



Billi H. and Maria S. in Walnut Creek

## DIY Garden Whirley

Upcycle plastic bottles into whirley flowers for your garden!

Supplies:

- Plastic bottle
- Wooden dowel stick
- Scissors for cutting
- Paints (any colors) acrylic
- Beads
- Glue gun and glue sticks
- Duct tape
- Wire

Instructions:

- 1 Take a clean plastic bottle and cut it in half horizontally
- 2 Using the top piece, cut out 5-8 strips
- 3 Flatten the strips, bending each slightly in the middle so it looks like a helicopter
- 4 Cut the edges of each strip so they're curved like petals
- 5 Paint the petals to your liking!

Have an adult help you with the following:

- 6 Poke a hole in the middle of two bottle caps, and screw one of the caps back onto the bottle top
- 7 Glue the other cap to the front of the spinner
- 8 To assemble the spinner, cut a 5-inch long wire, insert the wire through the hole of the dowel, and add a bead
- 9 Insert the wire through the backside of the spinner cap where the lid should be, and continue through the other cap
- 10 Add another bead and make a knot with the wire to secure the caps in place
- 11 Bend the wire hugging the dowel and tape it with a duct tape



1850 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Ste. 320  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
US POSTAGE PAID  
CONCORD, CA  
PERMIT NO. 99



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Get the dirt on green cart sorting
- Mark your calendars for spring events
- Tell us your feedback about services

Visit Amy at Planet Renu!



## Labels that Help

Did you know that the number and arrows on a product don't always mean it's accepted in the blue recycling bin? That's why the new California State Law SB 343 prohibits using the chasing arrows or any other indicator of recyclability on products and packaging unless it meets certain criteria. The law is in its early stages, but you can follow the lawmaking process at [CalRecycle.ca.gov/wcs/recyclinglabels](http://CalRecycle.ca.gov/wcs/recyclinglabels)



### LET'S SORT SMART. TEXT ME!

We're offering a new on-demand recycling resource called "Hello Recycling Bin."

It's easy—text "Hello Recycling Bin" to **925-940-5795**. Then text what you want to toss (try "milk jug" or "junk mail" to get started!) and our binbot will reply with helpful sorting instructions. Save the number to your contacts and you'll be ready to ask anytime!

## Get your (re)fill!

Want to reduce your plastic waste at home but don't know where to start? Try visiting your local refill store! Refill stores can contain everything from dried goods to household cleaning items to personal hygiene products and more.

**Planet Renu** in Walnut Creek or **Mighty Market** in Lafayette are two women-owned refill stores in our service area that offer a variety of eco-friendly alternatives for household, beauty, baby and pet products as

well as refillable home and bath essentials such as dish soap, cleaners, laundry strips, beauty products and lotions.

Customers can either bring their own refillable bottles to the refill store, or buy products on-site that are already contained in refillable bottles. You can learn more about Planet Renu at [PlanetRenu.com](http://PlanetRenu.com) and Mighty Market at [MightyMarket](http://MightyMarket)—they also have online stores!



SPRING 2024



# We want your feedback on garbage, recycling and organics services!

RecycleSmart is in the process of soliciting bids for garbage, recycling, and organics services beginning in 2027. As part of this process, we are seeking community input.

We want to know which programs and services are most important to you, as well as any new or expanded services that you'd like to see.

Let us know in our short customer survey!  
[RecycleSmart.org/survey](http://RecycleSmart.org/survey)

To talk to a member of our team to provide your feedback please call the RecycleSmart office at 925-906-1801 or email [Authority@RecycleSmart.org](mailto:Authority@RecycleSmart.org).

Take our 2-minute survey



[RecycleSmart.org](http://RecycleSmart.org)







# Make a difference when you dine

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), food and packaging make up almost half the landfill material in the U.S.

That's why RecycleSmart is teaming up with ReThink Disposable and FoodWare To Go to encourage local businesses to opt for more sustainable practices.

ReThink Disposable helps restaurants reduce waste and cut costs by minimizing the disposable packaging items they use. FoodWare To Go provides to-go containers to restaurants that can be

returned, sanitized and made ready to use again for the next takeout meal. Rising Loafer in Lafayette is FoodWare To Go's first participant in central Contra Costa.

Owner Maria Gastelumendi, pictured here, is expanding her many practices of waste prevention to her customers and has been testing out different sizes of reusable takeout containers since February.

You can learn more about FoodWare to Go at [FoodWareToGo.com](http://FoodWareToGo.com) and ReThink Disposable at [CleanWaterFund.org/Campaign/Rethink-Disposable](http://CleanWaterFund.org/Campaign/Rethink-Disposable)



## Now That's Sharp!

California passed a Producer Responsibility law requiring manufacturers of "sharps" (needles, lancets and other medical sharps) to pay for proper disposal. Now, residents can request a FREE mail-back sharps disposal box through California's Sharps Disposal Program, or continue to use local free drop-off locations.

Now it's easier than ever to make your home and local disposal facilities and workers safer by disposing of sharps properly.

Simply visit the website below to request a free mail-back kit. The kit will arrive at your home address within a couple of days. Fill it up with your sharps and send it back in the postage-paid box. Ta da!

You can request your kit at [www.RecycleSmart.org/HHW](http://www.RecycleSmart.org/HHW)



YES ✓

"Keep me under 150 lbs!"

The following items are list of acceptable organic materials that can be placed in your green organics cart:



FLOWER CUTTINGS AND PRUNINGS



GARDEN TRIMMINGS AND LEAVES



HOUSE PLANTS (shake dirt off)



UNTREATED WOOD (4 feet or less in length and 6 inches in diameter)



WEEDS



FOOD SCRAPS AND UNCOATED FOOD SOILED PAPER

NO ✗

The following materials should never be placed in your green organics cart:



POISON OAK AND IVY



PET WASTE

Pet waste is not organic!



ROCKS\*



CONCRETE\*



SOD OR DIRT\*



TREATED OR PAINTED WOOD\*

\*These items may have special disposal needs. Call Republic Services at 925-685-4711 with questions.



## SAVE THE DATE FOR SPRING COMPOSTING EVENTS

This year's compost giveaway dates are April 27 for Walnut Creek, Danville and Central Contra County communities, and May 4 for Lamorinda. Check out our website for details and registration info at:

[RecycleSmart.org/ICAW](http://RecycleSmart.org/ICAW). You can also find our composting workshop schedule at: [RecycleSmart.org/workshops](http://RecycleSmart.org/workshops)

And remember: International Compost Awareness Week is May 5-11. This year's theme is "COMPOST... Nature's Climate Champion!" Learn more and get involved at:

[CompostFoundation.org/ICAW/ICAW-Home](http://CompostFoundation.org/ICAW/ICAW-Home)



My Tip

## Making My Cleaners Greener

Clarissa B., Danville

Hi RecycleSmart, My spring cleaning isn't just going to stop at cleaning out my closet—I am also going to spring "clean" my cleaning products by opting for more eco-friendly cleaning solutions and even DIYing them.

And it turns out, making the switch can be pretty simple! Vinegar, water, baking soda and lemon juice are everyday items that I use, and also make excellent cleaners for all types of surfaces. Check out my first clean cleaning recipe below:

### DIY All-Purpose Cleaner

- Soak your discarded lemon or orange peels in vinegar for a week
- Combine ¼ cup of your citrus/vinegar mixture with 2 cups boiled water
- Add 1 teaspoon phosphorous-free dish soap
- Fill a spray bottle, shake and start cleaning

## Need More Info?



Editor, Janna McKay  
Janna@RecycleSmart.org

For tips, resources and other recycling services!

[www.RecycleSmart.org](http://www.RecycleSmart.org)  
925-906-1801  
Authority@RecycleSmart.org



Printed on paper made from post consumer waste (PCW).



### Organics, Recycling and Landfill

925-685-4711

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

This newsletter is recyclable!