



# “One Person’s Trash...”

Your guide to reducing, reusing and recycling

Costa Mesa Sanitary District



(949) 645-8400  
www.cmsdca.gov

Fall 2014  
Quarterly Newsletter

## Organics Recycling

The Costa Mesa Sanitary District (CMSD) has approved a new Organics Recycling Program that will use Anaerobic Digestion technology to convert food scraps and yard waste into renewable natural gas and fertilizer. The new program, which is expected to launch in mid-January of 2015, will require residents to separate their food scraps and yard waste into a separate organics container. This will help keep the District’s organic waste out of the landfill and will produce a renewable, zero waste carbon bio-fuel. The new program will also help the District achieve 75% diversion from landfills.

CMSD residents will receive one additional, 64-gallon organics cart for free. Small kitchen pails to collect food scraps will also be available for free on a first-come, first-served basis. An additional organics cart can be requested with no additional fee. Current trash collection days will remain the same. The materials from the organics carts will be transported to an Anaerobic Digestion Facility in Perris, CA. The facility will convert all of the organics (yard and food waste) into fertilizer and renewable natural gas to fuel CR&R’s collection fleet.

For more information, please visit the District’s website at [www.cmsdca.gov](http://www.cmsdca.gov).



## What is Anaerobic Digestion?

Anaerobic digestion is a series of biological processes in which microorganisms break down biodegradable material in the absence of oxygen. The process takes place within an enclosure, known as a digester. One of the end products is biogas, which can be processed into renewable natural gas and transportation fuels. Separated digested solids can be composted, utilized for dairy bedding, directly applied to cropland, or converted into other products.

Source: American Biogas Council

## What to flush

Protect our sewers by knowing what should go down the drain! The toilet is only meant to flush the three P’s—pee, poop, and paper. Human waste and toilet paper should be the only things going into the toilet bowl.

Unfortunately, some people use the toilet as a trash can. From medications and sanitary products to deceased pet fish and cigarette butts, people flush anything that fits, even when the items do not belong.

Flushing these types of items down the toilet causes several issues that are not easily fixed or are wasteful:

- You can clog the pipes in your home, creating messy overflows and requiring a plumber’s assistance.
- As much as 5 gallons of

water are wasted every time you flush non-toilet friendly items.

- Items other than human waste and toilet paper create problems in the Costa Mesa Sanitary District sewer system. For instance, baby wipes and adult moist wipes wrap themselves around pumps, leading to equipment damage and costly repairs which can affect our ratepayers.
- You put our ocean at risk. Water from our sanitary sewers is treated before

being recycled back into our rivers, groundwater basins, and the ocean. The fewer chemicals from medicines and cleaners you flush, the better our water systems are.

Keep our communities and oceans clean by flushing only the three P’s! For more information, please visit [www.what2flush.com](http://www.what2flush.com).



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## Keep Trash Containers Out of Public View

Empty trash containers can create problems. When they are left at the curb, they can block traffic, creating hazards for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. When empty containers are left out, thieves may assume that no one is home. To minimize these risks and create a tidy community, trash containers need to be stowed away out of public view when not in use.

The Costa Mesa Sanitary District ordinance reads as follows:

### Section 7.01.080. Removal of Trash Containers.

(a) Residential trash containers placed in the street shall be removed from the curb by midnight the day of trash collection and shall be stored in the rear or side yard of the property so as to be out of view from the street. Trash containers placed in the alley for collection shall be removed from the alley by midnight the day of trash collection and shall

be stored so as to be out of the public alley, completely on private property, and out of view from the public street.

(b) A hardship exception or variance may be obtained by any person whose property is uniquely situated to not allow container removal from the public alley or who has a personal hardship not allowing such storage. A hardship waiver form must be completed explaining the reason(s) for a hardship. Such a hardship exception or variance shall be approved in a letter or other memorialization from the General Manager or designee. Such memorialization shall list the reasons and may be limited in time. (Ord. 27, 1997) (Ord. 93, 2012)

If you have questions or require assistance finding an appropriate location to store your trash containers out of public view, please contact the CMSD at (949) 645-8400.

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## NEW LOOK

### same great newsletter

This newsletter comes to you quarterly from the Costa Mesa Sanitary District, an independent special district which provides curbside trash collection and sewer services to residents in the city of Costa Mesa, portions of Newport Beach, and unincorporated sections of Orange County.

With this edition, we are changing the look of the masthead. While the look of the newsletter is a bit different, you’ll find the same great information. There will be reminders on curbside programs, tips for reducing, reusing, and recycling, information about proper disposal of a variety of wastes, announcements about upcoming events, an employee spotlight, and more. We will continue to provide the information you need when you need it!



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# Recycling means jobs

As recycling has increased over the past decades, it's not uncommon to see recycling bins at home, work, and school, as well as in parks, public buildings, and entertainment venues. But what does all of that recycling mean? Certainly, it means that we're keeping a good proportion of our trash out of landfills. It also means that we are ensuring that resources are reused in manufacturing. But did you know it also means we have created a lot of new jobs?

As early as 2001, a study by R. W. Beck, completed for the National Recycling Coalition, began to document the economic benefits of recycling. That study, called the United States Recycling Economic Information (REI) Study, showed that 1,121,804 jobs came from the recycling and reuse industry and any manufacturing using recycled materials. Of those, 581,717 jobs were at companies completely dependent on recycling or reuse. REI also showed that recycling manufacturing far exceeds other areas in the recycling industry in employment, offering over 750,000 jobs in 2001. Collection, processing, and reuse make up barely half of that number.

When compared to employment in waste management (such as landfill operations), recycling and reuse exceed the number of people employed, as well as the average salary. REI attributed this difference to recycling and reuse's inherent "value-adding," or giving materials processed through recycling another purpose.

In the years since that study was completed, state studies have continued to support the findings of REI. In 2013, the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) analyzed 16 different studies on jobs created by recycling in California. If the state reaches its goal of a



75% recycling rate by 2020, at least 100,000 jobs would be created and current manufacturing facilities would need to expand.

Over 25,000 of those jobs would come from paper, plastics, and lumber recycling. Organic material disposal would lead to almost 14,000 jobs.

While collection and delivery to landfills creates only about 1.35 jobs per 1,000 tons of waste, recycling creates 5.3 jobs for every 1,000 tons.

Learn more about jobs in recycling at the U.S. Bureau of Labor: [www.bls.gov/green/recycling](http://www.bls.gov/green/recycling).

# State of Composting in the U.S.

With the increase in recycling across the country has come attention to the opportunity for composting. The Institute for Local Self-Reliance, along with *BioCycle* magazine, Coker Composting and Consulting, and the University of Washington, recently released a report that outlines the status of composting in the United States. The report, *State of Composting in the U.S.: What, Why, Where & How*, explores the environmental and economic benefits of composting, as well as offering recommendations for growing the compost industry.

The United States has 99 million acres of land where soil is eroding faster than it is being restored by natural processes. Not only does erosion lead to topsoil loss, but it also leaves behind soil that lacks the ability to store water and provide adequate nutrients to plants. Compost can rebuild depleted soils, replenishing nutrients and restoring the ability of the soil to hold water. Composting also provides 1,400 new jobs for every one million tons of organic material composted, compared to the only 120-220 jobs from disposal of the same organic material at landfills or incinerators.

Besides the need for composting, the report also looked at what materials are currently being accepted at composting facilities. Today, just over 70% of facilities accept yard trimmings only, while the remaining

facilities accept yard trimmings and a variety of other materials, such as food scraps, agricultural waste, animal manure, and biosolids from wastewater treatment. Food scrap composting presents an area for growth because nationwide only 4.8% of food scraps are being recovered.

Of the facilities in operation now, 72% compost less than 5,000 tons of organic waste per year. The report states that in order to increase composting, the number and size of facilities would need to expand.

A lack of funding remains a major roadblock to creating an infrastructure for increased composting. In addition, regulations sometimes delay the development of facilities, especially those that wish to accept a broader range of organic materials. Regulatory change is coming, but slowly. Almost 20 states have recently revised their regulations or are in the process of doing so.

In 2012, a total of 19,431,687 tons of organics were composted. While that number seems high, the report points out that to provide those 99 million eroding acres with just a half an inch of compost a year, we would need 3 billion tons of compost. Because this number is so much higher, the report claims that "no organic scrap should be wasted."

To read the full report, visit [www.ilsr.org/initiatives/composting](http://www.ilsr.org/initiatives/composting).



# The future of reuse is already here



In today's world, we get a lot of reminders about what and when to recycle. Reusing, on the other hand, can feel a little more complicated. Yet there is a simple place where you can reuse and reduce, and you're probably already using it—the library.

Libraries have become prime examples of reuse centers. They have long since increased their lending stock to include DVDs, CDs, magazines, e-books, online

resources, and even free Internet access, along with the traditional print books. To benefit from a library's well-stocked shelves, all you have to do is get a free card. That card gives its owner access to all the information and entertainment she or he could want.

Communities have come to rely on their libraries, even in an age of e-readers. In fact, the Pew Research Center found that 69% of Americans read a printed book in 2013,

compared to 28% who read an e-book. The study also found that 90% of Americans predicted there would be some impact on their communities if their local library were closed.

While libraries have become more like community centers, 80% of Americans still find their no-cost access to books and media the most important service libraries offer. This no-cost access is also what gives people the chance to reduce their consumption by reusing instead of purchasing.

Even with the increase in technology, libraries remain important reuse centers. By including e-book rentals in their offerings, libraries attract the 50% of Americans who own an iPad or e-reader but who might not have looked at a library for their music or movie needs.

Younger generations are also turning toward e-readers instead of print books. Of the 8 to 16 year-olds surveyed, 52% prefer reading on a screen. Attracting these youth with e-books encourages them not only to read, but also to experience reusing

something and sharing a resource with someone else—perhaps more than you thought a simple e-book could accomplish.

Technology has also brought online "reuse" tools. Netflix offers subscribers thousands of movies and television shows. Oyster is a similar service for readers, offering more than 500,000 books to electronic devices for a fee. Yet these services do not seem to be competing with libraries. In the past five years, 26% of Americans have increased their use of libraries, compared to the 22% who decreased.

According to a study by the Waste and Resources Action Programme in the United Kingdom, people are slowly becoming more inclined to reuse, especially when the items come from a reliable source. Libraries offer an easy way to begin the reuse cycle with a free alternative to purchasing an item.

The next time you're looking for a good read, or want to watch an entire season of *The Office* in one sitting, think of your library first! You'll be saving a little green in more than one way.

# VETERAN COMPOST

On November 11, many Americans will remember the men and women who fought for our country and will celebrate their bravery. Yet veterans who have served since 2001 have an unemployment rate of 9%, compared to the national rate of about 6%. When Justen Garrity became a part of this statistic in 2009, he decided to do something about it.

After a tour as a Combat Engineer Officer in the U.S. Army, Garrity transferred to the National Guard to be with his family. Once he was home, he struggled to find employment, so he researched possible green business opportunities.

That research gave birth to Veteran Compost in July 2010. The company strives to provide employment to veterans and their families, as well as turn food scraps into high-quality compost.

Food scraps are collected from commercial customers in the Baltimore and Annapolis, MD metro areas and residential customers in the metro Washington, D.C. area. The composting itself happens on a farm in Aberdeen, MD, where the scraps are dumped on a pile of mulch before mixing.

After about eight weeks, the compost is ready to be bagged and sold. Compost, gardening mix, vermicompost, compost tea bags, compost worms, worm bins, rain barrels, and burlap coffee bags are all for sale on the company's website.

Garrity predicts that last year's business will triple by the end of September. He finds that customers want their food scraps collected both to be greener and to save money.

"Food waste is expensive," he said. "For a lot of our customers, not only do they feel good about the composting aspect, but [separating food scraps] gives them a chance to take a look at why there is food waste in the first place."

Veteran Compost boasts its "chemical-free compost" and uses 100% wind energy to power its facilities. The company also has the only commercial worm composting operation in Maryland. Garrity sees composting gaining popularity across the country, catching up with recycling of paper products and containers.

"I think composting is the next thing," he said. "It's been a positive experience getting to be a part of this pioneering movement."

Garrity's place in the compost movement not only diverts food waste from landfills. His compost operation also gives veterans jobs, supports community gardens and farms, and helps to create healthier food.

"I really enjoy being a part of the rebirth of the food system," he said. "A lot of our products go to people's gardens and farms to grow new food. So we're part of the people-to-farm movement, a less popularized part of the food system. It's a part we're happy to play."

Photos courtesy of Justen Garrity, Veteran Compost



## First down for recycling



[WWW.GAMEDAYCHALLENGE.ORG](http://WWW.GAMEDAYCHALLENGE.ORG)

While you root for your favorite college football team this fall, you might also think about rooting for that college to win the 2014 GameDay Recycling Challenge. The GameDay Recycling Challenge is a competition among colleges and universities across the country to collect and divert the most recyclables, food scraps, and other waste during a football game.

In 2013, the 88 colleges and universities that participated in the GameDay Recycling Challenge kept 1.5 million pounds of materials out of landfills and prevented greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to removing 413 cars from the road for a year. Schools and students are stepping up their game this year with more publicity and volunteers.

Any college or university in the United States with a football program is welcome to participate. Schools register online and then measure the amount of waste produced and collected during at least one home game. Once the materials are collected and measured, the school reports the results from their top producing game by December 8.

The GameDay Recycling Challenge is one of many efforts to increase recycling in sports venues. Almost all items disposed of at sports venues come from the venue itself, including food, cups, bottles, trays, and more, giving these stadiums an excellent chance to reduce the amount sent to landfills.

With an increased presence of recycling and compost bins comes the necessity to educate fans. Programs such as the GameDay Recycling Challenge offer an opportunity to explain to fans how they can recycle and compost. Signage and messaging on products sold at the stadium explain what items can be recycled and where. Eventually, fans can come to expect recycling options at any sports game they attend.

If you want to know more about participating in the 2014 GameDay Recycling Challenge, visit [www.gamedaychallenge.org](http://www.gamedaychallenge.org). The winners will be announced in mid-December.

To learn about greening efforts in professional sports leagues, visit [www.nrdc.org/greenbusiness/guides/sports](http://www.nrdc.org/greenbusiness/guides/sports).

# Painting the town green

With the start of California's paint stewardship program on October 19, 2012, citizens are now able to recycle their paint more easily and more frequently than before. This ease is thanks to PaintCare, a not-for-profit organization run by the American Coatings Association (ACA) to help seven states collect leftover and unwanted paint.

The first-ever U.S. paint stewardship law was passed in Oregon in July of 2009. The law prompted the need for an organization like PaintCare to collect the used paint. Collection services apply to both oil-based and latex paint used for the interior and exterior of buildings and sold in 5-gallon cans or smaller (called "architectural paint").

Since the program began in California in 2012, PaintCare has established 650 drop-off sites in the state. More than 632,000 gallons of paint have been collected, with 96% of that paint recycled into new paint.

The paint recycling process begins with the purchase of a new container of paint. Each container has a "paint stewardship assessment," or a small fee, placed on all architectural paint sold in California. That assessment is used to pay for the costs of recycling and the administration of PaintCare.

Once paint is used or no longer needed, residents and businesses can drop it off at a designated site. The majority of drop-off sites are found at paint retailers, with others at Household Hazardous Waste collection events. Once collected, the paint is packed into larger containers and sent to facilities to be sorted.

Oil-based paint is burned to recover energy. Latex paint is reprocessed into new paint, made into other products, sent to reuse programs or stores, or used for biodegrada-



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tion projects. Only 1-4% of all collected paint is sent to landfills.

PaintCare makes it easy for you to dispose of your old paint. Go online to [www.paintcare.org/drop-off-locations](http://www.paintcare.org/drop-off-locations) and put your ZIP code or street address into the search bar to find a drop-off location near you.

PaintCare sites currently accept house paint and primers, stains, sealers, and clear coatings such as varnish in 5-gallon cans or smaller. The program cannot take aerosols, solvents, and products made for industrial use. For a comprehensive list of acceptable and unacceptable products, visit [www.paintcare.org/products-we-accept](http://www.paintcare.org/products-we-accept).

Thanks to PaintCare, California now offers a sustainable way to collect the state's leftover paint and turn it into something useful. For more information, visit [www.paintcare.org](http://www.paintcare.org).

## what's up?

The CMSD offers monthly composting workshops. At these sessions, you'll learn how to select a compost bin, what materials you can compost, and how to prepare them. You'll also learn how to use finished compost in your garden. For the next workshop date, call CMSD at (949) 645-8400 or visit the website, [www.cmsdca.gov](http://www.cmsdca.gov).

With specific composting questions, email Dr. Francene Kaplan at [priestesso.frot@yahoo.com](mailto:priestesso.frot@yahoo.com).



CMSD collects Christmas trees for the three weeks following Christmas and recycles them into mulch. Residents should place their tree on the ground next to their collection containers for pickup with regular trash. Please remove all tinsel, ornaments, and the stand. All trees taller than 6 feet must be cut in half to be eligible for this special collection. The mulch is used both locally and in other parts of California and helps nutrients remain in the soil.



CMSD customers can request convenient curbside collection of large or bulky items at their home. Residents are eligible for three complimentary pickups per year. There is a limit of 10 items per call. However, collections can be combined for a total of 30 items per calendar year. To schedule this service, please call CR&R Customer Service at (949) 646-4617, Monday through Friday, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Residents must provide a detailed list of items to be collected. Drivers will not collect any items not listed when the appointment is scheduled.

Residents who use dumpsters at their property are not eligible for this program.



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## Employee Spotlight



*This quarter we spotlight Steve Cano, Sewer Maintenance Supervisor. Steve has been a District employee since November 2010. He is responsible for the scheduling of routine maintenance for sewer cleaning and pump stations. He is also responsible for maintaining hotspots. He serves as the liaison for residents and plumbers for the Sewer Lateral Assistance Program (SLAP). As a member of the California Water Environment Association (CWEA), Steve has received his Grade I Environmental Compliance and Grade IV Certification for Collection System Maintenance. The Grade IV is the highest certification level for maintenance. Acquiring the Grade IV Certification demonstrates acceptable competency when performing the tasks that are necessary for management level Collection System Maintenance. Some of Steve's more notable work includes designing and developing the Sewer Slayer comic book. In 2012, he was selected as the Employee of the Year. The District would like to recognize Steve in the Employee Spotlight for this quarter and thank him for a job well done. Congratulations on all of your accomplishments, and keep up the great work, Steve!*

## Frequently Used Numbers

- Report sewer overflows.....(949) 645-8400
- Report sewer overflows after hours:
  - Police non-emergency .....(714) 641-1545 or (714) 754-5252
- Sewer odor complaints.....(949) 645-8400
- Sewer Lateral Assistance Program.....(949) 645-8400
- Sewer permits/plan check .....(949) 645-8400, ext. 229
- Schedule large item pickup.....(949) 646-4617
- Request lockable trash cans .....(949) 646-4617
- Request dumpster rental.....(949) 646-4617
- Request replacement cart .....(949) 646-4617
- Report scavenging.....(949) 645-8400 or (714) 754-5252
- Report abandoned furniture/mattresses on city property .....(714) 754-5123
- Composting bins .....(949) 645-8400
- Request landfill/recycling tours .....(949) 645-8400, ext. 222
- Door-to-door household hazardous waste pickup
  - for senior or disabled residents.....(949) 646-4617
- Household hazardous waste drop-off facilities.....(714) 834-6752
- OCC Recycling Center .....(714) 432-5131

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