

# Sustainability Update

## Recycling & Waste Newsletter for County of San Diego Customers



Sustainability in Action

FALL 2025

[RepublicServices.com/SanDiegoRegion](https://RepublicServices.com/SanDiegoRegion)

619.421.9400

## Avoid Common Recycling Mistakes



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- **Know What's Recyclable** – Place all clean, dry paper and cardboard in your recycling cart or dumpster. Also, recycle metal cans, glass bottles and jars, and plastic bottles, jugs and containers in the same cart or dumpster.
- **Label Bins Clearly** – Inside your home, label your recycling bins clearly to remind everyone what can and cannot be recycled. Simple, visible labels can make a big difference.
- **Empty, Clean and Dry** – Empty bottles and other containers, remove excess residue, rinse them out, and allow them to air-dry.
- **Keep It Loose** – Don't bag your recycling. Place all items loose into the recycling cart or dumpster.
- **Avoid Hazardous Materials** – Never put tanglers, like hoses or cords, or hazardous waste, such as batteries, chemicals or medical sharps, into your recycling cart or dumpster. These items can endanger workers and damage equipment.
- **Steer Clear of Contaminants** – Keep "yucky" items out of your recycling cart or dumpster. These include dirty recyclables, greasy pizza boxes and diapers.
- **Know What NOT to Throw** – Items like plastic bags, plastic wrap, palm fronds, Styrofoam, shredded paper, pet waste and diapers belong in the trash. Food-soiled napkins, paper towels and greasy pizza boxes should go in organics. Batteries and lightbulbs must be taken to a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center.
- **Learn More** – For more tips about recycling, visit [RepublicServices.com/SanDiegoRegion](https://RepublicServices.com/SanDiegoRegion).

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
GREENFIELD, IN  
PERMIT NO. 220

Republic Services  
8364 Clairemont Mesa Blvd.  
San Diego, CA 92111

### Recycling (Reciclaje)

#### Acceptable Items (Artículos aceptables)



Paper & Cardboard *Papel y cartón* Plastic & Glass *Plástico y vidrio* Metal Cans *Latas de metal*

#### Unacceptable Items (Artículos no aceptables)



Dishes & Mirrors *Platos y espejos* Carpet & Rugs *Alfombras y tapetes* Hazardous Waste *Desechos peligrosos* Garden Hoses *Mangueras de jardín* Tires & Car Parts *Llantas y refacciones de auto* Toys *Juguetes* Clothing & Bedding *Ropa y cubiertas de cama* Construction Waste *Desechos de construcción* Appliances *Electrodomésticos* Furniture *Muebles* Diapers & Pet Waste *Pañales y desechos de mascotas* Yard & Food Waste *Desechos de jardín y de comida* Plastic Bags & Styrofoam™ *Bolsas de plástico y espuma de poliestireno*



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## Break Down Those Boxes

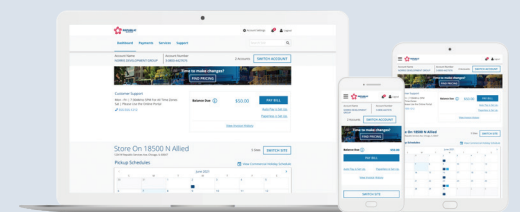
Please break down and flatten all cardboard and paperboard boxes. First, it will save a lot of room in your recycling cart. Second, it keeps items from getting caught inside the box. At the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF), staff members and machines work together to identify and sort materials as they travel rapidly over and through equipment. When other recyclables are inside boxes, they aren't visible and can't be separated by category, leading to contaminated bales of boxes and lost recyclable containers. Thank you for your help!



Credit: KURJIANPHOTO | iStock | Getty Images Plus

## Download the Republic Services App

With the Republic Services app, you can schedule a special pickup or report a missed pickup. You can request repairs or graffiti removal from commercial dumpsters. Plus, you can even pay your bill. Visit [RepublicServices.com/Account/login](https://RepublicServices.com/Account/login) to sign up or download the app.





# What SB 1383 Means for You

For single-family homes, SB 1383 means making a few changes to how you handle everyday waste. Food scraps and food-soiled paper should be kept separate from both trash and recycling. To keep things simple in the kitchen, place scraps in a container with a lid, which helps reduce odors, or store them in the refrigerator or freezer until you are ready to empty them. When it is time to take them out, place the scraps directly into your green organics cart along with yard trimmings. Plastic bags, even those labeled compostable or biodegradable, should not be used. Instead, scraps may be wrapped in newspaper or placed in a paper bag to help absorb moisture. To keep your cart cleaner, you can layer cardboard, leaves or other yard clippings at the bottom, add food scraps, and then cover them with more yard waste. A sprinkle of baking soda at the bottom can also help reduce odors. All organic materials should fit inside the cart with the lid closed, without anything sticking out or left on the ground.



For multi-family units, the same rules apply. Separate food scraps and food-soiled paper from the recycling and trash in your kitchen, store them in a lidded container, and when ready, place them in the green organics cart or dumpster. As with single-family homes, all material should be contained so that lids close properly and nothing is left outside the container.

This time of year brings its own opportunities to recycle organics. Pumpkins and collected leaves left over from fall decorations can go directly into your green bin, where they will be turned into compost instead of going to the landfill.

# Food Recovery Requirements for Businesses

To reduce food waste and help address food insecurity, SB 1383 requires that California recovers or rescues 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.



# California Plastic Waste Reduction

Senate Bill (SB) 54 requires producers of single-use packaging and plastic food service ware to reduce waste and take responsibility for the material they create. Under this law, producers must cut plastic packaging by 25 percent by 2032 and ensure that 65 percent of plastic materials sold, distributed or imported in California are recycled. By 2032, all covered materials must also be recyclable or eligible to be labeled as compostable.

## NEW GADGETS? LEARN HOW TO DISPOSE OF THE OLD ONES CORRECTLY

About 200 million US adults will purchase tech as a holiday gift this year, according to the Consumer Technology Association.<sup>1</sup> Let's be responsible about how we dispose of old electronics.



### Recognize THE RISKS

Throwing electronics in your trash or recycling bin could cause fires, injure workers or harm the environment. Electronics and rechargeable batteries must be returned to specialized electronics recyclers. **The following can NOT be placed in your trash or recycling container:**

- ✗ Cellphones
- ✗ Tablets
- ✗ Laptops
- ✗ Electronic toys
- ✗ Rechargeable batteries
- ✗ Cordless power tools
- ✗ Electric scooters & hoverboards
- ✗ Handheld gaming consoles



### Organize WASTE

When you have old items you no longer want to keep, divide them into different categories: **SELL, DISPOSE OF or DONATE.**

Electronics that are in good working condition could benefit various organizations. Consider donating your old devices to secondhand stores or local charities.

### Dispose OF SAFELY

To find battery and electronics recyclers in your area, visit [Earth911.com](https://earth911.com). Or, to explore mail-back recycling options visit [RepublicServices.com/residents/recycling](https://RepublicServices.com/residents/recycling).

- 1 Choose a box size that fits your needs.
- 2 Fill the box.
- 3 Call for pickup or ship the box yourself.

### WHEN IN DOUBT, LOOK IT UP.

Electronics don't belong in the regular recycling or trash carts. Visit [RepublicServices.com/Residents/Recycling/E-Waste](https://RepublicServices.com/Residents/Recycling/E-Waste) for more information.

1. <https://www.cta.tech/Resources/Newsroom/Media-Releases/2022/October/CTA-Previews-the-Hottest-Tech-Gifts-of-2022#:~:text=A%20record%2Dbreaking%2078%25%20of,three%20percent%20points%20from%202021.>



# Compost Giveaway

Compost creates healthier soil by adding back nutrient-rich organic matter and improving soil structure. Healthy soil uses water more efficiently, allowing available water to flow toward your plants' roots, storing water in the soil longer, and reducing runoff and erosion.

Republic Services will be giving away compost to customers residing in San Diego City and County for free on Saturday, November 8, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. (or until compost runs out) at the Otay Sustainability Park, 1700 Maxwell Rd., Chula Vista 91911. Please bring your own shovels, containers or buckets to fill with compost. Join us for our next giveaway! For more information, contact [Otay@RepublicServices.com](mailto:Otay@RepublicServices.com).



Credit: Cat\_Chat | iStock | Getty Images Plus

To receive free compost at this event, residents must provide proof of active account ownership in the form of an invoice or online app documentation, as well as a photo ID. For more information, contact Republic Services at **619.421.9400**.

Organics (Orgánicos)

**Acceptable Items (Artículos aceptables)**

**Yard Waste**  
Desechos de jardín

**Food Waste**  
Desechos de comida

**Food-Soiled Paper & Paper Bags\***  
Papel manchado de comidas y bolsas de papel\*

**Recyclables**  
Reciclables

**Plastic Bags & Wrap**  
Bolsas y envolturas de plástico

**Fats, Oil & Grease**  
Grasas y aceites

**Construction Waste**  
Desechos de construcción

**Trash & Pet Waste**  
Basura y desechos de mascotas

**Hazardous Waste**  
Desechos de peligrosos

\*You can place food in a paper bag. \*Puede poner comida en una bolsa de papel.

**Unacceptable Items (Artículos no aceptables)**



BATTERY  
BEWARE

TAKE CHARGE.  
STAY SAFE.

Dangers of Lithium Batteries



# Where Should Your Batteries Go?

Batteries power everything from smartphones and laptops to electric bikes, power tools, toys and home backup systems. But behind their everyday convenience lies a serious safety risk. When batteries, especially lithium-ion types, are damaged, overcharged or improperly disposed of, they can cause fires that are extremely difficult to control. These types of fires are becoming more common, including a collection truck fire in Fountain Valley in December 2022 caused by a discarded lithium-ion battery. Similar incidents across the country have resulted in injuries, equipment damage, facility shutdowns and disruptions to waste services. Most of these fires occur when batteries are thrown into regular trash or recycling bins. Once compacted, punctured or overheated during waste processing, they can ignite quickly and spread fast.

The best way to prevent battery-related fires is through proper handling and disposal. Always unplug devices once they are fully charged to prevent overheating, and store batteries in a cool, dry place away from sharp or heavy objects. Most importantly, never place batteries in your curbside trash or recycling cart. These batteries must be taken to a designated hazardous waste facility to be disposed of safely. To make proper disposal easier, local municipalities offer free battery recycling programs or drop-off locations. You can check your city or county website for nearby options, or visit [WasteFreeSD.org](https://www.wastefreesd.org) to find recycling and disposal sites throughout the region. If visiting a drop-off site is not convenient, Republic Services also offers a mail-back program that allows you to safely package and return used batteries from your home. To learn more or request a kit, visit [Packback.RepublicServices.com](https://www.Packback.RepublicServices.com).

# Easy Options for Recycling Leftover Paint

Old paint might not seem dangerous, but it can be harmful to the environment and your health if it is not disposed of correctly. Oil-based paints contain chemicals that make them hazardous, while even leftover latex paint can cause problems if poured down the drain or thrown in the trash. That is why safe recycling options are available through PaintCare California drop-off locations. Most sites accept up to five gallons of architectural paint in containers that are five gallons or smaller, and they cannot take leaking, unlabeled or empty containers. For locations and hours, visit [PaintCare.org/drop-off-sites](https://www.PaintCare.org/drop-off-sites).



Credit: RedBarnStudio | E+ | Getty Images

# Household Hazardous Waste Disposal

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](https://www.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](https://www.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](https://www.WasteFreeSD.org) for a location near you.

# 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."



# Greener Ways to Give



The holidays bring bright lights, busy shopping trips and piles of wrapping paper that find their way into the trash. While the holiday season is filled with joy, it can also be one of the most wasteful times of the year. Choosing gifts with the environment in mind helps turn that pattern around. When we think about what we give and how we present it, we not only share with the people we love but also with the planet we all call home.

When you choose a physical gift, consider the materials it is made from. Items created with recycled, upcycled, or organic materials carry less environmental impact and often come with a story worth sharing. Even how you wrap a gift can reflect sustainable choices. Instead of using wrapping paper that will be discarded after one use, you might wrap presents in fabric, scarves or tote bags that can be reused. Old maps, newspapers or even children’s artwork can also be repurposed to add charm and personality while avoiding unnecessary waste. By weaving these ideas into your holiday traditions, you can give in ways that feel heartfelt and responsible.

# Republic Services at Work in San Diego

- **Operation Clean Sweep** – On August 23, 2025 Republic Services sponsored San Diego coastal cleanup hosted by San Diego Working Waterfront where roll-off containers were provided at numerous sites. Republic had over 20 volunteers help in cleanup efforts at the Seasonal Wetlands next to Sweetwater Park.
- **Tours at the Otay Sustainability Park** – hosted ILACSD across two days to showcase the innovative processes occurring at the OSP in Chula Vista. Republic Services has previously partnered with I Love A Clean San Diego for their annual Creek to Bay cleanup, one of the largest single-day cleanup events in San Diego County. Interested in learning about landfill operations, composting, construction and demolition recycling, and more? Join the Republic Services team for a free guided tour by emailing **Otay@RepublicServices.com** or visiting **OtayLandfill.com**.
- **What’s In California’s Landfills?** Earlier this year, CalRecycle, one of the state’s governing bodies for resource recycling and recovery, published a preliminary finding of the composition of 16 California landfills. As recycling and recovery facilities continue to increase their own diversion goals, the state’s effort to characterize what enters our landfills provides needed clarity on how we can better sort materials for disposal.



’TIS THE SEASON FOR

# Holiday Recycling

**Gift Bags**  
Recycle or Reuse (if uncoated)  
Toss or Reuse (if embellished)

**Ribbons**  
Toss or Reuse

**Boxes**  
Recycle or Reuse

**Bows**  
Toss or Reuse

**Wrapping Paper**  
Recycle (if uncoated)  
Toss (if glossy or embellished)

**Tissue Paper**  
Recycle or Reuse

**Cellophane**  
Toss

Enjoy your holidays and celebrate your responsible actions toward our planet! Visit [RecyclingSimplified.com/Holidays](https://RecyclingSimplified.com/Holidays) and [RepublicServices.com](https://RepublicServices.com) for more information.

# Holiday Collection Schedule



- Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 27, 2025 (service delayed one day)
- Christmas Day – Thursday, December 25, 2025 (service delayed one day)
- New Year’s Day – Thursday, January 1, 2026 (service delayed one day)

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

**Republic Services**  
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San Diego, CA 92111  
**619.421.9400**

For more information, please visit:  
**[RepublicServices.com/SanDiegoRegion](https://RepublicServices.com/SanDiegoRegion)**

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