



# The 4Rs

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle  
and Rot



**CENTRAL CONTRA COSTA**  
**SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY**

[www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org)

# Trash is everyone's problem!

- Our landfills are filling up and there's no room for more
- What does it mean to "throw it away"?
- What are natural resources?
- How can I help?



# What Exactly IS Trash?

- There are lots of different names for trash
  - Garbage
  - Discards
  - Waste
- Things that people no longer need, use, or want



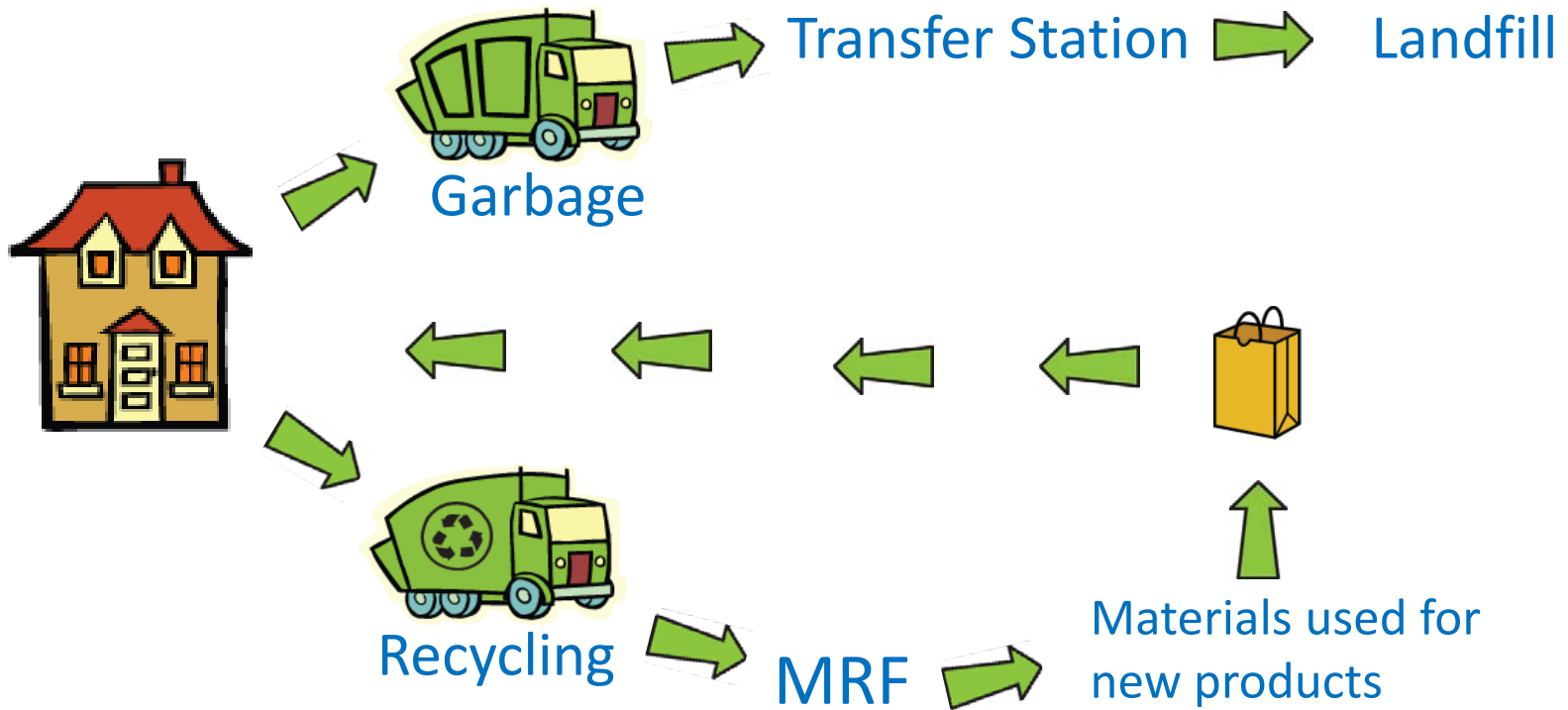
# What Exactly IS Trash?

- Most trash is packaging for other items such as food, household goods, even toys
  - Paper
  - Plastic
  - Metal
- Most trash could be considered unused resources





# Where does it all go?



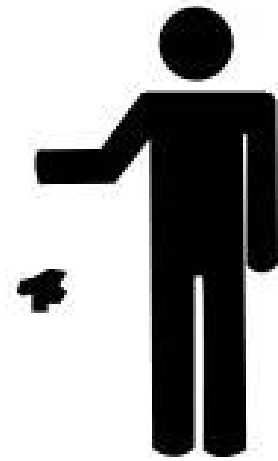
# What is a MRF?

- Materials Recovery Facility
- Where recyclables end up
- Materials are sorted, baled and prepared to be shipped to manufacturers



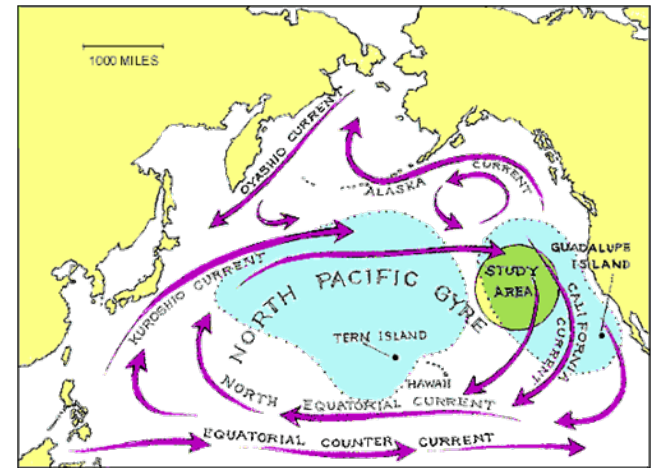
# What about litter?

- Trash that doesn't go to a landfill
- Can be on land or in the ocean
- Litter on land may go down storm drains  
and could eventually wind up in the ocean
- Marine trash from boats
- Where does it go?



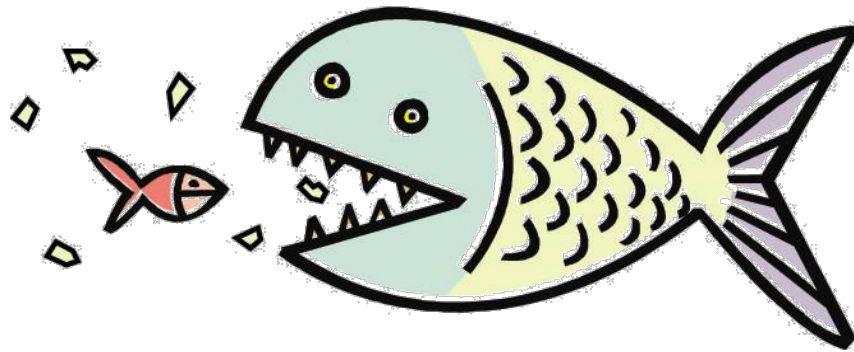
# Great Pacific Garbage Patch

- Why did it form?
  - Trash from boats and land sources in ocean
  - Currents in ocean bring to spot between San Francisco and Hawaii
- Size: as bigger than the state of Texas!



# Why is it bad?

- Chemicals in plastic stay in ocean water
- Marine animals eat the plastic
- Eventually gets into human food supply



# How do we fix it?

- Researchers are trying to figure out how to clean it up
- Make sure plastic doesn't get into the ocean!
  - Pick up litter
  - Recycle plastics
  - Reduce the amount of plastic you use!



# Use the 4Rs!



# How can I reduce?

- Always bring reusable bags
- Use reusable containers instead of lunch bags
- Take only the amount of food you will eat
- Use fewer napkins
- Use both sides of paper
- Buy rechargeable batteries
- Buy less and use less



# How do I reuse?

- Use reusable drink containers
- Donate old clothes or toys
- Reuse paper for art projects
- Reuse grocery bags
- Trade toys, books and other stuff with a friend



# Recycle

- Lots of things can be recycled
  - Glass
  - Plastics 1-5, #7
  - Aluminum cans
  - Milk cartons
  - Juice boxes
  - Paper
  - Cardboard
  - Batteries
  - Plastic bags
  - What else??



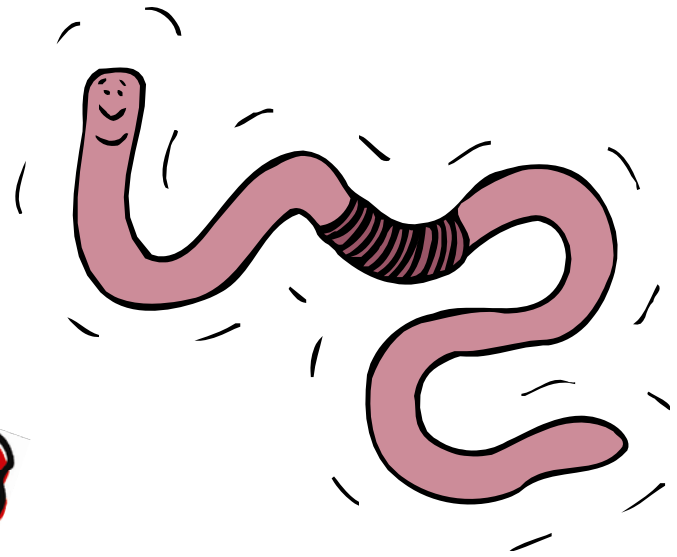
# How can I recycle?

- Participate at school
- Help at home
- Look for recycling when you are out
- Remind friends and family to recycle
- Be a good example!
- Teach your younger brothers and sisters



# Rot

- Nature's recycling!
- Break down green or food waste using microbes
- Worms can also help – called vermicomposting
- Creates nice yummy material for gardens!



# Rot: The Facts

- Food and green waste make up 25% of garbage
- You can compost:
  - Fruits
  - Vegetables
  - Grass clippings
  - Leaves or branches
- Compost helps gardens grow big!



# Your school can be a Wastebuster!

- Do the best job of recycling and reducing waste
- Help teach other students and adults how to recycle
- Your school gets a reward for being a Wastebuster



# The Pledge

“I promise to recycle, reduce and reuse my stuff, and to rot whenever possible.”

