FALL 2026: RECYCLING & WASTE NEWSLETTER

City of San Diego Businesses

619.421.9400 | RepublicServices.com/SanDiegoRegion

REPUBLIC SERVICES

Sustainability in Action



Reduce Contamination in Recycling Carts

- Keep recyclables clean and dry. Food residue, liquids and other contaminants can affect the quality of recyclable materials and may cause otherwise recyclable items to be discarded.
- Empty containers before recycling them. A quick rinse is usually all that is needed to remove leftover food or beverages and help keep recyclable materials clean.
- Recycle loose items in your cart. Bagged recyclables cannot be properly sorted at recycling facilities and may be removed from the recycling stream. Empty materials directly into the cart whenever possible.
- Recycle the right paper products. Clean paper, cardboard, newspapers, magazines, mail and paperboard boxes are accepted. Wet, greasy or heavily soiled paper should be placed in the trash.
- Flatten cardboard boxes before placing them in your recycling cart. Flattening boxes creates more space in the cart and helps improve collection and processing efficiency.
- Leave plastic bags out of the recycling cart. Plastic bags, plastic film, shrink wrap and similar materials can become tangled in sorting equipment and create delays at recycling facilities.
- Keep flexible plastics out of recycling. Items such as chip bags, candy wrappers, bubble wrap and pouches are not accepted in most curbside recycling programs and should be disposed of in the trash.
- Recycle bottles, jars, cans and containers when they are empty and clean. Glass bottles and jars, metal food and beverage cans, and plastic bottles and jugs are valuable recyclable materials when properly prepared.

Recycle Your Plastic Bags



When mixed with other recyclables, plastic bags tangle with equipment or other materials at the sorting facility, causing damage and delays. Even worse, they don't get recycled this way. Instead, recycle empty, clean plastic bags, like shopping bags, dry cleaning bags and the plastic wrap from cases of water bottles, at designated take-back bins located in many local retail stores. To find a participating store near you, visit **plasticfilmrecycling.org**.

Free Compost Giveaway at Otay Sustainability Park

Republic Services is hosting a free compost giveaway for customers residing in the County of San Diego on Saturday, November 14, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., or until compost runs out. The giveaway will take place at Otay Sustainability Park, 1700 Maxwell Rd., Chula Vista, CA 91911. Residents who would like to receive free compost must provide proof of residence with a photo ID. Please bring your own shovels, containers, or buckets to fill with compost.

Republic Services also offers free guided tours of Otay Sustainability Park, where organizations can learn about landfill operations, composting, construction and demolition recycling, and other innovative waste management processes taking place at the facility. For more information about the compost giveaway or to schedule a tour for your business, email **Otay@RepublicServices.com** or call **619.421.9400**. For more community recycling and compost events, visit **sandiegocounty.gov**.



- Avoid wish-cycling. Placing items in the recycling cart simply because they seem recyclable can increase contamination. If you are unsure whether an item is accepted, check local recycling guidelines before placing it in the cart.

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Safely Dispose of Household Hazardous Waste

Household hazardous waste (HHW) is any product in your home that could be poisonous, flammable or dangerous. Warning labels are often attached to products like automotive fluids, automotive and rechargeable batteries, lawn and garden chemicals, paint-related products, cleaners and solvents. These products are dangerous and pose a risk to our environment when they end up in the landfill. That is why HHW should never be placed in your curbside trash carts.

Electronic waste, such as televisions, computers, and cell phones, along with universal waste like common batteries and fluorescent lights, also do not belong in trash or recycling carts. These materials can harm collection and disposal workers and create environmental hazards if not handled properly.

For more information:

- **Households:** Visit **Sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/dpw/recycling/hhw.html** for details. You can also use the HHW drop-off facilities listed below.
- **Small Businesses:** If you generate less than 27 gallons, or 220 pounds, of hazardous waste each month or 2.2 pounds of acutely hazardous waste each month, call **858.694.2456**.
- **Large Businesses:** Call the County of San Diego Hazardous Materials Division at **800.253.9933**.
- **Seniors (65+) and Disabled Unincorporated Residents:** Limited door-to-door pickups of HHW are available. Call **877.R.1.EARTH (877.713.2784)** for more information.

Look for the FAQs at **RepublicServices.com/SanDiegoCountyCA** for more information and resources for mail-back programs and drop-off sites for different materials. Call **877.R.1.EARTH (877.713.2784)** with questions about where to properly dispose of just about anything and for information on scheduling an appointment at your nearest HHW facility. Used oil, oil filters and electronics can also be recycled at many local businesses. Call the HHW Hotline **877.R.1.EARTH (877.713.2784)** or search **WasteFreeSD.org** for a location near you.

Giving Unwanted Items a Second Life

- Visit your local thrift store to find your next Halloween costume or reuse your costume purchases from previous years.
- Participate in your local “Buy Nothing” group on social media. Your neighbors may need to re-home their previously used toys, costumes, and decorations.
- Properly dispose of fallen leaves, small branches, and gourds in your organics container. Recycle empty and clean pie tins, aluminum foil, metal cans, beverage containers, glass jars, and plastic containers.
- Use the paper bags you receive from the grocery store for disposing of food scraps before placing them in your organics cart.
- Donate your extra shelf-stable food items to a local nonprofit or food recovery organization.
- Choose reusable alternatives to single-use items, such as paper towels, straws, and utensils. Shop at local refill stores to purchase household products with less packaging and reduce waste.
- Properly store fruits and vegetables to help them stay fresh longer. Keep prodcue in the appropriate areas of your refrigerator or pantry, and use older items before opening new ones.

HHW Drop-Off Facilities

Ramona HHW Facility for Unincorporated Residents

- Location: Ramona Disposal Transfer Station, 324 Maple St., Ramona
- Appointments required: Call **877.713.2784** or schedule online.
- Appointments available on the first and third Saturdays of the month, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Escondido HHW Facility for Unincorporated Residents

- Location: Escondido Disposal Transfer Station, 1044 W. Washington Ave., Escondido
- Appointments required: Call **877.713.2784** or schedule online.
- Appointments available from 12:30 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. only
- City of Escondido residents: Call **760.745.3203**.

El Cajon HHW Facility

- Location: 925 O’Connor Street, El Cajon (at the Waste Management [WM] Transfer Station)
- Appointments required: Available every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Please call WM to schedule an appointment, using the following steps:

1. Call WM at **619.596.5100**.
2. Say ”Household Hazardous Waste” when the virtual assistant asks what you want help with. This will bring you to the Haul Away landing zone.
3. If you are a WM customer, say your address or account number (City of Santee residents and some County residents are serviced by WM).
4. If you are NOT a WM customer, say “No Address” or “No Account.”
5. Say ”Residential” when asked if it is a residential, business or contractor address.
6. You will be connected with an agent who can schedule your HHW drop-off appointment.
7. **Please note:** If it associates your phone number with an account for a different facility, such as Temecula, repeat “No Address.”

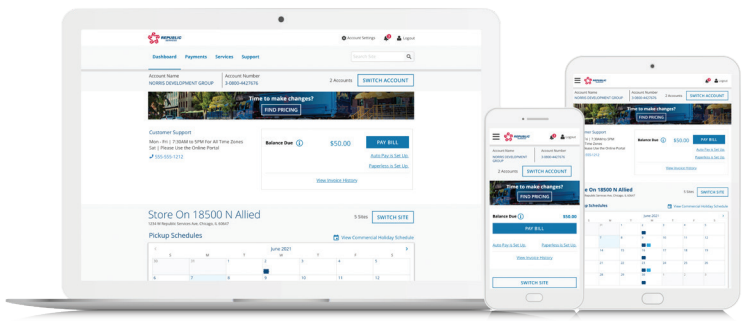
Self-Hauling Options in San Diego

San Diego has specific requirements for residents and businesses who choose to handle their own recycling, organics and trash. Self-hauling is allowed, but properties must first register with the County in order to waive subscription to service with a franchised hauler. Once registered, participants must provide proof of ongoing recycling, including facility receipts. Properties may be subject to inspections to confirm that recyclable and organic materials are properly separated from solid waste. For more information about registration and program requirements, contact San Diego County at **Recycle@sdcounty.ca.gov** or call **858.694.2456**.

Need Help?

Managing your waste and recycling services is easy with the Republic Services App. The app provides one simple tool to help manage your account needs, access important information, and stay connected to your services. Visit **RepublicServices.com/Account/login** to sign up or download the app.

Republic Services also offers comprehensive Environmental Solutions for hazardous and regulated waste through its acquisitions of US Ecology, ACV Enviro and ECOFLO. These services include waste treatment, field and industrial services, and 24/7 emergency response. With a network of 42,000 employees and 175 environmental services locations, Republic Services provides innovative solutions in addition to its recycling and waste services.



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Download on the App Store

Why Wasn't My Cart Serviced?

These are some of the reasons why organics, recycling or waste may not be collected:

- Cart inaccessible
- Overfilled or overweight cart
- Insufficient space to service cart, such as car blocking cart
- Unacceptable contamination or hazardous waste found in cart
- Organics, recycling or waste placed in the incorrect cart
- Cart lid not closed flat
- Items placed outside the cart, either on the lid or on the ground

Cart Placement Tips

Place carts out by 7 a.m. on your collection day. All three carts are emptied on the same day but not by the same truck. Carts may be serviced at different times throughout the day. Drivers have until 6:30 p.m. to service the carts.

- Place carts either in the street gutter, against the curb, in front of the premises or adjacent to the premises in the alley or easement in the rear of the premises.
- Place carts out prior to 7 a.m. on your regular collection day.
- Place carts with the lid openings facing toward the street.
- Place carts in a visible location at least 3 feet apart and 6 feet away from mailboxes, trees, basketball hoops, cars or other stationary objects.



California Recycling Laws for Businesses



Recyclables: Assembly Bill (AB) 341 makes recycling mandatory for businesses that generate 4 or more cubic yards of waste per week and multi-family properties with five or more units. Under AB 341, businesses and properties must recycle paper, boxes, cans, bottles and containers, as well as recyclable items that are unique to their operations. Senate Bill (SB) 1383 expands on this requirement, making recycling of clean paper and cardboard mandatory at all businesses and multi-family properties, regardless of size.

Organics: Under SB 1383 and AB 1826, California businesses are required to reduce the volume of organics sent to landfills. Under these laws, organics include food scraps, food-soiled paper and yard trimmings. All businesses and multifamily properties should now be participating in organics recycling programs.

Customer Recycling: Under AB 827, limited-service restaurants in California must now provide customers with visible, clearly marked and easily accessible containers for recyclables and organics (uneaten food scraps, soiled paper and similar items) adjacent to trash bins. Full-service restaurants need to provide separate bins for use by employees. This law also applies to food courts and other businesses that sell food for on-site consumption.

For Assistance: You can learn more about these requirements at **CalRecycle.ca.gov/recycle/commercial**.

Sharps Disposal Options Near You

Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist whether they take back used needles, lancets and syringes. You can also take your used needles, lancets and syringes to drop-off collection sites. Or, you can search for a needle drop-off location closest to your home on the County's waste and recycling database, **WasteFreeSD.org**.

You might also consider using a free "mail-back" service for proper disposal. To sign up, call **844.633.7765** or **888.371.0717**, or order online at **Med-project.org** or **Safemedicinedrop.com**. Each mail-back kit includes a sharps container, prepaid shipping and packaging. Once the kit arrives, use the sharps container as directed, and follow the mail-back instructions to ship the sharps container free of charge with USPS right from your home.

Holiday Collection Schedule



- Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 26, 2026 (service delayed one day)
- Christmas Day – Friday, December 25, 2026 (service delayed one day)
- New Year's Day – Friday, January 1, 2027 (service delayed one day)

What is SB 1383?

California Senate Bill (SB) 1383, signed into law in 2016, aims to reduce methane emissions by keeping organic waste out of landfills. The law established a statewide goal of reducing the amount of organic waste disposed of in California landfills by 75% by 2025. SB 1383 builds on and expands the requirements of Assembly Bill (AB) 1826, which affect businesses that generate 2 or more cubic yards of waste per week and multifamily properties with five or more units. Under SB 1383, all residential properties and all businesses, regardless of size, are required to participate in organics recycling programs. Organic waste includes food scraps, food-soiled paper and yard trimmings, materials that can be composted rather than buried in a landfill.



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Food Donation Requirements for Business

To reduce food waste and help address food insecurity, SB 1383 required that California recover or rescue 20% of surplus edible food to feed people in need by 2025. The law directs food generating businesses to recover the maximum amount of their edible food that would otherwise go to landfills and to maintain records of their food donation activities. SB 1383 places mandated food donors into two tiers. As of January 1, 2024, large food businesses, such as wholesale food vendors, distributors, food service providers and grocery stores, as well as some cafeterias, restaurants and venues, are required to comply. These businesses must establish an agreement with an edible food recovery organization (EFRO) and track the types of food donated, the frequency of food donations, and the quantity of food donated.

Republic Services Expands Environmental Services Reach

Properly managing hazardous and regulated waste is essential for protecting people and the environment. Through its Environmental Solutions division, Republic Services offers comprehensive services to help businesses safely manage these materials. Following the acquisitions of US Ecology, ACV Enviro and ECOFLO, Republic Services provides waste treatment, field and industrial services, and 24/7 emergency response. With 175 environmental services locations and a workforce of 42,000 employees, Republic Services delivers innovative solutions for hazardous and regulated waste alongside its recycling and waste management services.



Organics Recycling in San Diego

For residents, participation begins in the kitchen, by separating food scraps and food-soiled paper from recycling and trash. Scraps can be collected in a container with a lid to help reduce odors, and some residents choose to refrigerate or freeze scraps until collection day. Plastic, compostable or biodegradable bags should not be used in organics carts. Instead, scraps may be wrapped in paper bags or newspaper to absorb liquids before being placed in the green organics cart with yard trimmings. To help keep the cart cleaner, residents can place cardboard, leaves or other yard clippings at the bottom, add food scraps, then cover them with additional yard clippings. Sprinkling baking soda in the bottom of the cart can also help reduce odors.

Residents living in single-family homes should place loose food scraps and food-soiled paper directly into the green organics cart with yard trimmings. Those living in multifamily communities should place the same materials into the designated green organics cart or dumpster provided at their property. In all cases, organic materials should be fully contained inside the cart or dumpster with the lid closed, and no materials should stick out of the top or be left on the ground nearby.



Contact Us

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For more information, please visit:
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