



Happy New Year

This is the year to make a resolution you can keep; a no-waste new year's resolution. This year, pledge to do whatever you can to reduce the amount of waste you produce. No matter how big or small the decision at hand, keep in mind to ask yourself what impact your decisions have regarding "Recycle, Reduce and Reuse." A no-waste new year's resolution will have you making better choices regarding minimizing waste. Here are a few ideas:

- **Get your name off of junk mail lists**

Each year, the average household in the U.S. receives more than 40 lbs. of unwanted, unsolicited mail. Many find junk mail to be a real pain, but it's sometimes hard to know who to contact to remove your name from a list. The Federal Trade Commission maintains marketing name removal information on the Web at: www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0262-stopping-unsolicited-mail-phone-calls-and-email.

- **Pack a no-waste lunch** Another easy "be green, save green" tip. Use a reusable lunch bag and reusable containers instead of plastic bags or disposable containers-and of course, a cloth napkin.



- **Use a reusable mug** Instead of using a polystyrene or paper cup from the coffee shop, bring in your own mug. Also, bring a water bottle to refill; you'll save money and reduce waste.
- **Carry a reusable bag** Have one with you to eliminate the need for a paper or plastic one.

- **Look for less packaging and avoid disposables** This one's big, nearly 30 percent of our trash is packaging. Much of this is cardboard, which can be recycled, but why use the resources on recycling when we didn't need that packaging in the first place? When you're at the store, buy in bulk and bring reusable bags to carry your purchases in. Choose less-packaged products over individually wrapped items.
- **Borrow, rent or shop used** Borrow or rent items that friends or neighbors have or that stores offer, then check out buying used before heading to the store for a new item that you'll only use a couple of times.

A no-waste new year's resolution is a worthy resolution and one you can stick to. Get your friends, family and kids involved, it's a great way to spread the word about waste and recycling and to help reduce the waste in our landfills.

We Want Our Service to Be The Best and You Can Help

Please place your carts at the curb edge with at least 3 feet of clearance from other objects, including other carts, basketball hoops and motor vehicles.



What Do I Put Into the Organics Cart?

The reason Organics Carts are so important is that using them helps divert materials away from our landfills which is better for the environment. Here is a list to help you use your cart efficiently. Thank you for helping us provide you with the best possible service.

Organics Acceptable List

- Grass and weed clippings
- Shrubs and tree prunings (less than 4" in diameter)
- Leaves, plants and flowers
- Food scraps and food soiled paper products

Non-acceptable Organics List

- No household garbage
- **No plastic bags**
- No dirt or rocks
- No overloading - lid must be closed

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The Importance of Recycling

Each year the average American produces 1,609 pounds of waste. By recycling, composting and reuse you can cut that waste stream by up to 75%. It takes 390 gallons of oil to produce a ton of paper (about 11,500 pages). Every ton of paper recycled saves 17 trees and 7,000 gallons of water. Glass bottles stay in landfills for a million years. Recycling creates 5 jobs for every 1,000 tons while landfill only creates 2.5. Each year recycling in California saves enough energy to power 1.4 million homes, saves 14 million trees and reduces greenhouse gas emission to the equivalent of removing 3.8 million passenger cars off the road.

Special Recycling Items

Universal Waste

Effective February 9, 2006, a new law passed stating that Universal Waste (UW), such as batteries, electronic devices, fluorescent light bulbs, are hazardous and must not be thrown away in the trash.

What is it?

UW contains harmful chemicals which, if put in the trash, may harm people or the environment. UW may contain corrosive chemicals that can cause burns, as well as toxic metals like cadmium and lead.

The following is a list of Universal Waste:

- Fluorescent Tubes/Bulbs and other Mercury-containing lamps
- Household batteries, rechargeable batteries, button batteries
- Thermostats, Thermometers, electrical switches and relays
- Electronic Devices such as: Televisions, computer monitors, computers, printers, VCRs, cell phones, telephones, radios and microwave ovens

Why can't I throw it away?

The chemicals found in UW can contaminate our air, water and possibly the food we eat, if not properly disposed of. They can cause additional hazards to your garbage handler as well; for example if a waste processing worker doesn't know there is a toxic item in the trash and they handle it, they are at risk for being exposed to harmful chemicals.

Sharps Waste

What is a Sharp Item or "Sharps" waste?

Certain sharp items called "sharps waste" present health and safety issues for waste management. The California Health and Safety Code defines "Sharps waste" as "any device having acute rigid corners, edges, or protuberances capable of cutting or piercing, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

- Blades
- Hypodermic needles
- Hypodermic needles with syringes
- Needles with attached tubing
- Syringes contaminated with biohazardous waste
- Acupuncture needles
- Broken glass items contaminated with biohazardous waste
- Items capable of piercing or cutting that are contaminated with trauma scene waste

Beginning on September 1, 2008, California state law made it illegal for residents to dispose of sharps waste in trash or recycling containers. This law requires that all sharps waste be transported in an approved sharps container to a collection center.

How can you dispose of sharps waste?

Please do not place sharps in your garbage or recycling bins.

There are several accepted options for disposal such as:

Pharmacies and hospitals who have take-back programs. Mail-back service is available from a number of providers approved by the California Department of Public Health. Sharps can also be dropped-off at Alameda County Household Hazardous Waste facilities.

How do I recycle Special Items?

For additional information, call the StopWaste.Org Alameda County Recycling Hotline at 877-STOPWASTE (786-7927), or go to www.household-hazwaste.org or www.StopWaste.Org.

Source: City of Dublin www.dublin.ca.gov

In the spirit of conservation we are providing our newsletter online, but please feel free to print it out.