

## Poetry Contest

Hey kids—grab a pen and paper!

We're looking for a new way to help remind our community to clean their recyclables!

Need some inspiration? Here's a poem to get you started:

### Ode to Clean Recyclables

*Nothing better than shiny  
clean plastic  
In fact, when it's dry,  
it's SUPER fantastic  
That greasy pizza box and  
old piece of toast  
Cannot be recycled and  
should be compost*

*All these boxes make my head spin  
But all can be flattened  
for my recycle bin  
Now I'm ready for Republic  
to come by  
To pick up recyclables that are  
empty, clean and dry!*

Please ask an adult to send your poetry (or song!) to  
**Authority@RecycleSmart.org** with your name, age and city.

We'll select one winner to receive a prize and be featured in the next issue of RecycleSmart!



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

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

EVERYDAY RECYCLING MADE EASY

# RecycleSmart

WINTER 2021

## Living out of the box(es)

By 2024, over 90% of all Americans will have ordered something online. All that online shopping means lots more packaging—cardboard boxes, bubble wrap, hard plastic, and other materials to make sure your necessities arrive in good shape.

Recycling cardboard is easy: Just break down the box, then place flat, dry cardboard in your blue recycling cart (making sure the cart lid is closed keeps items from flying away). If you're a power shopper, you may need to request an extra recycling pickup (available up to four times each year). Drivers can't accept more than what fits in the cart, so save any overflow for your next collection day.

While cardboard is one of the original recyclable materials, it's still smart to reduce as much packaging as you can—it helps prevent clutter in your house and shrinks your carbon footprint. One idea? If you are ordering multiple items, choose the option to combine your orders in one box instead of having them shipped separately.

And if you have too many boxes for your cart, try offering them to a neighbor or friend who's moving. You can post a notice on a neighborhood website or bulletin board!



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Hot stats from 2020
- Recycling shampoo bottles
- Under a mountain of stuff? We have the answers!

It's time to boast,  
these teens are the most! →

## HEART Orinda

### What to do when school is online but your club still wants to make a difference?

Devon Bradley and Miramonte High's Environmental Solutions Club formed Project HEART, which is donating 100% compostable (uncoated) paper-based takeout containers to participating Orinda restaurants.

With COVID impacting businesses every day, Devin and Miramonte High's Environmental Solutions Club are offering support to

the restaurants in town. Unfortunately, compostable materials can cost more than landfill-doomed materials like plastic and polystyrene.

"Originally, the club aimed to ban plastic takeout materials through city council, but plans had to change when COVID-19 hit."

We hear you, Devon! You can support the project and keep up to date with their work at **HEARTorinda.org**

## We're All In

Beginning January 1, 2022, a new law requires Californians to keep organics out of the landfill cart and participate in composting programs. For more info, visit **RecycleSmart.org/1383**



### BULK IS BACK!

If you're shopping locally, the site **ZeroWasteCalifornia.org** has tips for buying bulk during COVID. You can even take your own bags to win a personal "reduce and reuse" award.



# Big numbers from 2020:

Last year, RecycleSmart residents stepped up their game!

We picked up **32,543** tons of recycling, **64,812** tons of compost, and **47,964** tons of trash

**230** tons of leftover Christmas trees composted

Starting daily at 3 a.m., Republic's dispatchers, mechanics, and staff keep up:

**75** trucks and **75** routes



**90** drivers and **300** tons more residential material per week (compared to pre-pandemic times)!

## Need More Info?



Editor, Janna McKay  
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For tips, resources and other recycling services!  
**www.RecycleSmart.org**  
925-906-1801  
Authority@RecycleSmart.org



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**Organics, Recycling and Landfill**  
925-685-4711

For questions concerning your recycling, organics or landfill carts, billing, new service, vacation hold requests, computer and TV collection, special cleanups or to request motor oil recycling kits and kitchen food scraps containers.

Email us with your mailing address to get your own RecycleSmart mask!



### SEEING A NEW LIGHT

Yes, we've been through some changes in light bulb technology. Because light bulbs contain different chemicals and types of glass, they need different handling. Some go in the trash, some can be recycled, and some are hazardous waste! But we've got you—bring your questions to [RecycleSmart.org/HHW](https://www.RecycleSmart.org/HHW) and we'll show you the way.

## Renew Your Shampoo



**Question:**  
I've switched to shampoo and conditioner bars—what's the right way to recycle my empty bottles?

—Gary P, Moraga

**Answer:**  
Thanks for asking! To recycle your goopy bottles, please give them a rinse (this is a good way to get a few extra uses out of your products, too!), then close them up and put them in the blue cart.

We can take shampoo, soap, body wash, and other hard plastic bottles. We'll even take (empty) prescription bottles; just take the labels off for privacy.

If you're on a zero-waste journey, you might check out toothpaste tablets! Tubes like the ones containing face wash, sunscreen, lotions and toothpaste can't be recycled.



"Lucky me, I'm plastic free!"



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