



# Diversions

SPRING 2002

Your Authority on Waste Diversion, Recycling and Source Reduction in Central Contra Costa County

## New collection rates effective March 1.

Visit [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org) or call 906-1801 for complete rate information.

## Throwing away your grocery money? What a waste!



### Save Money... and the Environment, Too.

Did you know that 10 cents of every dollar spent on packaged items goes toward packaging? Or that buying individual or small serving sizes costs a lot more than buying large or bulk sizes? These two facts are the foundation of the Bay Area Recycling Outreach Coalition's annual "Save Money and the Environment Too" campaign. Look for the "shop smart" message in newspaper ads and radio spots.

Also, since 30% of your trash is packaging, you may be able to switch to a smaller garbage cart by reducing this waste. Change your ways and you may save some change!

## Report Shows Economic Benefits of Recycling

Proponents of waste reduction have long applauded the environmental benefits of reuse and recycling. But a new United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-commissioned study shows that recycling is also good for our economy.

The U.S. Recycling Economic Information (REI) Study, conducted through an agreement with the National Recycling Coalition (NRC), confirms that the recycling industry not only reduces waste, pollution and energy use, but creates jobs and revenue on a scale comparable to auto and truck manufacturing.

The industry comprises businesses that collect and sort recyclables; businesses that remanufacture metals, glass, and plastic; recycled paper mills; and newer business types such as compost facilities, computer demanufacturers, and refurbishers.



"Locally, we have recycling promoters, such as government agencies and for-profit and non-profit organizations, all contributing to the local economy," said CCCSWA Executive Director Janet Schneider. "We're also seeing new businesses such as computer demanufacturers, construction and demolition recyclers and recycled plastic manufacturers."

Nationally these industries account for 1.1 million jobs in over 56,000 facilities, \$37 billion in payroll and \$236 billion in gross sales annually. The REI Study shows that our recycling efforts make a direct positive contribution to the economy. It also reminds us that environmentally sound choices can also be economically sound.

To view the full report, visit the NRC website at [www.nrc-recycle.org](http://www.nrc-recycle.org), or call 703-683-9025.

## Reduce Matters

WASTE-LESS WAYS TO SPEND YOUR DOLLARS

## Boost the Economy Without Boosting Waste

For the past few months, stories of downsizing and declining consumer consumption have filled the news, translating into our country's first recession in 10 years. Reports like these can make spending money feel like a patriotic act!

Although buying lots of stuff may seem good for the economy, it can have a negative effect on our waste reduction efforts. However, reducing waste and helping the economy don't have to be mutually exclusive. You can have fun and support local businesses by spending your money on waste-less activities and services. Here are some ideas:

- **Take a weekend trip.** Find a cozy B&B in Tahoe, Napa, Big Sur – even Walnut Creek – or spend a weekend in downtown San Francisco.
- **Treat yourself right.** There are many spas and beauty salons in Central Contra Costa. Indulge in a massage or facial, or try a new hairdo.
- **Learn a new skill or hobby.** If you've always wanted to try Tai-Chi, tennis, cooking, tap dance, yoga or ceramics, there's no time like the present!
- **Enjoy an evening out.** Central Contra Costa is home to some of the best restaurants in the Bay Area. Follow your dinner with a movie.
- **Support the arts.** The Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts is a wonderful place to see a concert, play or ballet.

If you can't avoid the urge to buy something, try to buy the highest quality, most durable product you can afford. Longer product life means less waste. Or consider "renew" rather than "new":

- Reupholster or use decorative slip covers for furniture to update your home without creating any waste.
- Paint an old dresser (with a coat of non-VOC paint) to give a lift to your bedroom and the economy.
- Repair your car, electronics and appliances, which not only prolongs their useful lives, but provides jobs within the community.

Finally, when you are ready to buy, choose products containing high recycled content and minimal packaging.

## Now Available: On-Call Collection for TVs & Computers

Televisions and monitors contain cathode ray tubes (CRTs) and can no longer be thrown in your trash. Consequently, Pleasant Hill Bayshore Disposal (PBHD) and the CCCSWA are pleased to announce that collection of unwanted computer monitors and televisions is now available for a fee.

Acceptable materials include TVs, monitors and other computer equipment.

There is a \$25 fee for each monitor, TV, or other device containing a CRT. PBHD also will take three other non-CRT computer-related devices such as printers (non-laser), CPUs and keyboards for an additional \$5.00. CRTs contain a significant amount of lead, and when discarded and disposed in landfills, can cause harm to people, animals, waterways and soil. The fee covers the disassembly and safe disposal of this hazardous material and the disassembly and recycling of parts. For more information or to schedule your pickup, call PBHD at 603-1144.

For working computers and monitors, see our website at [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org) for donation ideas.

## Celebrate Earth Day



This year, celebrate Earth Day by doing something good for the Earth. Leave your car at home and take a walk, donate unused furniture to local nonprofits (see insert for details), plant a tree or learn about clean air alternatives like hybrid vehicles or electric mowers (see back side for mower rebate offer). You can also attend the following events:

- **West County Earth Day Celebration.** April 20th, 11 am to 3 pm. 101 Pittsburg Ave., Richmond. See [recyclemore.com](http://recyclemore.com) or call 510-215-3021 for more information.
- **HHW & Electronics Collection Event.** April 20th, Danville. Call 1-800-207-8222 for an appointment. Get rid of unwanted electronics and safely dispose of your household hazardous waste.

# Surplus Medical Supplies Save Lives

When hospitals reorganize or find themselves with limited warehouse space, they must dispose of unneeded supplies. With the help of a Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority (CCCSWA) mini-grant, Volunteers for Inter-American Development (VIDA) now puts those supplies to good use.

Using the grant, VIDA staff contacted Contra Costa County medical organizations for donations of surplus hospital beds, syringes, respiratory aids and I.V. fluids, to name a few.

"In 2001 we collected approximately 21 tons of surplus supplies from Contra Costa County and sent them to Latin American medical institutions that serve people in need. The donations help save



VIDA volunteers Sister Miriam Irene and Kathryn Cadle help Director of Operations Jorge Valle send surplus medical supplies to Latin American medical institutions that serve people in need.

lives, and prevent the supplies from being wasted in a landfill," said Jorge Valle, director of operations for VIDA.

The outreach effort increased donations nearly ten percent and established new, mutually beneficial relationships. The Contra Costa Regional Medical Center, San Ramon Regional Medical Center, Walnut Creek Surgical Center, and Kaiser Walnut Creek now donate regularly.

VIDA also accepts donations from individuals, such as wheelchairs, medical supplies, food for

babies and the elderly, prosthetic limbs, and sutures. To arrange a donation, call VIDA at 510-655-8432. For more on VIDA, see [www.vidausa.org](http://www.vidausa.org).

## Support Recycled Paper with Your Buying Power

According to [www.conservatree.com](http://www.conservatree.com), every ton (400 reams) of 100% recycled paper produced saves 24 trees. As a consumer, you have the power to increase demand for recycled paper products and save more trees.



Kinko's in Walnut Creek uses recycled paper in all their copiers and offers a variety of recycled-content options. Staff member Rick Trenholm loads 100% post-consumer recycled paper into a copy machine.

You can visit the store or website of any of the retailers listed below and choose from multipurpose office paper, sticky notes, envelopes, file folders, hanging files, business card stock, and even resume bond, all with significant amounts of recycled content. If your retailer doesn't stock a product you need with recycled content, talk to the manager and make a request. The increase in demand will encourage paper mills to make more paper using recycled content. As Andrew Dungey, manager of Contra Costa Stationers says, "If more people asked for recycled products we would stock more."

Allen's, 19 Orinda Way, Orinda. 254-3643. Copy paper, printer paper, envelopes, letterhead, and business cards.

Contra Costa Stationers, 3643 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite D, Lafayette. 283-6720. Office paper, notebooks, unbleached hanging folders, sticky notes, and sketchbooks.

Kinko's, 1909 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Walnut Creek. 934-8254. 100% post-consumer recycled bond paper, pads, and a variety of copy papers.

Office Max, 2520 North Main, Walnut Creek. 934-8867. [www.officemax.com](http://www.officemax.com). Office, printer and business card paper, pads, and envelopes.

Staples, 2120 Contra Costa Blvd., Pleasant Hill. 691-4060. [www.staples.com](http://www.staples.com) Using the recycled products button on the Staples website, you can search for File folders, hanging files, binders, office paper, sticky notes, storage boxes and napkins.

## Ask the Authority

Dear Authority,

I've heard that the next California state goal will be "zero waste." Is this possible?

Wondering in Walnut Creek

Dear Wondering,

The California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) recently adopted *zero waste* as a philosophy in its new three-year strategic plan. This challenging goal will require industry, government and the public to work together to reduce, reuse or recycle all municipal solid waste materials back into nature or the marketplace.

While not an official legislative act, the zero waste goal will influence future CIWMB programs, whose mission is to reduce waste, promote the management of all materials to their highest use, and protect public health and the environment. By maximizing recycling and introducing "product stewardship" (sharing the responsibility for a product's environmental impact between manufacturers, retailers, users, and disposers), they believe California can move towards a zero-waste, sustainable society.

Central Contra Costans have reached near 50% waste diversion in the last 10 years. But rather than rest now, we are asked to keep progressing towards an even healthier, waste-free future.



## DON'T FLUSH OR TRASH YOUR MEDS

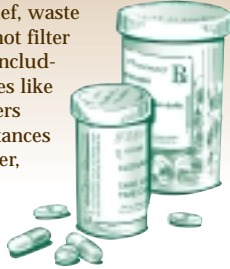
### Prescription Medicines Need Proper Disposal

Contrary to popular belief, waste water treatment plants do not filter out all types of chemicals, including those found in medicines like birth control pills, pain killers and antibiotics. These substances remain in treated wastewater, which is released back into the environment.

Ongoing studies by the EPA, UC Berkeley and other groups found traces of prescription medicines in our nation's waterways, including the Bay. The long-term effect on humans is unknown, but these substances have caused mutations in fish.

Improper disposal of these medicines by flushing them down the sink or toilet, or disposing of them in the trash contributes to this problem.

Please take your unwanted medicines to the Household Hazardous Waste Facility in Martinez for disposal. Free drop-off is available to Central Contra Costa residents Tuesday and Thursday-Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 1-800-646-1431 or visit [www.centrialsan.org](http://www.centrialsan.org) for more information.



## Learn to Grasscycle

Grasscycling is the simple and time-saving act of leaving grass clippings on the lawn after mowing. It's less work for you and benefits your lawn. Call 906-1806 or visit [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org) to request a free informational brochure. A FREE copy of the CCCSWA's new video "Home Composting — It's Second Nature" is also available. The video shows you how to grasscycle, compost and care for your yard — the natural way.

## Electric Grasscycling Mower Sale!

Electric-grasscycling mowers recycle your grass clippings without polluting the air!

A limited number of \$100 rebates will be available when you trade in your old gas mower for an electric mower. Open to Contra Costa Residents only. Rebates given on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Black & Decker**  
cordless mower **\$279**  
after rebate

**\$79**  
after rebate **Black & Decker**  
corded mower



## Sale Dates:

Home Depot in Pittsburg  
7 a.m to Noon • Saturday, April 20, 2002

Home Depot in San Ramon  
7 a.m to Noon • Saturday, April 27, 2002

## Phone Numbers

CCCSWA ..... 906-1801 ..... FAX 906-1805  
email: ..... authority@wastediversion.org  
website: ..... www.wastediversion.org

Pleasant Hill Bayshore  
Disposal (formerly BFI) . . . 603-1144 . . . . . FAX 685-8153  
For questions concerning billing, special cleanups, CRT collection, vacation hold requests, new service or your blue garbage cart.

VWM Customer Service . . 935-8900 . . . . . FAX 935-1617  
For questions regarding VWM's service of your burgundy recycling cart or green yard clippings cart, to request motor oil disposal containers, for recycling cleanups or for information on the Walnut Creek Recycling Center.

Contra Costa Recycling Hotline . . . . . 1-800-750-4096

Home Composting/Grasscycling Hotline . . . . . 906-1806

Household Hazardous Waste . . . . . 1-800-646-1431

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