



Rate Year Nine (RY9) 2023 FAQs

When are rate increases effective?

March 1, 2023

Residents are billed quarterly as follows:

Danville and Walnut Creek – February, May, August, November

County, Lafayette, Orinda and Moraga - March, June, September and December

How much did rates increase?

The percentages below reflect the average increases of the most common service levels for residential, commercial and multifamily rates. Please see Attachment A, Rates, for all services and rates.

- Attachment B: Rate Comparison for service rates throughout some East Bay jurisdictions
- Attachment C: RecycleSmart Services and Programs
- Attachment D: Rate History

Additionally, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2022 12-month percent change in the San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, all urban consumer, CPI-U of 6% was used to calculate a portion of the rate increases.

Member Agency	Rate Increase	Residential 32-gal Cart	Commercial 2 CY Bin, 1x/wk
Danville	8.00%	+\$2.66/month	+\$30.03/month
Lafayette	5.50%	+\$2.17/month	+\$26.55/month
Moraga	6.27%	+\$2.63/month	+\$30.48/month
Orinda	5.05%	+\$2.86/month	+\$33.27/month
Walnut Creek	5.39%	+\$1.44/month	+\$14.13/month
County	4.80%	+\$1.48/month	+\$17.82/month

RY9 Cost-Based Adjustment

RY9 is a Cost-Based Adjustment year. Every three years during the Franchise Agreement, including RY9, RecycleSmart, along with a rate setting consultant, undertakes a detailed review of the Hauler’s actual costs of service for inclusion in the rates. The highest costs of service include labor, overhead, materials handling, and equipment depreciation.

In addition to the customary costs allowed in a cost-based adjustment year, RY9 will also include costs for:

1. COVID leave impacts
2. SB 1383 organics processing

3. Walnut Creek bridge project (impacts only Walnut Creek and County rates)

Franchise Agreement Extension with Republic Services

RecycleSmart's franchise agreement with Republic Services includes the option for RecycleSmart to exercise a two-year extension of the agreement (2025-2027). RecycleSmart has opted to extend the franchise in large part because it is significantly more cost efficient to exercise this option than to go out to bid at this time. During negotiations regarding the extension, RecycleSmart prioritized measures that would ensure service quality and reliability.

RecycleSmart and Republic Services have worked together to identify the service deficiencies reported by community members, and have negotiated terms intended to resolve those complaints. RecycleSmart does monitor service issues and has assessed liquidated damages, the enforcement mechanism in the Franchise Agreement, and has required Republic Services to provide credits to customers for service delays. Included with these remedies, RecycleSmart will now also use missed collections data reported to Republic Services as a condition for approval of certain future costs allowed in the annual rate adjustment for RY10 – RY12. RecycleSmart will also monitor reports of missed collections to the Member Agencies and to RecycleSmart, and open route data, when assessing performance.

The next franchising process will begin in 2023, which allows RecycleSmart time to arrange for services that are the best value for ratepayers, and gather input from our communities and stakeholders, prior to implementation in early 2027.

Credits for Missed Collections

Beginning March 1, 2023, Republic Services is required to provide a credit in the amount of one quarter of a subscribers monthly bill for each call from the subscriber (or CCCSWA staff on behalf of the subscriber) to Republic Services resulting from a missed collection of one or more carts or bins that have been set out on the scheduled collection day and not collected by the end of the following business day. Republic's customer service representatives are also required to be well-educated on the procedure and requirement to issue a credit for missed collections.

Residential rates include:

- Weekly single stream recycling collection,
- Weekly organics collection; yard trimmings with food scraps and uncoated food-soiled paper,
- Weekly landfill collection,
- On-call collection of yard trimmings and/or recyclables (4 combined per rate year at no additional cost),
- On-call collection of landfill materials (once per rate year at no additional cost),
- Two (2) scheduled community Reuse and Clean-up Days per year, where usable items are collected and given to people in need. The unusable items are hauled off for disposal,
- On-call used motor oil collection at the curb,
- Holiday tree collection,
- Disability on-property service,
- Household battery, cell phone and CFL collection at curb, and,
- Schools waste diversion programs, construction and demolition debris diversion, medical sharps (needles) disposal, organics diversion programs, public outreach, and other services and programs in support of reduction, reuse, recycling and diverting waste from the landfill.

Miscellaneous Rates

The miscellaneous rates, unlike the rates for the base services, are generally the same across all Member Agencies, with a 3.68% increase for RY9. Additionally, Republic Services identified a miscellaneous rate allowed in the Franchise Agreement (tiered push/pull service over 25 feet) that was not approved previously, that the RecycleSmart Board approved to include in the RY9 adjustment.

How can I lower my bill?

If you are recycling and composting properly, and not regularly filling your landfill cart or dumpster, you can downsize to a smaller size landfill cart/bin. For example, **residents** using a standard 32-gallon landfill cart can downsize to a 20-gallon landfill cart, and residents using a 64-gallon landfill cart can downsize to a 32-gallon landfill cart. **Commercial** accounts can downsize to a smaller landfill cart/dumpster *and* decrease the frequency of collection. Please remember to sort properly and request the service levels you will need.

By composting organic material at home (in your backyard or with worms), and certifying your efforts through Republic Services. Single family home residents can go to www.recyclesmart.org/certification or call (925) 685-4711. Compost Certification is \$4.50 per quarterly Republic Services bill (\$18/year).

Is there a lower service rate for seniors and/or low-income residents?

No, the RecycleSmart Board of Directors has not approved a lower rate for seniors and/or low-income residents.

Why is my garbage rate different from other neighboring RecycleSmart communities?

Different communities have different service needs because of difficulties related to terrain, different fee structures, and different residential and commercial mixes.

Is garbage service mandatory?

It is mandatory to have garbage service for occupied property within the **unincorporated** areas of Contra Costa County. Residents in those areas may, however, apply for an exemption by contacting the County's Environmental Health Division of the Health Services Department. If exempt, garbage must be removed from property a minimum of once per week.

Service for residents living in all other jurisdictions is not mandatory, however, residents not subscribing to service must self-haul or remove materials from the property a minimum of once per week, and properly divert recyclable and compostable material from the landfill. There are additional record keeping requirements for commercial and multifamily accounts that self-haul.

Residents may not use other service providers to haul garbage, recycling or organics. Those materials fall under an Exclusive Franchise Agreement with Republic Services.

RecycleSmart (Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority)

Who is RecycleSmart?

A government agency – a Joint Powers Authority of six Member Agencies: (1) Danville, (2) Lafayette, (3) Moraga, (4) Orinda, (5) Walnut Creek, and (6) the County.

RecycleSmart does not directly collect recyclables, organics, or landfill materials. Those services are provided by Republic Services under an Exclusive Franchise Agreement.

For questions about your recycling, organics and landfill services, or billing questions, contact Republic Services at (925) 685-4711.

Who approves maximum rates?

The RecycleSmart Board of Directors, after careful consideration of costs and expenses identified by an extensive yearly analysis performed by a third party. The Board is comprised of two elected officials from each of the six Member Agencies (City/Town Council Members and County Supervisors).

The Board process to set maximum rates begins at the September Board meeting each year, final approval is in January, and new maximum rates are effective March 1st annually. For Board of Directors meeting information please visit, www.recyclesmart.org/Board.

Where can I get more information?

Visit www.RecycleSmart.org, call (925) 906-1801 or email the RecycleSmart team at authority@recyclesmart.org. If you would like to provide written comment, please mail to:

RecycleSmart
1850 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 320
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Rates
- B. Rate Comparison
- C. RecycleSmart Services and Programs
- D. Rate History