

Better at the Bin



Recology Sunset Scavenger and Recology Golden Gate, your local recycling companies | Recycle | Compost April–June 2024

THE FUNDAMENTAL FOUR

Key materials to always recycle

Getting the basics right is critical to every endeavor's success. In the case of recycling, we encourage customers to embrace the following:

Be sure to recycle all bottles, cans, paper, and cardboard.

These are the fundamental four.

By weight, recycled paper and cardboard make up most of the material San Franciscans place in their blue bins, and that's great.

Every time we recycle paper and cardboard, we save trees, reduce landfill disposal, and help achieve additional positive outcomes. Recycled paper and cardboard become new products such as cardboard boxes.

During the initial months of COVID, the demand for cardboard boxes more than doubled. Cardboard manufacturers relied on everyone to recycle all clean paper and cardboard. Your role in

meeting this increased demand was invaluable. This call to action remains as important today as most products are shipped in cardboard boxes.

Recycling organizations nationwide also ask customers to empty all bottles

and cans of liquids and shake out all food containers before placing them in curbside recycling bins.

Emptying beverage and food containers helps keep recycled paper and cardboard clean and dry. We are often asked: How clean does my recycling have to be? The answer is: Reasonably clean.

People who consistently recycle the big four can take satisfaction in knowing they do a very good job of recycling.

Flattening or tearing up cardboard boxes can take a few minutes, but doing so saves space in your blue recycling bin, space your family may need for other recyclables.

By adopting the basics of recycling as good green habits, we help protect the environment and contribute to our economy. This is a responsibility we all share and can take pride in. ■



Big increase in SF recycling advocates

Across San Francisco, people volunteer to promote recycling and composting in apartment buildings, commercial properties, and schools.

We call them Waste Zero (WZ) Champions. A year ago, 257 people signed up to perform this community service. Today, there are 450—a **75 percent increase in one year!**

WZ Champions encourage neighbors, co-workers, and students to take a moment when discarding materials and place them in the proper bins—bottles, cans, paper, and cardboard go in blue bins and food scraps, sticks, and leaves go in green.

These volunteers place recycling posters over recycling and composting bins, answer questions, and share new information with their communities. Some volunteers email the Recology newsletter *Better at the Bin* to neighbors and friends. Some produce and distribute their own newsletters and flyers to promote recycling. Brave advocates open bin lids and, when necessary, sort materials into the correct bins.

"I tell students to start with our own schoolyard and their own homes to reduce waste," says Annie Tahtinen, a garden teacher at Jefferson Elementary School and a WZ Champion. "Yes, we recognize the huge problem of our landfills being beyond their capacity, but we need to start with our own habits. We are trying to do better—waste management is a practice, not a one-time performance."



Waste Zero Champion
Annie Tahtinen

Many other cities view San Francisco's WZ Champions program as a leading environmental initiative. Let's continue working together to make recycling and curbside composting work every day. ■



Our customer service staff is here to help. Email us at CustomerService@RecologySF.com

These pros keep SF collection trucks rolling

Without the exceptional work of the mechanics who maintain and repair Recology trucks, we couldn't begin to provide the high-quality service our customers rely on. Their role is crucial to our operations.

Our mechanics are responsible for servicing a fleet of 450 collection and hauling trucks operated by Recology Sunset Scavenger and Recology Golden Gate. And that's just the beginning of their immense task.

Recology San Francisco uses 45 transfer trucks to haul garbage, recycling, and compostable materials. We also maintain many loaders and forklifts at all of our facilities in San Francisco and three dozers that compact and push the garbage inside the Transfer Station.

In addition to vehicles, mechanics keep our many machines running—charge hoppers, conveyors, screens, optical sorters, balers, excavators, and more.



Juan Hernandez of Recology Golden Gate

San Francisco is a 24/7 operation requiring three shifts of mechanics. In total, we employ about 40 mechanics in SF. They are the unsung heroes our customers never see.

"It takes a team effort to service and maintain today's modern refuse equipment, and it starts with the mechanic who needs to master many

trades to service such a variety of systems safely," says Paul Furtado, Recology Golden Gate equipment maintenance manager.

Recology employee-owners honor their mechanics by taking good care of the equipment they maintain and repair so we can provide high-quality service to our customers. ■

NEED A BULKY ITEM RESIDENTIAL PICKUP?

Visit BulkyItemRecycling.com to learn more about the program and schedule an appointment.



Save food, save money

Adopting a few simple tricks can help keep produce fresh and delicious longer, reducing food waste and saving money.

Keep carrots crunchy for days by wrapping them in a damp kitchen towel and storing them in a produce drawer in your refrigerator. It's a pleasure when you pull a carrot out of the fridge days later, and it's still crisp and flavorful.

We are blessed in California to have access to beautiful, tasty lettuce for salads and sandwiches. How can you keep it fresher longer?

There are a couple of ways. Rinse the leaves in cold water, dry them

(a spinner works great), put them in a glass container lined with a dry kitchen towel, and store them in the fridge. Another option is to wrap the lettuce, whole head or just the leaves, in a damp kitchen towel and put it in your refrigerator's produce drawer.

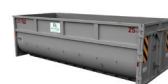
You may have some tried-and-true tricks of your own. The point is that by adopting these techniques, you can save money and reduce waste because the produce lasts longer.

For more tips on extending the life of the food you buy and reducing waste, check out the San Francisco Environment Department website EndFoodWasteSF.org. ■



Putting herbs in water and storing them in the refrigerator keeps them fresh longer.

Check us out on social media for quick tips, event info, and recycling news:



Debris Box Dept.
888.404.4008