

Promoting A More Sustainable California

Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery

CalRecycle is the state's leading authority on recycling, waste reduction, and product reuse, and is leading the way as California pursues its statewide goal of 75 percent recycling by 2020. CalRecycle plays an important role in the stewardship of California's vast resources and promotes innovation in technology to encourage economic and environmental sustainability.

Organic Waste

More than half of California's waste stream consists of organic matter such as food scraps, lumber, paper, landscape trimmings, and other materials. A large percentage of organic waste can be recycled, composted or sent to an anaerobic digestion facility where food scraps can become soil amendments, or a clean source of biofuels for motor vehicles and bioenergy to power facilities.

- Diversion of organic waste from landfills means fewer harmful greenhouse gas emissions. It also produces positive environmental impacts such as revitalizing California's farmland, reducing water needed for irrigation, and creating clean, alternative fuels to cut our dependency on fossil fuels for transportation.
- Compostable organics decompose in landfills and generate methane, which as a greenhouse gas is 23 times more potent than carbon dioxide (CO₂).

Achieving our environmental and conservation goals – notably 75 percent statewide recycling by 2020 – will demand solutions to dealing with the largest component of our waste stream: Organics.

- Utilizing compost and mulch reduces landscaping costs and water use. Compost also creates healthier soils and more vibrant plants.
- "Grasscycling" is the natural recycling of grass by leaving clippings on the lawn when mowing. Grass clippings decompose quickly, return valuable nutrients back to the soil, and conserve water. Grasscycling also reduces fertilizer requirements, thus cutting chemical runoff entering storm drains and polluting creeks, rivers, and lakes.

Beverage Container Recycling

California Redemption Value (CRV) provides consumers and organizations a financial incentive to recycle their empty beverage containers. Recycling bottles and cans saves energy, conserves natural resources, and provides valuable raw materials for new products.

Most beverages sold in glass, plastic and aluminum containers are part of the CRV program. Milk, wine, and distilled spirits are notable exceptions.

- CRV is 5 cents on containers less than 24 ounces, 10 cents on containers 24 ounces or larger.
- Recycling a single aluminum can saves enough energy to run a television for nearly three hours. Aluminum and glass can be recycled over and over again.
- Businesses, schools, gyms, and other away-from-home locations can order a free Recycling Starter Kit, which includes a sleek black bin.
- There are approximately 2,000 recycling centers statewide. To order your Recycling Starter Kit or find a local recycling center, visit calrecycle.ca.gov or call 1-800-RECYCLE.

Used Oil Management

The old standard for motor oil changes was every 3,000 miles. Today, motorists should check their owner's manuals for specific oil change recommendations based on make, model and driving conditions. When properly recycled, used motor oil can be cleaned and used again to help conserve natural resources and protect the environment.

- Many of today's automakers recommend oil changes at 5,000, 7,000 or even 10,000 miles. If an automaker suggests changing oil less often than every 3,000 miles, this should not have an adverse effect on engine wear. See what your vehicle requires at checkyournumber.org.
- In 2010, 120 million gallons of lubricating oil were sold in California. Approximately 20 percent, or 24 million gallons, leaked out of engines or was burned. Of the remaining amount, 83 million gallons were recycled, preventing it from being improperly disposed of in storm drains, into lakes or streams, or thrown in the garbage.
- Used motor oil poses the greatest environmental risk of all auto fluids if not disposed of properly. Used motor oil contains heavy metals and toxic chemicals. When dumped accidentally or illegally,

just one gallon of motor oil can pollute 1 million gallons of water, a year's supply for 50 people.

- Never dispose of used motor oil on the ground; in a ditch, creek, river, or lake; in a storm drain; or in the garbage. Instead, take it to a local used oil recycling center. Find centers near you at calrecycle.ca.gov.

Electronic Waste

Electronic waste or “e-waste” makes up one of the most challenging segments of California’s waste stream. CalRecycle oversees efforts to make sure many e-waste products are properly recycled at the end of their useful life.

- It is illegal to throw certain e-waste items into

the trash because of the hazardous materials they contain. Many of these products can be reused—it’s a good idea to donate them if they are in working condition. Others can be refurbished. Some e-waste products include: televisions, laptop computers, computer monitors, portable DVD players, and plasma or LCD televisions.

- Since California started its e-waste recycling program, more than 1.5 billion pounds of electronic waste have been diverted from landfills.
- To help ensure these electronic products are recycled, a recycling fee of \$3 to \$5 – depending on the size of the screen – is paid by consumers at the point of purchase.
- Electronic devices that cannot be reused or repaired should be recycled at any eRecycle location throughout the state. To find a local e-waste recycling center visit calrecycle.ca.gov or call 1-800-RECYCLE.

Tire Sustainability & Management

Californians generate about 40 million waste tires each year. While more than 80 percent are typically collected for recycling and other uses, millions of tires still end up in landfills or are illegally dumped each year.

- Proper tire care improves fuel efficiency, saves money, protects the environment and makes driving safer. Check tire pressure once a month, when tires are cool to the touch. The proper inflation level can maximize the life of your tires.
- Scrap tires can be ground and mixed with asphalt to pave roads, or shredded for use in landslide repair and embankments. Every such

project keeps thousands of tires out of landfills, results in significant cost and energy savings, and is environmentally preferable to engineering projects that use traditional materials.

- CalRecycle's tire recycling grant and technical assistance programs encourage innovative uses and new markets for recycled waste tires. CalRecycle's hauler and storage facility regulations keep the public safe from the dangers of tire stockpiling.
- For more information about tire sustainability and management, including resources for tire haulers, public officials, and engineers, visit us online.

Cleanup of Illegal Disposal Sites

To protect California's land and public health and safety, CalRecycle manages the investigation, cleanup, and enforcement of illegal solid waste disposal sites in California and works with local, state, and federal agencies to prevent illegal dumping.

- Cleanup and remediation efforts are undertaken through the Solid Waste Disposal Site Cleanup Program and the Farm and Ranch Solid Waste Cleanup and Abatement Grant Program. They support CalRecycle's mission to reduce the negative impacts of solid waste on public health and safety and the environment.
- About \$5 million is available annually for activities to help clean up waste sites and prevent illegal dumping throughout California. In the state's largest cities and its most remote regions, CalRecycle grants and assistance are keeping California beautiful.
- Among its many cleanup projects, CalRecycle worked closely with California State Parks to remove and separate tons of debris, tires, and trash along the Tijuana River Valley and Goat Canyon Estuary in Border Field State Park, 15 miles south of San Diego along the California-Mexico border. It is an important wildlife habitat housed within the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve.
- The department also provides emergency response assistance and debris removal following natural disasters such as earthquakes and fires. CalRecycle assisted officials in removing debris from neighborhoods following the 2010 San Bruno pipeline explosion and the 2007 Angora wildfire near South Lake Tahoe.

California's 75 Percent Recycling Initiative

Organic materials. Beverage containers. Oil, electronics and tires. Elevating our efforts to divert these materials away from landfills and

toward beneficial reuse is essential to achieving California's ambitious recycling goals.

The Legislature and Governor Brown, through enactment of legislation in 2012, established a new recycling goal for the state: 75 percent by the year 2020. The objective is to increase waste prevention, and recycle and compost more of the waste we generate.

Working together, we can protect our environment, conserve more resources, and strengthen our economy with more job creation. We can turn our waste stream into a supply stream.

State of California

California Environmental Protection Agency

Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery

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