



DON'T FORGET ME.
ReusableBagsAC.org

STOPWASTE

at home • at work • at school

SPRING-SUMMER 2013 | UPDATE

REAL AND POSITIVE CHANGE

CHANCES ARE YOU'VE NOTICED A BIG CHANGE

at local checkout counters. On January 1, a new countywide law took effect that prohibits distribution of single-use plastic bags at stores that sell packaged foods. Stores can provide customers with recycled paper or reusable bags but must charge at least 10 cents each.

Why target single-use plastic bags? On average, a plastic bag is used for 12 minutes. Yet it can survive in a landfill or the ocean for hundreds of years. Using reusable bags—or skipping the bag altogether when buying an item or two—is a good habit that quickly becomes second nature.

The story of Alameda County Waste Management Authority's reusable bag ordinance is a great example of multiple government agencies and interest groups working together to achieve real and positive change in our communities. Many environmental groups, as well as public

agencies charged with cleaning up clogged storm drains and other litter, began to advocate for such laws years ago. But despite passage through the State Assembly and support by the Governor, the State of California was unable to adopt such a law in 2010.

"SAY GOODBYE TO URBAN TUMBLEWEEDS"

And yet we know from experience in places such as San Jose and Los Angeles that this type of legislation reduces plastic bags in storm drains by as much as 89 percent. That in turn saves money for citizens and businesses whose taxes pay for stormwater cleanup. In Alameda County alone, stormwater cleanup costs \$24 million each year. Thanks to this new legislation, we can say goodbye to so many of those urban tumbleweeds that drain our communities' resources.

The new law draws attention to the fact that single-use bags have never been free—their cost has merely been foisted onto taxpayers who foot the bill for combatting litter, and onto the hundreds of species of marine life that are injured or killed due to ingestion or entanglement in marine debris, most of which is plastic waste.

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WASTE REDUCTION NEWS IN ALAMEDA COUNTY



READY * SET RECYCLE

Now in its third year, StopWaste's Ready Set Recycle contest is helping make proper sorting the norm.

Many Alameda County residents already do a good job of keeping their trash clean of recyclables and compostables. In 2008, about 60 percent of the contents of a typical residential garbage cart was "good stuff"—readily recyclable or compostable materials like cans and bottles, yard trimmings and food scraps. By 2012, that was down to about 42 percent.

That's good news, but there's still a lot of work to be done to get us to the countywide goal that by 2020, less than 10 percent of what winds up in landfills will be readily recyclable or compostable. Ready Set Recycle is one of many local efforts moving us toward that goal.

REINFORCING THE RIGHT STUFF

The Ready Set Recycle contest rests on a foundation of well-respected research on how to make positive habits long lasting through recognition, reward and reinforcement. One facet of the contest includes random selection of garbage bins on pick-up day, sorting of their contents, and recognition

**MAKE PROPER SORTING
A SLAM DUNK! PLAY THE
SPEED SORTER GAME AT
READYSETRECYCLECONTEST.ORG**

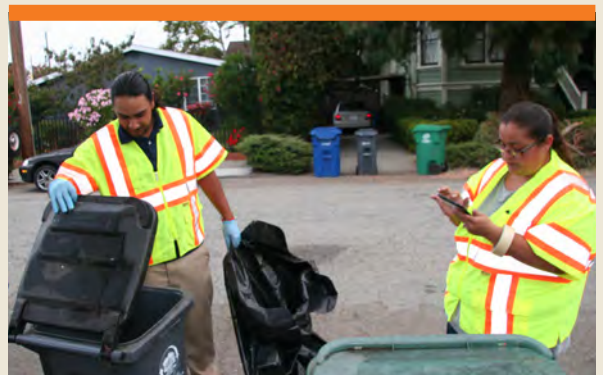
and rewards for those households whose garbage contains less than 10 percent recyclable and compostable material.

As an online complement to the curbside contest, the Speed Sorter Game provides a fun, fast-paced way for people to test and improve their recycling skills. Players can also take a recycling pledge, earn rewards, and share tips on how to make proper sorting a slam dunk.

READY SET RECYCLE RESULTS

Check out the contest's garbage-sorting stats from 2012, and stay tuned for updated results later this year.

- **893 garbage bins** randomly selected and sorted
- **42% recyclable or compostable material** mixed in with residential trash, on average
- **17% of households** met the countywide goal of less than 10% "good stuff" in the garbage
- **20.3 lbs.:** Average weight of stuff in garbage bins, including:
 - ▶ 12 lbs. of garbage (58%)
 - ▶ 2.3 lbs. of recyclables (12%)
 - ▶ 6 lbs. of compostables (30%)



Ready Set Recycle auditors sort the contents of randomly selected residential garbage bins. Households with less than 10% recyclable or compostable material in their garbage receive recognition and the chance to win rewards.

UNDER 10 BY 2020



ESTIMATED % OF RESIDENTIAL GARBAGE THAT'S READILY RECYCLABLE OR COMPOSTABLE

STOPWASTE BUSINESS EFFICIENCY AWARDS 2013

**LESS WASTE. BETTER BUSINESS.
MEET ALAMEDA COUNTY'S
INDUSTRY LEADERS.**

On May 9, StopWaste honored 12 businesses and institutions in Alameda County for outstanding waste reduction achievements. These organizations are greening their bottom lines while leading the way to a healthier environment and more robust economy.

- ▶ BALENTINE PLAZA
- ▶ CAGWIN & DORWARD
- ▶ CBRE, INC.
- ▶ FRESHPOINT SAN FRANCISCO
- ▶ THE JOHN STEWART COMPANY
- ▶ McDONALD'S—PACIFIC SIERRA REGION
- ▶ PETE'S ACE HARDWARE
- ▶ TESLA MOTORS, INC.
- ▶ TRUITT & WHITE
- ▶ UC BERKELEY, CAL DINING
- ▶ VF OUTDOOR, INC.
- ▶ WESTERN GARDEN NURSERY



Waste Reduction Excellence in Office Operations At their new campus in Alameda, apparel company VF Outdoor, Inc. composts or recycles 86% of its waste and meets 100% of its electricity needs with solar panels and wind turbines. The campus has earned the Bay-Friendly Rated Landscape designation.



Waste Reduction Excellence in Multi-Family Property Management The John Stewart Company manages multi-family buildings in seven Alameda County cities, and has instituted onsite recycling programs in all of them. Several of their sites have implemented other green practices as well. Compared to conventionally managed sites, these green sites have reduced costs for electricity by 61%, water by 26%, gas by 21%, sewer services by 71% and garbage by 31%.



Learn more about all 12 waste reduction leaders: www.StopWaste.org/winners

(CONTINUED FROM COVER)

In 2012, after consulting with their constituents, all 14 cities in Alameda County and the county itself embraced the proposed ordinance. The California Grocers Association and other business groups also came on board. This collaborative approach is just what we're missing at the state and federal level. Real progress is only possible when citizens, businesses and public agencies focus on solving real problems rather than getting tied up in ideological disputes.

Today, StopWaste and our Member Agencies have embarked on a new collaboration—the creation of an Energy Council. The Energy Council will seek funding on behalf of participating Member Agencies to develop and implement programs and policies that reduce energy demand, increase energy efficiency, advance the use of clean, efficient and renewable resources, and address the climate change readiness of our communities.

The need for an Energy Council is clear—remarkable opportunities exist to obtain large grants and contracts to fund local government energy policy development and program implementation. But funders such as the California Public Utilities Commission want regional, special-purpose governance structures in place to manage these funds.

To date, the County of Alameda and the cities of Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Fremont, Hayward, Newark, Oakland, Piedmont, San Leandro and Union City have joined the Energy Council. We look forward to collaborating with them, and with future signatories, to help make our communities even better places to live and work.

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GARBAGE NIGHT IS NOW GAME NIGHT!



How many items can you sort correctly before the clock runs out? Play the Speed Sorter Game at www.ReadySetRecycleContest.org.

ABOUT STOPWASTE

StopWaste is a public agency responsible for reducing the waste stream in Alameda County. We help cities, business, schools and residents reduce waste through source reduction and recycling, market development, technical assistance and public education. We are governed jointly by two Boards, the Alameda County Waste Management Authority and the Alameda County Source Reduction and Recycling Board. Board meetings are open to the public. For upcoming meeting dates and agendas, please check our website.

NOTICE SOMETHING MISSING? WE'VE DROPPED THE ".ORG"!

Saying the names of our two Boards can be a mouthful. So 11 years ago we adopted a more accessible name—StopWaste.Org. Now, to make things even easier, we're simply StopWaste.

You can still find us online at www.StopWaste.org.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.

Let us know how we're doing, and how we can help you. Phone: (510) 891-6500
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