



ZERO WASTE

News

A publication for County of Santa Cruz GreenWaste Recovery
Commercial Customers | Winter 2026

NEW YEAR, NEW WAYS
TO KEEP SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
CLEAN AND GREEN

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NEW YEAR, NEW WAYS TO KEEP SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CLEAN AND GREEN



A new year is the perfect time to refresh our habits and help make Santa Cruz County the cleanest, most sustainable county in California. Here are a few simple zero-waste actions you can start today:



Reuse First, Then Reduce

Choose reusable options before buying anything new. Carry reusable bags, bottles, utensils, and containers, and say no to single-use disposables whenever possible. Repair and repurpose items to extend their life before considering a replacement.



Recycle Right

Only bag your plastic bags and shredded paper. All other recycling should be loose in the blue cart.



Don't Feed the Landfill Organics

Use your green cart or a backyard composting system for food and plant materials.



Support Local Zero-Waste Businesses

Go to cafes that accept reusable cups and offer refill stations. Use repair shops. Shop bulk food sections, and products with minimal packaging.



Donate Before You Dispose

Give gently used items a second life. Shop your closet, participate in a clothing swap, visit specialty consignment stores, and donate to local thrift stores run by your favorite charities.



Litter Starts Small - So Does Prevention

Keep cart lids closed, secure items on windy days, and pick up litter when you can.

Together, these small steps add up. Let's start the year with new habits that care for our community and move Santa Cruz County toward zero waste.



SAVE THE DATES



Earth Day Santa Cruz

Saturday, April 18

Cooper Street downtown

More information is coming soon. Are you interested in volunteering or sponsoring this free, community event? Contact ZeroWaste@santacruzcounty.us



3rd Annual Santa Cruz Countywide Community Clean Up Day

Saturday, May 9

For more information visit www.pitchinsantacruz.org

WHAT'S NEW WITH CRV REDEMPTION?

In California beverage, retailers must accept CRV containers if they are located in a "convenience zone" without a certified recycling center nearby. A convenience zone is a 1-mile radius around a supermarket with at least \$2 million in annual sales. These retailers must either provide in-store redemption or join a "dealer cooperative" to handle their redemption obligations.

If a store is in an unserved zone, it must accept CRV containers from the public on its premises.

All dealers must post a sign at all public entrances that is at least 10" x 15". For stores that do not redeem, the sign must show the nearest state-certified recycling center's name and address. For stores that redeem, the sign must provide the in-store redemption location and hours of operation.



Santa Cruz County convenience zones are located at participating Safeway Stores:

2203 Mission Dr. Santa Cruz

117 Morrissey Ave. Santa Cruz

2720 41st Ave. Soquel

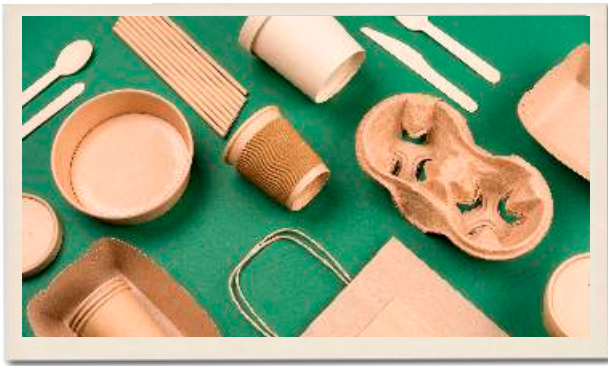
253 Mt. Hermon Rd. Scotts Valley

Contact 1-800-Recycle (toll free) to make a complaint if the retailer is not in compliance.

RECYCLE YOUR MEDICATIONS AND SHARPS

For medicine and sharps, Santa Cruz County provides safe, free, and convenient disposal options for household medications. For locations please call **(844) 633-7765** or **TTY:711**, or scan the code.





TAKE OUT REMINDER

All to-go ware must be recyclable or compostable, as certified by Biodegradable Products Institute (BPIworld.org) or meet ASTM International standards for biodegradable and compostable plastics.

THIS BAG MUST GO

On January 1, 2026, all film plastic bags are banned by the State of California. Paper carryout bags made with a minimum of 50% post-consumer recycled paper will still be allowed. Businesses are required to charge a \$0.25 fee at the register for each carryout bag used by the customer. Consider selling promotional reusable bags at the register, encourage customers to bring their own bags, or reuse cardboard shipping boxes to help save our planet. By working together to change habits, we can reduce waste and keep Santa Cruz beautiful.



DISPOSABLE CUP CHARGE

Businesses in the unincorporated areas of Santa Cruz County serving drinks in disposable cups must charge \$0.25 per single-use cup (hot or cold). Twenty-five cents should show on receipt as a separate line item, on menu boards, and online orders to promote reusable cup use. For more information about the Cup Charge call **(831) 454-2000** or scan the code.



HERE TO HELP YOU

Zero Waste Outreach experts are available to assist businesses with their waste management. Whether you want to save money, right size your service, or help educate and communicate to tenants, staff or customers, we are here to help you. For a free waste audit and recommendations for best waste practices, please reach out to us at zerowaste@santacruzcountycalifornia.gov.



RECYCLING RESOURCES



Recycle Information Line 831-454-2333

- What and where to recycle (recorded messages)

Curbside Refuse, Recycling and Yard Waste Collection 800-665-2209

(operated by GreenWaste Recovery)
www.greenwaste.com/santa-cruz-county

- Begin new service
- Report missed recycling or trash service
- Request delivery or removal of carts
- Obtain oil recycling jugs

County Community Development & Infrastructure 831-454-2160

www.santacruzcountyrecycles.org

- Apartments and business recycling inquiries
 - Complaints, compliments or suggestions
 - Report roadside trash 831-477-3999
- Download and use the "My Santa Cruz County" free mobile app

Household Hazardous Waste 831-454-2606

(recorded messages)

- Schedule for free disposal
- Non-hazardous alternatives

Contact Zero Waste Outreach Team 831 454-2160

or ZeroWaste@santacruzcounty.us

- Questions
- Volunteer as a Zero Waste champion

Composting Resources . www.compostsantacruzcounty.org

Buena Vista Landfill & Recycling Center 831-454-5153

Recorded information 831-454-2430

1231 Buena Vista Drive, Watsonville 95076

Open: Mon-Tues, Thurs-Sat 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM;
Wed 7:30 AM to 2:30 PM

HHW Facility - Open: Wed 7:30 AM to 2:30 PM;
Fri and Sat 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM

Ben Lomond Transfer Station & Recycling Center 831-336-3951

Recorded information 831-454-2430

9835 Newell Creek Road, Ben Lomond 95005

Open: Mon-Tues, Thurs-Sat 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM;
Wed 7:30 AM to 2:30 PM

HHW Facility - Open Thursdays 7:30-3:30

California Grey Bears Recycling Centers 831-479-1055 ext. 235

2710 Chanticleer Avenue, Santa Cruz 95065

Open: 7:30 AM - 3:45 PM daily

City of Santa Cruz Resource Recovery Facility & Recycling Center 831-420-6270

Open to unincorporated county residents in Davenport and Bonny Doon only

605 Dimeo Lane, Santa Cruz 95060

Open: Mon-Sat 7:30-3:30

HHW Facility - Open: Saturdays 7:30-3:30

DON'T OVERFILL YOUR CART

Overfilled trash and recycling carts create litter, attract pests, and can prevent proper collection. "Not overfilling" means keeping the lid closed so everything stays inside. If you often have extra waste, break down boxes to save space, or request an additional cart/bin or additional pick-up days to help keep our community clean and safe. Contact GreenWaste Recovery to right size your service **(831) 426-2711**.

KEEP BINS CLOSED THIS WINTER

As temperatures drop, wildlife and pests look for easy food sources—open trash bins are an invitation. Keeping your bin lid closed helps prevent animals from scattering waste, which keeps our neighborhoods clean and healthy. It also protects recyclables from rain; wet cardboard and paper can't be recycled and end up in the landfill.

A quick habit makes a big difference! Please remember to close your bin each time you use it.

YELLOW CARTS, COME HOME!

We're rounding up any old yellow carts still out in the community. If your property or business has one, we're happy to provide a free replacement in the correct color. Call GreenWaste Recovery at **(831) 426-2711** to schedule a quick swap. Thanks for helping us keep things running smoothly!

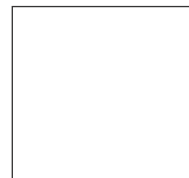
DAMAGED CART OR BIN EXCHANGE

If your GreenWaste garbage, recycling or organics container is damaged, leaking, or has graffiti, please contact GreenWaste Customer Service at **(831) 426-2711** to request an exchange.



SAVE THE DATE!

County of Santa Cruz
Community Development & Infrastructure
701 Ocean Street, Room 410
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 454-2160



EARTH DAY SANTA CRUZ 2026

FIND DETAILS AND
MORE EVENTS ON PAGE 3



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SANTA CRUZ COUNTY EARNS CLEAN CALIFORNIA DESIGNATION

In September 2025, the County of Santa Cruz was designated as a Clean California Community, a recognition that highlights local efforts to reduce litter, beautify public spaces, and inspire community pride. Through this designation, Santa Cruz County will continue its commitment to cleaner streets, healthier neighborhoods, and more welcoming public spaces for all residents and visitors. The designation acknowledges the County's leadership in supporting the Pitch In Initiative www.pitchinsantacruz.org

