



# Refuse & Recycling 2023

(831) 420-5220 • [www.cityofsantacruz.com/recycleright](http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/recycleright)

Boletín en Español en [www.cityofsantacruz.com/recycleright](http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/recycleright)

## Food Scrap Recycling Reduces Landfill Disposal and Methane Emissions

Separating food scraps from other kitchen trash is good for the environment, reduces methane emissions at our landfill and helps us comply with California's Senate Bill (SB) 1383. But while many cities across the state have opted to collect food scraps with yard waste, the City of Santa Cruz has taken a different path.

We already have a successful processing operation that is turning yard waste into mulch. The space we have, process we use, permits we hold and market for our material didn't lend themselves to adding food scraps to our yard waste materials. (See page 4 to learn more about our yard waste collection and processing program.) So, for us, collecting food scraps separately to mix with other "wet" organic waste, like wastewater, made more sense.

In late 2019, we were able to install a food scrap preprocessing system at the City of Santa Cruz Resource Recovery Facility. This system accepts food scraps from the

truck that empties the brown curbside pails (and commercial food scrap bins). The food scraps are shredded, becoming a brown mash that is roughly the consistency of applesauce.

At present, our preprocessed food scrap mash is delivered to a facility in Santa Clara, where it undergoes further processing and becomes a feedstock for use in pig feed pellets, biodiesel and fertilizer. After improvements are completed at the City's Wastewater Treatment Facility, we will begin taking this mash to that facility to be digested locally and turned into biogas that will help fuel the facility and reduce the City's energy costs.

We are already diverting approximately 40 tons of food waste from the landfill each week through residential and commercial collections.

For updates and more information on food scrap recycling in Santa Cruz, visit [www.cityofsantacruz.com/foodwaste](http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/foodwaste).



**In the City of Santa Cruz, food scraps are collected separately from yard waste. Why? If we combined the material, we would have to send seven trucks a day, round trip, to the only regional industrial composting facility located in Marina, near Monterey. Plus, we would no longer be able to provide local residents and a neighboring farm with mulch created from our well-established yard waste collection program.**

## Curbside Food Scrap Collection Is Here!

### What you need to know

The City provides weekly collection of food scraps from all single-family residents in a 6-gallon pail. Please follow these guidelines in using and setting out your pail:

- Place the pail on the leading edge of your row of carts, as shown in this picture. The pail should be at least 2 feet away from the first cart. This ensures that the smaller brown pail will be visible to the driver.
- Do not place the brown cart on top of any other carts.
- Be sure to place your pail at the curb

by 5 a.m. on your collection day.

- Place only LOOSE food scraps into the brown pail. **No bags** of any kind, including those marketed as "compostable" or paper bags, are accepted. The City's program is for food scraps only.
- Regularly wipe or rinse out your empty brown pail to remove any remaining food scrap debris and to keep it smelling fresh.
- If your pail is not collected by 11 a.m. on your collection day or is damaged, please call customer service at 831-420-5220.

If you did not receive your pail or would like reflective tape to make your pail more visible on dark mornings, please call 831-420-5377.

If you live in a multi-family complex that has not yet implemented the food scrap collection program, you can take advantage of the City's ongoing Food Scrap Drop-Off program. To learn more, visit [www.cityofsantacruz.com/foodwaste](http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/foodwaste) or call customer service at 831-420-5377.

For a quick how-to video on using your pail, watch our demo at <https://youtu.be/8DpoPFBG1jQ>.



## Did You Know?

Reducing food waste is always better than recycling or disposing of it! Here are some tips to help you waste less food:

- Check your fridge and pantry to see what ingredients you have on hand before planning meals or going shopping.
- Plan your meals.
- Create a grocery list and shop from it.
- Store your food properly to extend freshness.



For more tips and how-to videos, visit [www.savethefood.com](http://www.savethefood.com) and [www.cityofsantacruz.com/foodwaste](http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/foodwaste).

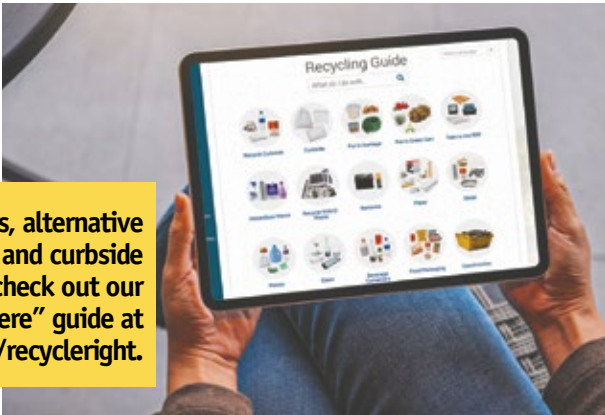
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Permit #505  
Santa Cruz, CA

City of Santa Cruz  
Public Works Department  
809 Center Street, Room 201  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060



# Confused About Recycling?

You're not alone! There have been many changes to the recycling industry since China stopped taking most material from the West a few years ago. The curtain has been pulled back to reveal that recycling is more than a symbol, a number or a blue bin. Is recycling still worth it? You bet! We just have to learn to "recycle right." Join us for an in-depth look at the world of recycling — materials management on a global scale all the way down to our own region here in Santa Cruz. You will find out if you are "wish-cycling" and how to stop, what we recycle, how we recycle and where the items we collect end up. Sign up for this virtual seminar offered Tuesday, April 4, 2023, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. by emailing lomalley@cityofsantacruz.com. Please include "Recycling Boot Camp" in the subject line.



For reuse tips, alternative recycling options and curbside recycling guidelines, check out our "What Goes Where" guide at [www.cityofsantacruz.com/recycleright](http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/recycleright).

# Have an Unwanted Mattress?

Mattresses are made of valuable components. Recycling puts these parts to good use and helps protect the environment. Thanks to the statewide Bye Bye Mattress Program, residents have several options to dispose of unwanted mattresses and box springs.



- **Retailer Take Back** – When you buy a new mattress and are having it delivered, ask your retailer about taking your old one back.
- **Drop Off** – City residents can bring up to 5 mattresses/box springs to the Resource Recovery Facility at 605 Dimeo Lane free of charge.
- **Curbside Collection** – Mattresses, box springs and other bulky items can be collected curbside by scheduling a pickup in advance. Fees may apply. For more information, visit [www.cityofsantacruz.com/bulkyitem](http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/bulkyitem).

**Please Note:** Curbside items with "Free" signs left on them are considered illegal dumping. They impede safe navigation of our sidewalks and contribute to blight. It is better to actively find a home for clean, usable items in working condition through donation, Nextdoor, Craigslist Free and Buy Nothing Groups.

## ✓ YES KEEP IT SIMPLE, KEEP IT CLEAN!

✓ **Paper and Flattened Cardboard**



Papel y cajas de cartón desarmadas

✓ **Glass Bottles and Jars**



Botellas y frascos de vidrio

✓ **Metal Cans & Aluminum**



Latas de metal y aluminio

✓ **Plastic Bottles, Jugs, Jars & Tubs**



Botellas y contenedores de plástico

✓ **Plastic Bags Clean & Dry**



Bolsas de plástico Pongalas en una bolsa

● Recycle Right! ● Don't Bag Recyclables ● Keep Recycling Loose ● Dejar el Reciclaje Suelto

**YES** 

Only the types of items shown above in the blue area are accepted in the Recycling Cart. Stick to these items to recycle right!

**NO** 

While not an exhaustive list, the items shown below in red are the most frequently confused items that are incorrectly placed into the recycling. These items are NOT recyclable in the City's curbside program.

## ✗ NO NOT ACCEPTED IN THE BLUE CART

✗ **No Single Plastic Bags**



✗ **No Food, Liquids or Garbage**



✗ **No Cartons**



✗ **No Plastic Food Boxes**



✗ **No Polystyrene** 



✗ **No Glassware or Ceramics**



✗ **No Pizza Boxes**



✗ **No Clothes or Linens**



✗ **No Tangles**  
hoses, wire, chain, electric cords



✗ **No Big Items**  
Scrap metal, buckets, furniture



When in Doubt Find Out! • 420-5593 • [cityofsantacruz.com/recycleright](http://cityofsantacruz.com/recycleright)



# Spotlight on the City of Santa Cruz Landfill



The City of Santa Cruz Resource Recovery Facility has been an asset to the community for decades. Here are some fun facts about our landfill:

- The current City of Santa Cruz Resource Recovery Facility (SCRRF) location has been utilized for refuse disposal since about 1926 and was operated as a burn dump up until 1969.
- Since 1969, the SCRRF has operated as a “Class III landfill,” which is permitted to accept non-hazardous municipal wastes.
- On Labor Day 1987, we started collecting curbside recycling with three used trucks. The Recycling Building was completed in May 1989 with the first conveyor lines for sorting.
- The landfill’s leachate (contaminated water) system was completed in 1993, providing protection to ground water and our ocean.
- In 1999, to make refuse disposal safer for the public, the City installed and opened the Public Tipping Area to keep non-commercial traffic away from the active landfill area.
- Cells, areas that are lined and actively receiving new waste, were installed in 1996 (Cell 1), 2002 (Cell 2), 2017 (Cell 3A) and 2022 (Cell 3B).
- The Recycling Building was expanded in 2005 with the installation of the tipping tent, and the Recycling Center went through a major equipment upgrade to handle mixed, co-mingled recycling.
- The food waste preprocessing system was completed in 2020.
- The landfill is expected to be able to receive waste until 2056.



## Award-Winning Master Recycler Volunteer Training Program Is Back!

You can learn more about recycling and waste reduction in the City of Santa Cruz and share that knowledge by taking part in our Master Recycler Volunteer Training program in 2023. Over eight sessions from February 7 to March 14 participants will train to become “Master Recycler Volunteers.” They will graduate as community champions with the knowledge to educate and empower friends, neighbors, schools, businesses and local groups to waste less, “recycle right” and divert food from the landfill.

At six Tuesday evening sessions, participants will receive hands-on training from City of Santa Cruz Resource Recovery staff and other local waste professionals and

experts. Class topics include waste prevention, recycling processes and markets, Zero Waste concepts, extended producer responsibility, household hazardous waste, repairing and repurposing items, and green consumer tips. Two Saturday morning field trips will provide a behind-the-scenes look at sorted and baled recyclable material, food scrap processing, large- and small-scale composting systems, and electronic waste management.

Course graduates will emerge with an agreement to put their new skills into practice through a minimum of 20 hours of community service. They will be invited to support Earth Day and reuse and repair events, serve as neighborhood resources at block parties, and assist as waste monitors and outreach coordinators at special events and the farmer’s market.

Advanced registration is required. Applications will be accepted from all City of Santa Cruz residents who are at least 18 years of age and are due by 4 p.m. on Thursday, January 26. Applications can be downloaded at [www.cityofsantacruz.com/recycleright](http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/recycleright).



## Support Our Climate Goal of Net-Zero Emissions by 2035

The City adopted its 2030 community-wide Climate Action Plan this past September. The plan includes ambitious goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing overall sustainability while supporting and enhancing a thriving and equitable community with robust active and public transportation; plentiful housing that is affordable, sustainable and resilient; and healthy regenerative landscapes. To learn more, visit [www.cityofsantacruz.com/climateactionplan](http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/climateactionplan).

Achieving our goals will require all of us to work together. Resilient Santa Cruz is a one-stop-shop with rebates, resources and information to enable residents to take meaningful action. Sign up, join a team, track emissions and commit to reducing your carbon footprint to win prizes! Visit <https://resilientsantacruzcounty.org/santacruz> to get started.





## Yard Waste Collection

Long before SB 1383 mandated yard waste recycling statewide, the City of Santa Cruz was collecting yard waste at the curb, shredding it and creating mulch. Most of the City’s mulch is used by a nearby commercial farm. We also make mulch available to the public for a small fee per standard pickup truck load.

We offer weekly collection of yard waste from a green, 64-gallon yard waste cart. We ask that you place only grass clippings, leaves, pine needles, branches, plants, unpainted/untreated lumber scraps, untreated wood chips, bark or sawdust into the yard waste cart and set it out on collection day. **Dirt, rocks, construction debris, food scraps and animal waste are prohibited.** Residents can request additional curbside yard waste carts for approximately \$1.20 per week. Contact customer service at 831-420-5220 for more information.

## Ready to Compost?

A backyard compost system is a great way to keep methane-producing organic material out of the landfill and create healthier soil that will help your garden flourish. To encourage backyard composting, we offer a one-time \$40 rebate for the purchase of a composting bin or a worm bin to our refuse disposal customers. Visit [www.cityofsantacruz.com/homecomposting](http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/homecomposting) to learn more.



### Community Paper Document Shredding Event

Saturday, May 6, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
809 Center Street

### Garage Sale Weekend

Saturday, June 3 – Sunday, June 4

For more information, visit [www.cityofsantacruz.com/garagesales](http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/garagesales) or call 831-420-5220.

## Curbside Collection Tips

- Place carts curbside by 5 a.m.
- Do not overload carts. Lids should close completely.
- Use City-provided cart. No other containers will be serviced.
- Place carts on street with wheels 6 to 12 inches away from the curb.
- If carts are different sizes, align the front of the carts.
- Leave at least 6 inches between carts.
- Leave 18 to 24 inches between carts and parked cars.
- Take your carts in after they have been serviced.

## Recycle your holiday tree

After the holidays, remove ornaments, lights, tinsel and stands from your tree and prep it for one of three recycling options. (Remember, no flocked trees!)

**Curbside** – The curbside pickup service runs for two weeks, January 1–14. Put your tree out on your regular collection day. Trees must be 6 feet in length or less.

**Cart** – Trim branches so that tree fits in green cart with the lid closed. Accepted year-round.

**Drop-Off** – Take your tree to the Resource Recovery Facility at no charge throughout January.



## Street Sweeping

Did you know that most litter accumulates within 40 inches of the curb? The City attempts to clean this litter with a street sweeping vehicle that collects material from the curb gutter every other week in residential neighborhoods. Frequent sweeping not only picks up litter, but it also removes dirt and sediment that could flow to the Monterey Bay and affect our local water quality. Unfortunately, in many neighborhoods, residential parking blocks our street sweeper and impacts its effectiveness. To help us keep our streets clean and our Bay sparkling, please move your vehicle off the street on street sweeping day.



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## Right Size Your Trash Cart

Choose the right size based on the number of people in your household & your consumption habits.

**20** Gallon Trash Cart



2 Tall Kitchen Bags per Week  
**1 – 2 People**

**32** Gallon Trash Cart



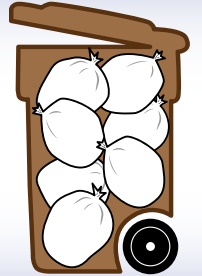
3 Tall Kitchen Bags per Week  
**2 – 3 People**

**64** Gallon Trash Cart



5 Tall Kitchen Bags per Week  
**3 – 4 People**

**96** Gallon Trash Cart



7 Tall Kitchen Bags per Week  
**5+ People**

Avoid extra fees from overloading and **recycle cart** contamination. 420-5220

We want your suggestions, questions and comments!



### Public Works Department

809 Center Street, Room 201  
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831-420-5220

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