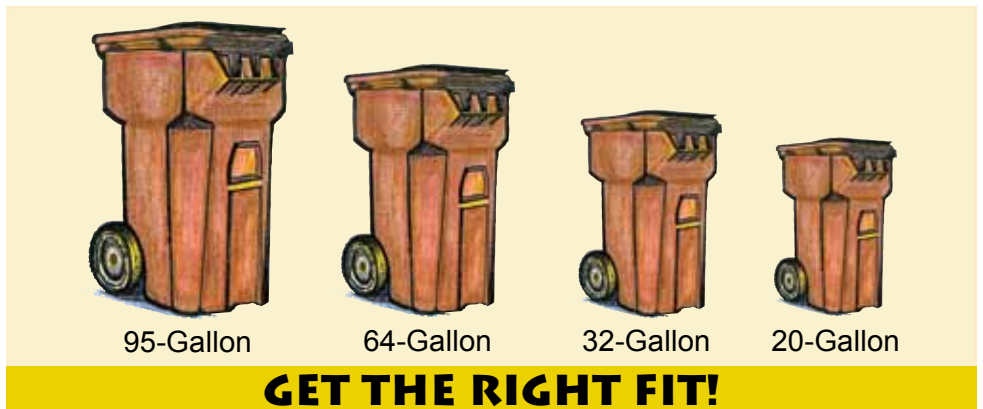
Safety first when it comes to medical waste. Syringes or sharps should never be placed in the trash or recycling. A hypodermic needle or sharp found among the recycling material either loose or in a container will bring sorting operations to a halt so that it can be safely removed. The sorting line in our recycling facility shuts down several times a day to remove dangerous needles that pose a serious risk to workers.

Needles should always be placed in a dedicated red sharps container, available at



pharmacies. There are ten convenient pharmacies in the City of Santa Cruz that accept medical sharps from the public free of charge.

For drop off locations visit:
www.sharpmedsolutions.org



GET THE RIGHT FIT!

Are you running out of room in your trash cart? If your cart is overflowing, you may have a cart that is too small for your household. Residents have options about the level of refuse service they require. Some homes can get by with a small 20- or 32-gallon refuse cart, while larger households may need 64- or 95-gallon carts.

Regardless of the level of garbage service, each household receives a 64-gallon blue recycling cart and a 64-gallon *GreenCycle* cart at no extra charge. These carts must only be used for their intended material.

You also receive four service tags in this mailer. You may use them during the year when you occasionally have more trash than will fit in your cart (instructions on page 3).

Call Customer Service at 420-5220 to check your level of service and get the right fit. Changes must be made in writing at www.cityofsantacruz.com/scmu or in person at the Santa Cruz Municipal Utilities office, 212 Locust Street. Note: there is a small service charge when you change your service level to a larger size.

FREE SERVICE TAGS & DISPOSAL COUPON

FOUR FREE SERVICE TAGS

are enclosed for you to use when you have more refuse than your cart can hold. Use these tags on collection days before December 31, 2016.

They may come in handy following a special occasion like a party or spring-cleaning!

GreenCycle! OPTION: Use any or all four tags for free drop-off of yard trimmings at the Resource Recovery Facility.

APPLIANCE/BULKY ITEM OPTION: Service tags may be used for curbside Appliance/Bulky Item Pick-up (June or November). One tag is required for each refrigerator, air conditioner, freezer or other appliance, and one tag for each bulky item. **Good for curbside collection only!** Tags are not accepted as payment at the Resource Recovery Facility.

ADDITIONAL SERVICE TAGS must be purchased in advance at the Customer Service Office, 212 Locust Street, or call 420-5220 to request tags by mail.



How to Use Your Service Tag for Extra Refuse

- 1 Place extra refuse in a trash bag — maximum 32 gallons, 40 pounds.
- 2 Open refuse cart lid, **place extra bag on top**, close lid over bag to hold in place.
- 3 Attach tag to the outside of the bag, facing street.
- 4 Only one tag may be used per week.



ONE FREE DISPOSAL COUPON

Use your enclosed disposal coupon at the Resource Recovery Facility for free disposal of one yard of refuse. **See coupon for details.**



HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

Drop-off site is at the City of Santa Cruz Resource and Recovery Facility.

Open Saturdays only 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM

For other Locations: call 454-2606

Resource Recovery Facility (Landfill, GreenCycle! & Recycling)

Hours: Mon. – Sat. 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM

Closed on Sundays, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Closed at noon on December 24 (Christmas Eve) and December 31 (New Year's Eve).

Location: 605 Dimeo Lane (3 miles north of Santa Cruz up Highway 1)



What do we do with all this STUFF?

Do you have items you're not sure what to do with? Find out!

Check this online guide:

www.cityofsantacruz.com/reducewaste



Need More Information?

Customer Service 420-5220

Resource Recovery Facility. 420-6270

Household Hazardous

Waste Disposal 454-2606

Recycling Tip Line 420-LESS



Recycle Your Holiday Tree FREE!

- **CURBSIDE** – The curbside pick-up service runs for **two weeks**, January 1–14. Put your tree out on your regular collection day. Do not place tree against carts. Allow two feet of space between carts and tree. Trees must be six feet in length or less—so please cut your tree to size.
- **GreenCycle! Cart** – Trim branches down so that the tree fits into the cart with the lid closed, and will easily slide out when the cart is serviced.
- **DROP-OFF** – Take your tree to the **GreenCycle!** area at the Resource Recovery Facility at no charge through the month of January only: 605 Dimeo Lane, three miles north of Santa Cruz up Highway 1.

Please remove ornaments, tinsel and stands. No flocked trees.



PAPER AND CARDBOARD

MIXED PAPER

- White and colored paper (office, binder, typing, etc)
- Envelopes
- Junk mail
- Catalogs and magazines
- Phone books

NEWSPAPER

PAPER BAGS

CARDBOARD

Flatten and fold to fit

PAPERBOARD

- Cereal boxes, shoe boxes
- Paper egg cartons, paper towel rolls
- Beer and soda packs
- File folders

NOT RECYCLABLE:

- NO** Shredded or crosscut paper
- NO** Cartons or Aseptic packaging (milk, juice boxes, soy containers)
- NO** Books
- NO** Paper cups, plates, napkins, paper towels or tissues
- NO** Food-contaminated paper
- NO** Waxed paper or waxed cardboard
- NO** Plastic-coated paper or cardboard

Recycle Right!



GLASS, METAL, AND PLASTIC

GLASS BOTTLES & JARS

- Beer, wine, soda, juice, food, etc. (Remove caps and lids, empty and rinse)
- **NO** other glass
- **NO** corks

METAL CANS

- Aluminum, tin, and steel cans
- Food aerosol cans (Empty)
- **NO** scrap metal

ALUMINUM CANS & FOIL

- Cans, pie plates, trays
- Foil wrap (Must be clean)

PLASTIC BOTTLES, JUGS, JARS & TUBS

- Water, soda, milk, detergent, peanut butter, yogurt, etc.
- **NO** polystyrene #6

PLASTIC BAGS

- Clean, dry, bag & tie!
- **NO** single bags

NOT RECYCLABLE:

- NO** Food or garbage
- NO** Single plastic bags
- NO** Plastic motor oil containers
- NO** Ceramics, dishware, glassware, cookware (Pyrex), windows, mirrors, light bulbs, china
- NO** Non-food aerosol cans
- NO** Polystyrene plastic foam #6
- NO** Plastic cups or hinged food boxes
- NO** Utensils or straws

Rigid Plastics - Accepted at the Resource Recovery Facility **only**. **Not in Blue Cart!** Includes 5-gallon buckets, toys, molded plastic chairs, black plastic, laundry baskets, hangers, and nursery pots.

- Use City-provided cart. No other containers will be serviced.
- Place carts on street with wheels touching curb.
- Leave at least 4 inches between carts, more space is even better.
- Don't place carts under tree branches or overhead wires.
- Take your carts in after they have been serviced.

Questions? 831-420-5220 www.cityofsantacruz.com/recycleright