

# Sustainability Update

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



Sustainability in Action

SPRING 2024

RepublicServices.com/SanDiegoCountyCA 619.421.9400

## Spring Cleaning Clothing Donation and Recycling Resources

As you go through old items and declutter your homes this spring season, please be mindful of what you throw in the trash. Most household items like clothes, mattresses, electronics and furniture have a thriving secondhand market that you can donate to or be a part of. The less we throw in the trash, the less landfills we need to create.

**San Diego Rescue Mission** accepts clothing/shoes that are fairly new or gently used. They take into account the wishes of the donor and your requests on how the items you donate will be used. Most of their donations are given to students and guests at the San Diego Rescue Mission according to their needs. Deliver items to their facility on 120 Elm St., San Diego 92101.

**Father Joe's** accepts clothing/shoes that are clean and gently used and resells them at their thrift stores. You can drop them off at a local facility or schedule a pickup online. The money collected from reselling the donations goes directly towards helping the homeless population in San Diego. Visit [My.neighbor.org/take-action/donate-goods](https://my.neighbor.org/take-action/donate-goods).



Credit: FG Trade | E+ | Getty Images

### Locations:

- Church of the Nativity  
6309 El Apajo  
Rancho Santa Fe 92067
- St. Michael's Church – Poway  
15546 Pomerado Rd.  
Poway 92064
- Our Lady of Guadalupe – Chula Vista  
345 Anita St.  
Chula Vista 91911
- Greater Life Church  
2770 Glebe Rd.  
Lemon Grove 91945
- Mt. Carmel High School  
9550 Carmel Mountain Rd.  
San Diego 92129

**Facebook** has a "groups" feature where you can search for "Buy Nothing" groups in your community. These groups offer a local way to donate old or unwanted items for free in your neighborhood. Create a Facebook account and join one of these if you're moving or want to give away a lot of stuff for free. This is a great way to connect with your neighbors and know your stuff is helping others in need.

**Soles4Souls** is a free mail-in program which aims to turn unwanted shoes and clothing into opportunity, creating jobs and empowering people to break the cycle of poverty. Shoes are distributed to people in need and are also used to help people launch and sustain their own small businesses selling donated shoes and clothing. Visit [Soles4souls.org/give-shoes](https://soles4souls.org/give-shoes).

**The Bra Recyclers** is a free mail-in program that accepts bras, sports bras, mastectomy bras, nursing bras and new panties. The bras are then donated to women in developing countries, who are escaping domestic violence or human trafficking or battling breast

cancer. Visit [Thebrarecyclers.com/recycling-form](https://thebrarecyclers.com/recycling-form).

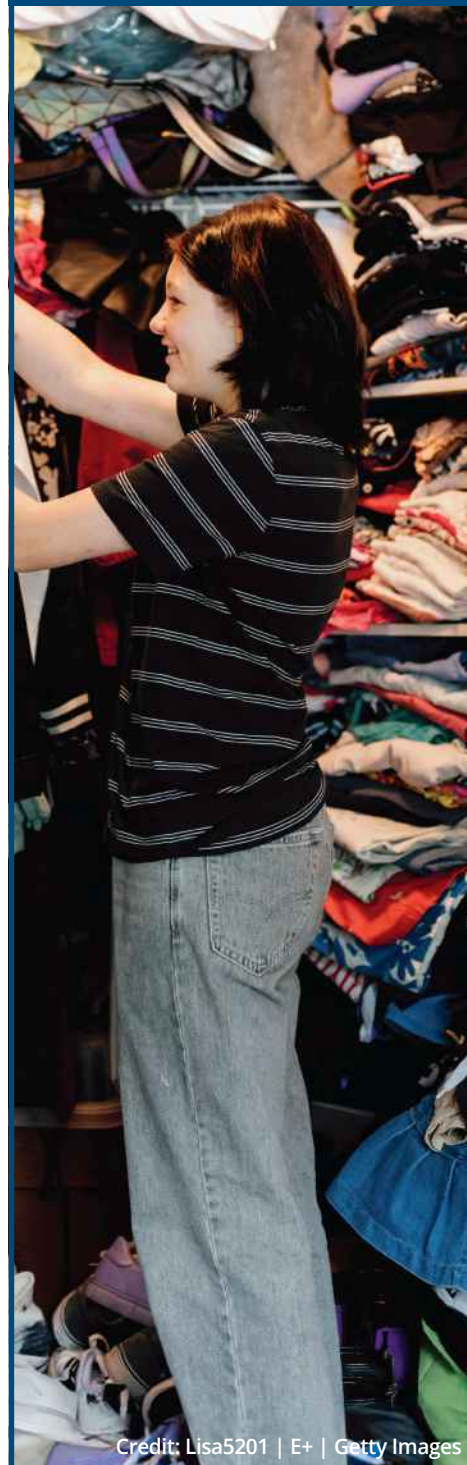
**Retold Recycling** is a mail-in program that accepts damaged or very worn-out clothes and textiles (blankets, towels, bed linen) to be recycled. Whether it's just one sock or a full bag of clothing, Retold makes sure none of it ends up in the landfill. The items are sorted by type and quality, and are then sent to thrift stores, charities, upcyclers, recycling companies and developing countries to support micro-economies. Visit [Retoldrecycling.com](https://retoldrecycling.com) to purchase a bag.

**USAgain Drop Boxes** accepts clothing/shoes that are in reusable condition. Items in good condition are given to people who don't have the option to buy new clothes, allowing them to conserve funds for other basic necessities such as food, shelter and education. Some are sold to small shop owners or secondhand stores who need products to make ends meet. Items that are battered, such as fabric scraps, are either reused as wiping rags or shredded for insulation material for appliances and vehicles. Visit [Usagain.com/find-a-box.php](https://usagain.com/find-a-box.php) to find a drop off location near you.

**Recycling Mattresses and Box Springs** – The City's Environmental Services Department accepts mattresses and box springs for free at the Miramar Landfill. The Mattress Collection Site is located on the east side of the entrance at 5161 Convoy St., 92111, next to the Household Hazardous Waste Transfer Facility. Mattresses and box springs are accepted Monday to Friday, from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. The site is closed on Saturdays and Sundays. Items must not be severely damaged, wet, twisted, frozen, soiled or infested with bedbugs. The limit is 10 units per trip.

*Is it time to  
declutter  
your rooms  
and closets?*

Discard with care by  
selling or donating  
gently-used items.



Credit: Lisa5201 | E+ | Getty Images

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San Diego, CA 92111



# Why Sorting Organic Waste Will Help Combat Climate Change

Organic waste is defined as any biodegradable material that comes from a plant or animal. For residents and businesses, this means food scraps from mealtimes and any extra landscaping material like grass, leaves, small branches and plant clippings.

Traditionally in California, all of this material has gone straight to landfills where it decomposes along with other trash, creating a massive amount of methane production. In fact, 20% of all methane comes from the waste sector. The problem stems from the U.S.'s inefficiency with food. About 40% of all food goes uneaten or unused and decomposes in our landfills across the country.

With such a high percentage of food being wasted every year, California has taken the first initiative to fix this problem with Senate Bill 1383, requiring residents and businesses to sort their food and yard waste. Placing organic waste in a separate stream allows it to be composted and used again for food production, landscaping and community projects all while diverting it from landfills and reducing methane emissions.



Credit: terra24 | iStock | Getty Images Plus

Republic Services has been proudly operating the Otay Compost Facility since 2021, diverting 200 tons of organic waste per day. This is made possible by the dedication and participation of our San Diego and Chula Vista residents and businesses. The couple extra seconds it takes to sort at the source will have a major positive impact for the future.

Join us this Earth Month and commit to learning and implementing organic waste management in your home or business. If you have any questions or need help managing organic waste, please contact your local Sustainability Advisor, Sarah Walsh at [Swalsh@RepublicServices.com](mailto:Swalsh@RepublicServices.com).

# Organics Recycling Tips for Residents

## Residents – Single-Family Homes

- Separate food scraps and food-soiled paper from the recycling and trash in your kitchen.
- Put scraps into a container with a lid to reduce odors. If you wish, you can freeze or refrigerate the scraps.
- Do NOT bag scraps in plastic, compostable or biodegradable collection bags. You may use paper bags or wrap scraps in newspaper to absorb liquids.
- Place loose food scraps and food-soiled paper into the organics cart with yard trimmings.
- Keep the curbside cart cleaner by placing cardboard, leaves or other yard clippings in the bottom, adding food scraps and then layering more yard clippings on top.
- Place all organics inside your cart and close the lid — no material should be sticking out of the top or sitting on the ground.



Credit: Candle Photo | iStock | Getty Images Plus

## Residents – Multi-Family Units

- Separate food scraps and food-soiled paper from the recycling and trash in your kitchen.
- Put scraps into a container/caddy with a lid to reduce odors. If you wish, you can freeze or refrigerate the scraps.
- The more carbon sources, such as paper towels, napkins, paper bags, coffee filters and newspaper, the less smells and liquids. These will help soak up liquids and keep it cleaner.
- Place loose food scraps and food-soiled paper into the green organics cart or dumpster outside.
- Your green dumpster or cart should be equally as accessible as your trash and recycling dumpsters or carts. Please contact your property manager if you cannot find one.
- Place all organics inside your cart or dumpster and close the lid — no material should stick out of the top or sit on the ground.

# Properly Dispose of Household Hazardous Waste

Household hazardous waste (HHW) should never be thrown into the trash or poured down the sink, sewer or storm drains. Improper disposal may injure refuse workers and pollute ground water, waterways and our oceans, potentially destroying marine life. For these reasons, improper disposal is illegal.



The County has access to three permanent HHW collection facilities to accept HHW from unincorporated County residents.

## 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 to 2:45 p.m. only
- City of Escondido residents: Call **760.745.3203**.

## El Cajon HHW Facility

- Location: 925 O'Connor St., El Cajon (at the Waste Management Transfer Station).
- Appointments required: Available every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- To schedule an appointment, please call Waste Management using the following steps:
  1. Call Waste Management 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."

# Recycling Contamination

Loads of recyclable materials end up in landfills every year because of contamination from plastic bags, liquids, food and incorrect items being thrown into the blue recycling container. Avoid "wishcycling" and only throw the following six categories of items into your blue cart. Plastic trash bags are not accepted. All items must be loose in addition to empty, clean and dry.

1. Metal cans (soda cans, canned foods)
2. Flattened cardboard
3. Paper (NO paper towels)
4. Cartons/Tetra Pak (milk, juice or soup boxes)
5. Plastics (soda bottles, water jugs)
6. Glass (jars, bottles)



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.

- Alpine Sheriff Station  
2751 Alpine Blvd.  
Alpine 91901
- Imperial Beach Sheriff Substation  
845 Imperial Beach Blvd.  
Imperial Beach 91932
- Borrego Springs Sheriff's Office  
571 Palm Canyon Dr.  
Borrego Springs 92004
- Julian Sheriff Substation  
2907 Washington St.  
Julian 92036
- Bonita – Sunnyside Fire Station  
4900 Bonita Rd.  
Bonita 91902
- Lakeside Sheriff's Station  
12365 Parkside Dr.  
Lakeside 92040
- Campo Sheriff Substation  
378 Sheridan Rd.  
Campo 91906-0007
- Pine Valley Sheriff Substation  
28696 Old Hwy. 80  
Pine Valley 92062
- Encinitas (North Coastal) Sheriff Substation  
175 North El Camino Real  
Encinitas 92024
- Rancho San Diego Sheriff Station  
11486 Campo Rd.  
Spring Valley 91978
- Fallbrook Sheriff Substation  
388 East Alvarado St.  
Fallbrook 92028
- Valley Center Sheriff Substation  
28201 N. Lake Wohlford Rd.  
Valley Center 92082

Annually, there are more than 34,500 reports of illegal dumping, littering, scavenging and waste-related violations locally. To report illegal dumping, littering, scavenging or other waste-related violations, please call the County Storm Drain Pollution hotline at **888.846.0800** or email **[Watersheds@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Watersheds@sdcounty.ca.gov)**.




Earth Day 2024 signals a strong commitment from **EARTHDAY.ORG** to combat the pervasive issue of plastics, pledging a 60% reduction of all plastics production by 2040 under the theme, "Planet vs. Plastics." This global mission emphasizes heightened awareness of the environmental risks associated with plastics, a push to phase out single-use plastics, advocacy for a UN Treaty on Plastic Pollution and a call to end the environmental impact of fast fashion. This Earth Day, everyone is invited to unite in building a plastic-free planet for future generations.

In our daily lives, each of us can play a pivotal role in contributing to this shared vision. Embracing reusable alternatives to single-use plastics stands as a foundational step. You could also swap disposable water bottles for reusable ones, trade single-use shopping bags for sturdy, eco-friendly options and opt for reusable coffee cups and

food containers. These seemingly small changes collectively would lead to a significant reduction in our contribution to plastic waste.

Another impactful arena for individual action lies in the realm of fashion. Choose timeless pieces over fleeting trends, prioritizing quality over quantity. Exploring second-hand or thrift stores not only adds a unique touch to your wardrobe but also contributes to the reduction of fast fashion's environmental impact.


As Earth Day 2024 approaches, let's recognize the power of individual action in shaping a collective and sustainable future. Through conscious choices, we can contribute to the vision of a plastic-free planet. Earth Day calls us all to be stewards of our environment, embracing a responsibility that extends beyond a single day and influences a lifetime of mindful living.



# Plastics Recycling Myths

**MYTH**  
Plastic doesn't really get recycled.

**✓ FACT**  
Plastic bottles, jugs and tubs are widely accepted for recycling and in demand.




**MYTH**  
You should bag your recyclables.

**✓ FACT**  
Bags tangle in sorting equipment. Recyclables should be placed loose in your recycling cart.




**MYTH**  
Plastic grocery bags can be recycled curbside.

**✓ FACT**  
Bags must be returned to the grocery store for proper recycling.




**MYTH**  
Anything with chasing arrows should go in your recycling bin.

**✓ FACT**  
This symbol identifies the type of plastic an item is made from. It doesn't mean an item is recyclable.



**MYTH**  
Anything plastic can go in your recycling bin.

**✓ FACT**  
Only rigid plastics like bottles, jugs and tubs are recyclable curbside.



Visit  
[RepublicServices.com/AmericaRecyclesDay](https://RepublicServices.com/AmericaRecyclesDay)  
to learn more about recycling.



# Reviving Gadgets

Electronics recycling is the process of collecting, dismantling and reusing or refurbishing electronic devices. It is an essential practice in today's world where electronic waste has become a significant environmental concern. Electronic devices contain various hazardous materials, such as lead, mercury and cadmium, which can cause serious harm to the environment if they're not handled correctly. By recycling our electronic devices, we prevent these harmful substances from contaminating soil and water when disposed of improperly or from ending up in landfills.



Credit: hxyume | E+ | Getty Images

So how do you handle electronic devices in a sustainable and responsible manner? First, strive to extend the lifespan of devices by taking good care of them, protecting them and investing in repairs as necessary. This reduces the demand for new products and the associated environmental impact of both manufacturing and disposal.

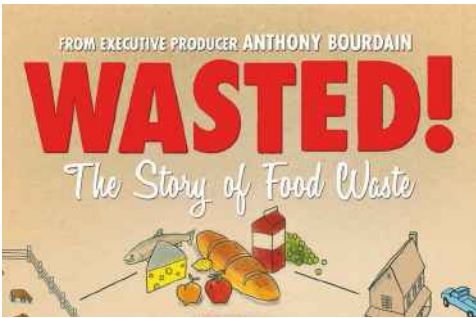
Second, when it is time to upgrade or replace electronic devices, consider donating or selling them instead of discarding them. Many organizations and individuals can benefit from used electronics, promoting local reuse, giving devices a second life and reducing waste.

Finally, with devices that are beyond repair or unwanted by others, research recycling options. In some cases, manufacturers may offer recycling programs and even discounts on new devices when you trade in an old one. Otherwise, be sure to recycle your old devices through our bulk collection program or at one of the household hazardous waste collection centers.

By taking care of our devices while we are using them and after we are done with them, we contribute to a more sustainable future and minimize the environmental impact of our electronic devices.

# Wasted! The Story of Food Waste

*Wasted! The Story of Food Waste*, directed by Anna Chai and Nari Kye, is a compelling and eye-opening exploration of a global issue that affects us all — the staggering amount of food wasted across the world. Narrated by the late celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain, the documentary takes audiences on a thought-provoking journey, uncovering the root causes of food waste and offering solutions.



The film skillfully weaves together interviews with chefs, food activists and experts, presenting a multifaceted perspective on the issue. Bourdain's narration adds a touch of authenticity, guiding viewers through various locations worldwide to showcase the extent of the problem. The cinematography is visually striking, capturing the beauty of food juxtaposed with the harsh reality of its unnecessary disposal.

*Wasted!* not only sheds light on the environmental impact of food waste but also addresses its economic and social consequences. The film effectively communicates the magnitude of waste at different stages of the food supply chain, from farms to restaurants and households. It challenges viewers to rethink their consumption habits and encourages a collective shift towards a more sustainable and mindful approach to food.

The documentary also goes beyond highlighting the problem; it offers practical solutions. From creative culinary approaches for utilizing food scraps, to advocating for changes in policies and consumer behavior, *Wasted!* inspires viewers to be part of the solution.

*Wasted! The Story of Food Waste*, which is available on several streaming platforms, combines the charisma of Anthony Bourdain, the expertise of interviewees, and the artistry of filmmaking to create a compelling narrative that inspires action. It's a must-watch for those interested in sustainability, environmental issues and the broader implications of our food choices.

# 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: KURJANPHOTO | iStock | Getty Images Plus

# Join the Republic Services Family

Nationwide, Republic Services employs more than 35,000 people who make 5 million daily pickups and operate more than 300 facilities, including recycling centers, organics processing operations and landfills. Our highly skilled team members are passionate about the work they do to protect our environment and the communities they serve, which are typically also the places they call home.

If you would like to stay close to your family and friends and advance in a well-paying career, consider joining our team at Republic Services. Available jobs in our region include drivers, equipment operators, mechanics, shop technicians, material sorters, laborers, customer service specialists, dispatchers, recycling coordinators, sales representatives, office support staff members and more. To see and apply for open positions, visit [RepublicServices.jobs](https://www.RepublicServices.jobs).

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

**Republic Services**  
8364 Clairemont Mesa Blvd.  
San Diego, CA 92111  
**619.421.9400**

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

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Please recycle after reading.

# Holiday Collection Schedule

There will be no recycling, organics and waste collection services on these holidays:

- Memorial Day – Monday, May 27, 2024 (service delayed one day)
- Independence Day – Thursday, July 4, 2024 (service delayed one day)
- Labor Day – Monday, September 2, 2024 (service delayed one day)
- Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 28, 2024 (service delayed one day)
- Christmas Day – Wednesday, December 25, 2024 (service delayed one day)
- New Year's Day – Wednesday, January 1, 2025 (service delayed one day)

Collections on and after these holidays will be delayed by one day for the remainder of the week.

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