

## Captain Zero Strikes Again!

The hottest number these days is ZERO! Color in the zero-waste lunch above and hang it up to remember these zero-waste tips when packing your lunch:

- Use a cloth napkin instead of paper towels
- Pack a stainless-steel fork and spoon
- Use a refillable drink container and reusable food containers
- Pack up all your goodies in a lunchbox or fabric bag instead of a paper bag
- Bring home any leftovers so parents know what you like and don't like

And, just like that, you have a zero-waste lunch! Aye aye, Captain!



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# RecycleSmart

APARTMENTS & CONDOS EDITION SUMMER 2019

## Seven ways to go beyond

Here at RecycleSmart we're proud of how well our customers get recycling. So now we're asking: How can we take the extra step to move beyond recycling and reduce the amount of materials that we use in the first place?

Here are some ideas to reduce waste and help get us into a more sustainable mindset.

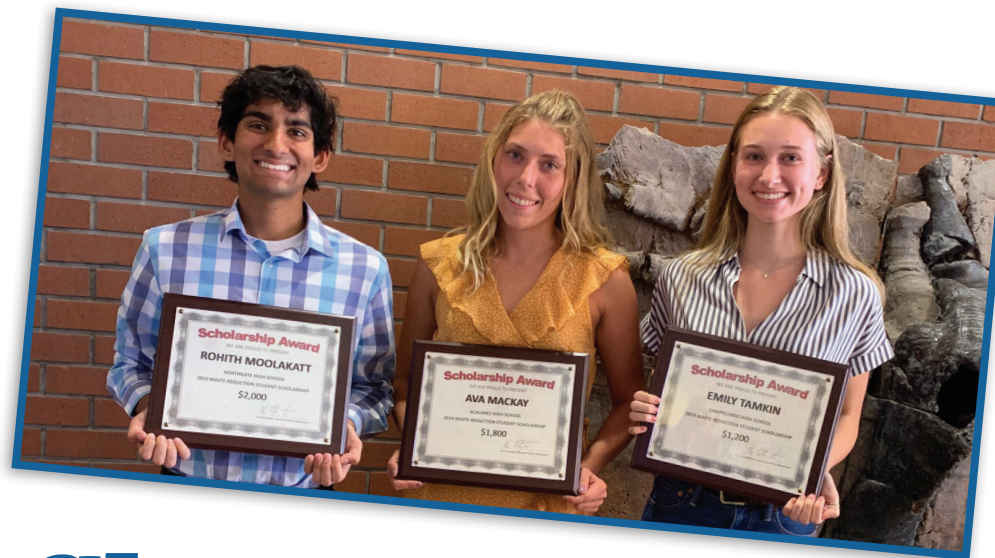
- 1 **Go to a farmer's market with reusable bags or bring your own bags** to the store to avoid over-packaging—from produce to pasta and shampoo, we have lots of bulk options here in Contra Costa County. If you do shop at a grocery store, choose the items with less packaging.
- 2 **Visit a local shop on your way home** from an outing rather than ordering online to reduce the use of excessive mail order packaging.
- 3 **Carry durable items** in place of single-use straws, foam cups, plastic water bottles and utensils.
- 4 **Host a toy or clothing swap** with friends, schoolmates or neighbors. What's "used" for you may just need a new home for a second (or third) life!
- 5 **Repair items before you replace them.** If you don't know how, maybe someone nearby does! Or you can visit YouTube to learn all kinds of fix-it skills.
- 6 **Before you toss it, reconsider**—Can that chipped mug hold a succulent sprout? Challenge your creativity to find a new use before you toss.
- 7 **Take a moment** to ask yourself, "Do I really need this? Is there something that already exists that can do the job?"

We don't expect everyone to follow *all* of these principles all of the time, but each small change adds up!



### LIGHTEN THAT LOAD

How about reducing the amount of temptation and paper waste in your mailbox? You'll find complete information about how to remove your name from direct marketing lists at [BayAreaRecycling.org/stop-junk-mail](http://BayAreaRecycling.org/stop-junk-mail)



Off to change the world!

## Champs earn scholarships!

This May, RecycleSmart awarded three student leaders with Waste Reduction Student Scholarships. This year's recipients are:

### Rohith Moolakatt

Under Rohith's leadership, Northgate High School's environmental club has started developing eco-leaders in their junior and sophomore years, even reaching out to Foothill Middle School and Walnut Acres Elementary to start sorting early! Rohith is studying Environmental Science at the University of California, Berkeley this fall.

### Ava MacKay

Ava joined the Environmental Board at Acalanes High School in tenth grade—in her senior year as head of the board, the school switched from ketchup packets to ketchup pumps and from styrofoam

cups to compostable paper cups. Ava is majoring in Communications at California State University, Chico.

### Emily Tamkin

Emily's legacy at Campolindo High School is easy to spot since she joined the Environmental Club as a freshman: what once was "a sea of black trash cans" is now a fully integrated three-bin system that includes recycling and compost. The diversion rate at Campolindo is up 50% from two years ago! Emily is off to Bates College, where she will study Biology.

For more information about RecycleSmart scholarships or to apply, visit [RecycleSmart.org/schools](http://RecycleSmart.org/schools)



## Keepin' it Clean

This kitty, Alvin, of Orinda, was inspired by Oliver (the dog on Republic's trucks) and is helping to keep its household's recyclables empty, clean and dry. If your pets help you clean up cans and jars, give the containers a wipe or a rinse and then make sure they're nice and dry before you put them in the blue bin. That keeps your paper and cardboard free of leftover food spilled from empty jars, cans and bottles, ready for its recycling makeover. You can be sure that your paper has a long and productive future!

There's more info online at [RecycleSmart.org/clean-recyclables](http://RecycleSmart.org/clean-recyclables)



# Meal box mystery

Home delivery meal kits are getting more and more popular—it seems like a new service opens every day! Getting pre-made or ready-to-assemble meals delivered right to your door certainly saves time and effort, but what about their impact on the environment?

Many companies deliver food stored with plastic freezer packs to keep them cool. Plastic freezer packs are NOT recyclable, whether they're filled with gel, water, or cotton. Even if you empty out the goo inside, we CAN'T recycle the lightweight plastic bag.

Here are a few ideas for what to do with freezer packs, instead of throwing them out:

- Keep a few of them in the freezer and reuse them for picnics, camping trips or kids' lunches.
- Send them back to the meal kit service that sent them to you (Blue Apron will accept them; you can check with other meal kit services about their policies.)
- Share with family and friends who could use them.
- Wrapped in a pillowcase, a cold gel pack can cool your bed on a hot night.

This is a tough product and unfortunately, they're trash! The fewer we use, the better.

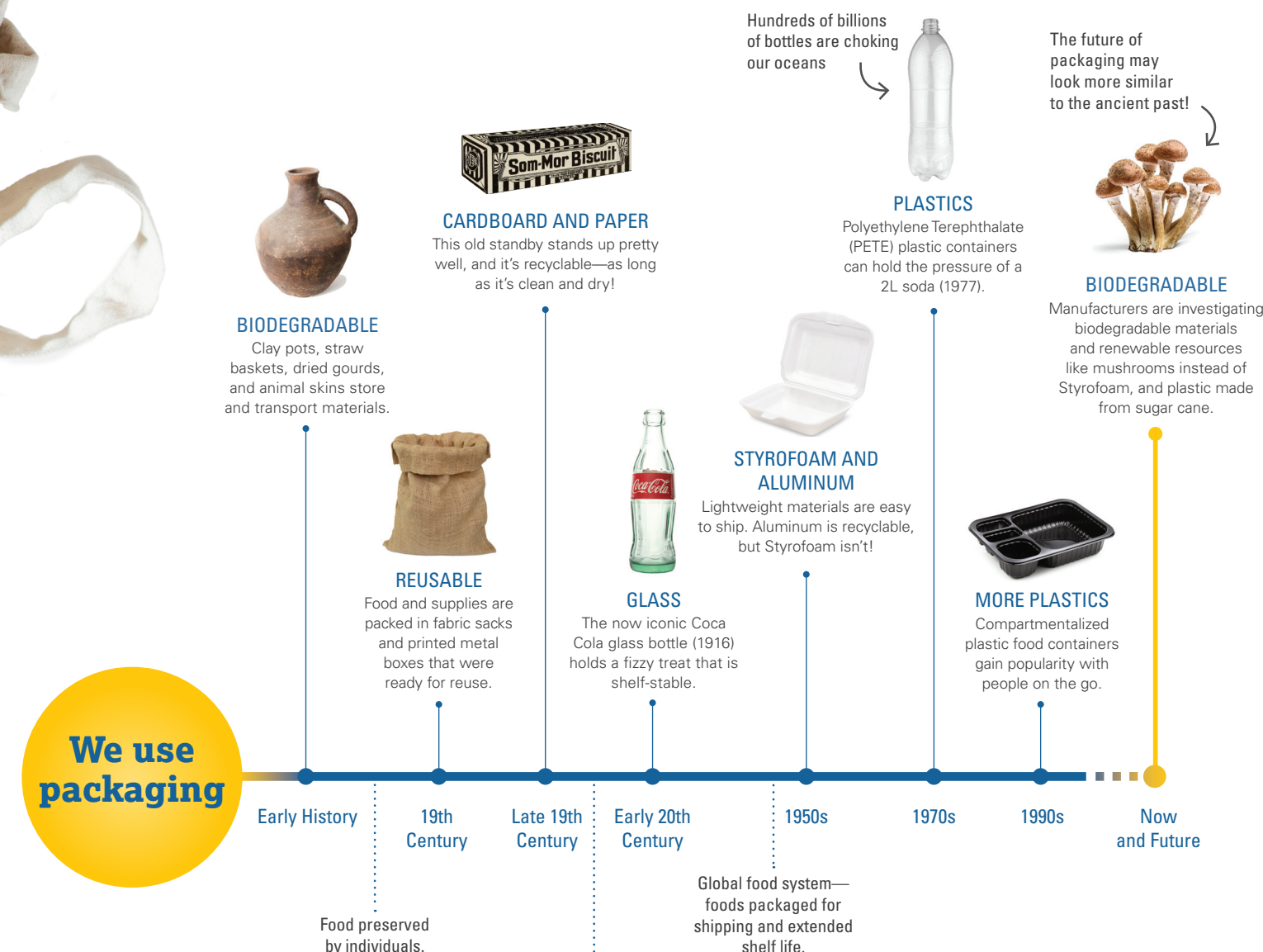
You've got questions, we're here for you! Send your "Can I Recycle That?" questions to us at [Authority@RecycleSmart.org!](mailto:Authority@RecycleSmart.org)

## Lead the Way, California!

The freezer pack situation is one of many where producers make a product without a plan for how it can be reclaimed. The California Product Stewardship Council is here to help—dedicated to helping manufacturers and retailers reduce waste from single-use packaging and products by 75%.

The Council's members are hard at work on legislation to reduce single-use plastic waste, too—you can learn about it at [calpsc.org/legislation](http://calpsc.org/legislation) or find all of California's waste-prevention legislation in progress at: [CalRecycle.ca.gov/reducewaste/packaging/lawsregs](http://CalRecycle.ca.gov/reducewaste/packaging/lawsregs)

# How it started



We've posted information about how to recycle different types of packaging at [RecycleSmart.org/packaging](http://RecycleSmart.org/packaging)



### THAT'S A WRAP!

People around the world just finished Plastic-free July, a global effort to reduce plastic use. Throughout the month, communities shared tips and inspiration to reduce plastic usage. If you participated, how did it go? Did you find

a new way to bring less into your home? Did you find a new plastic-free version of your favorite product? We're excited to hear what you learned or tried—send us a note at [Authority@RecycleSmart.org](mailto:Authority@RecycleSmart.org) and share your favorites.

I'm waaay better than plastic—and I'm empty, clean and dry.



## Need More Info?



Editor, Janna McKay  
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 For tips, resources and other recycling services!  
[www.RecycleSmart.org](http://www.RecycleSmart.org)  
 925-906-1801  
[Authority@RecycleSmart.org](mailto:Authority@RecycleSmart.org)



### Organics, Recycling and Landfill

925-685-4711  
 Ask your property manager to contact Republic Services about additional recycling, organic or landfill carts or bins, computer and TV collection, special clean ups or to request motor oil recycling kits, recycling tote bags and kitchen food scrap containers.



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## Tumbling Tips!

"Let's take a spin"

Janet C., Walnut Creek



I have two waste-free tips for laundry day. Instead of buying dryer sheets, I dunk a wash cloth in fabric softener, wring it out and let it dry. I put the dry washcloth in the dryer with my wet clothes to get soft, fresh-smelling laundry. I use the same washcloth over and over again.

I don't use fabric softener for towels or workout clothes because it works against their absorbing ability. For those loads, I use wool dryer balls to speed up drying and keeping them nice and fluffy! Sometimes I even put peppermint or lemon essential oil onto the balls for a nice smell.

Thanks for the newsletter!



**HAVE TIPS TO SHARE?**  
 Send your ideas to  
[Authority@RecycleSmart.org](mailto:Authority@RecycleSmart.org)