

CURBSIDER

FALL 2010

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What is the Green Schools program (GSP)?

About 55 million children, teachers, administrators, nurses and custodians spend their days in K12 schools in our country. Yet, many current school systems pose threats to our children's health and consume resources and energy unsustainably.

The GSP is a County of Santa Cruz (County) program that works with local schools to educate students and staff about environmental issues such as waste reduction, water conservation, energy conservation and storm water management. The County GSP's goal is to help create a healthy environment for students and staff, while promoting ecological sustainability by using alternatives to toxic chemicals, pursuing green building and maintenance practices, changing resource consumption patterns, serving nutritious food, teaching students to be stewards of their communities, the earth and its resources, and by providing a blueprint for parents, educators, students, environmental and health advocates, school board members, and interested community members to collaborate on implementing this vision.

In essence, a Green School can be broken down into four main areas: strive for a toxic-free environment, use resources in a sustainable manner, create a green and healthy space and educate and engage its students.

1) Striving for a toxic-free environment would include removing use of pesticides, mold and lead, and using green building and cleaning materials.

2) Using resources in a sustainable manner is possible by using energy-efficient alternatives, green building design for remodels or new construction, environmentally sound schools supplies and implementing practices that reduce waste and promote reuse and recycling.

3) Creating green schoolyards and gardens and rethinking school lunch is important so that our kids can eat healthier and be more engaged in gardening and composting. Farm-to-school organic produce can even be produced at the schools.

4) And lastly, teaching, educating and engaging the students, parents and leaders of our schools is essential so everyone can participate and learn.

The County has recently contracted with Save Our Shores to offer presentations at

schools on environmental topics, and to follow up with field trips such as storm drain labeling and beach or neighborhood cleanups. In addition, County staff is working with schools to help them transition into "green certified" schools.

For information on participating schools, please visit us www.santacruzcountyrecycles.org or contact the GSP coordinator at (831) 454-2160.

In essence, a Green School can be broken down into four main areas: strive for a toxic-free environment, use resources in a sustainable manner, create a green and healthy space and educate and engage its students.

Can and Cannot

If you move into a new home, you might take some cues from neighbors, such as what day to put out your garbage cart and where to place it for pickup. In most neighborhoods in the county you will find that people thoughtfully pull their carts off the street after collection and keep them out of sight the rest of the week.

In some areas, however, you might get the impression that grey, blue and green carts are supposed to live on the street, seeing them by the side of the road 24/7. Such carts left out for extended periods create a visual eyesore, attract unwanted animals, and can create a traffic hazard for vehicles or pedestrians.

Not only is it respectful to take carts in promptly, it is also in compliance with County Code Section 7.20.100, which states:

“Garbage containers shall not be placed adjacent to streets or roadways to facilitate refuse collection more than twenty-four hours prior to pickup time, and they shall be removed from the pickup site within twenty-four hours after they have been emptied.”

The County Public Works Department handles questions and complaints regarding this ordinance at (831) 454-2160 and may authorize the removal of carts considered abandoned.

Garbage customers with a physical hardship may inquire of GreenWaste Recovery at (800) 665-2209 for assistance in complying with the 24-hour rule.



Not only is it respectful to take carts in promptly, it is also in compliance with County Code Section 7.20.100.

Dispose your HHW properly!

It is dangerous and illegal to dispose of Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) in the garbage, on the soil, in stormdrains, or down the sink or toilet! HHW placed in the garbage could harm the refuse collection and landfill workers and flushing down the drain or toilet could upset the operation of the wastewater treatment facility. If poured on the ground or into stormdrains, HHW could flow into creeks, sloughs, and rivers and pollute the groundwater and the Bay. **Call (831) 454-2606 for information about proper HHW disposal.**





No Bags For Yardwaste

For curbside customers, extra yard trimmings that don't fit in your green cart can be picked up at no additional charge.

“Paper or plastic?” is a question commonly heard at the checkout counter. It is also a good question when you have raked up a big pile of leaves. And the best answer is the same in either case: “Neither!”

At the grocery store, bringing your own bag saves resources. In the garden, keeping bags out of the yardwaste improves the quality of the soil amendment made from it. Who wants to spread mulch around their careful plantings and then discover unsightly bits of colored plastic litter distracting the eye from the petunias?

Whether you put yard trimmings in a green cart for curbside pickup or haul them to a disposal site, skip the bags. Yardwaste processing in Santa Cruz County is limited

to chipping and screening to make a mulch product. Compostable and paper bags do not sufficiently degrade without composting. Petroleum-based plastic bags, though they may break into smaller and smaller pieces over time, will remain in the soil indefinitely.

For curbside customers, extra yard trimmings that don't fit in your green cart can be picked up at no additional charge. But don't use a plastic bag; it will be viewed as extra garbage. Rather, set out your own can marked “yardwaste.” If you regularly have extra yardwaste, GreenWaste Recovery will provide you with a second green cart upon request.

Get a Free Compost Bin by Taking a Compost Workshop!

Free for residents of the unincorporated area* of Santa Cruz County and the City of Scotts Valley

Registration and proof of residence required; call (831) 454-2160 to register.

Free Backyard Composting Workshop

Saturday, November 13, 2010

1-3 PM

The Live Oak Grange

1900 17th Avenue, Santa Cruz

Compost bins are available for those who register prior to the workshop. No other materials will be provided.



GreenWaste Recovery customers in the unincorporated area* of Santa Cruz County and the City of Scotts Valley who complete a workshop will be given one FREE COMPOST BIN. Limit of one backyard compost bin per household per five-year period. Pre-approval required.

* Includes San Lorenzo Valley, Davenport, Live Oak, Soquel, Aptos, La Selva Beach, Corralitos, Summit, and other areas outside the Santa Cruz, Watsonville and Capitola city limits.

The Home Composting Program is sponsored by the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors and produced by the Santa Cruz County Department of Public Works Recycling and Solid Waste Services, with the help of the Santa Cruz County Master Composters.





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Recycling Resources

Recycle Information Line 831-454-2333

- What and where to recycle (recorded message)

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

- Begin new service
 - Report missed recycling or trash service
 - Request delivery or removal of carts
 - Obtain oil recycling jugs
- (Operated by GreenWaste Recovery) www.greenwaste.com

County Public Works Dept. 831-454-2160

- www.santacruzcountyrecycles.org
- Apartments and business recycling inquiries
 - Complaints, compliments or suggestions

Household Hazardous Waste 831-454-2606

- (recorded message)
- Schedule for free disposal
 - Non-hazardous alternatives
 - Free surplus paint

Rotline Composting Resources 831-423-HEAP (423-4327)

www.compostsantacruzcounty.org

Buena Vista Landfill 831-454-5331

- Recorded information 831-454-2430
- Recycling Center 831-479-1055
(Operated by the California Grey Bears)

Ben Lomond Transfer Station 831-336-3957

- Recorded information 831-454-2430
- Recycling Center 831-338-1728
(Operated by the Valley Women's Club)

City of Santa Cruz 831-420-6270
Resource Recovery Facility (landfill)

- Open to Unincorporated County residents in Davenport and Bonny Doon only

