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Unwind with a Word Find!

Can you find our 12 spring-themed words in the grid above?

- Flowers
- Reuse
- Spring Cleaning
- Fresh
- Bottle
- Lemon
- Dispose
- Yard
- Compost
- Recycle
- Sun
- Worms



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Goodbye winter gloom—hello, super bloom!

Springtime's the right time for **green** cleaning. But how can you clean AND cut back your paper and plastic waste? Try these fresh ideas...

- ✦ Use dissolving laundry tablets instead of plastic-wrapped pods, and reusable wool balls instead of dryer sheets
- ✦ Air dry your clothes for a bright, crisp feel
- ✦ Cut up old shirts to clean—and cut down on single-use paper towels
- ✦ Use non-toxic cleaners like vinegar, baking soda and lemons
- ✦ Choose biodegradable soaps and cleaning products in refillable glass bottles

Want to replace more single-use paper and plastic items this spring? Do a trash audit! Keep track of what you trash during a week and choose one commonly used item to phase out and replace with a more sustainable option. Review and choose a new product to replace each month and watch how sustainable your habits become!



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Eco-friendly ways to spring clean
- Breaking it down: Reuse and Cleanup days
- Save paper with our e-newsletter



In a row they go!

Orinda's outstanding on organics

Residents in the City of Orinda have been doing their part to keep their recyclables and food scraps from going into the landfill. Their efforts have made a TON of impact—literally! In 2022, Orinda collected **2,724** tons of recycling and **6,419** tons of organic waste from residents. The City's sorting efforts—which also included landfill, battery and e-waste—resulted in an impressive 70% diversion rate. Way to go, Orinda!

Oops, Did We Miss You?

Residents, businesses, schools and multifamily property owners/managers: If your cart and/or bin was not serviced on your regularly scheduled service day, and was not collected by the end of the following business day, you are entitled to a credit on your bill. Please contact Republic Services at 925-685-4711 to report missed pick ups and request your credit. If your request or complaint is not resolved by Republic Services, please contact RecycleSmart at 925-906-1801 or email Authority@RecycleSmart.org



BYE BYE MATTRESSES

Has your old mattress lost its spring? Here's how to safely recycle this bulky household item:

Retailer Take Back
Getting your new mattress delivered? Ask your retailer if they can take your old one back at no cost.

Bye Bye Mattress
Central Contra Costa County residents can drop-off mattresses on Sundays for free at the local ByeByeMattress location:
1038 Shary Cir. Unit 7, Concord, CA 94518
For more information, go to ByeByeMattress.com

RecycleSmart staff story

Article Submission by Ashley Louisiana, RecycleSmart Program Manager

Growing up in Moraga, my mom would get excited when it was "pick-up day." She would get up early and drive around picking up the goods she wanted from the curb that others no longer needed. The good news for our unsuspecting neighbors, she retired almost 10 years ago and doesn't live in the area.

Coming full circle and working at RecycleSmart, I carry on my mom's legacy of finding good homes for usable cast-offs, but in a more organized (and legal) way by assisting with managing the Reuse and Cleanup Days program.

The Reuse and Cleanup Days program started in 1999 to respond to the environmental, social and economic issues impacting Contra Costa County. Twice a year on pre-scheduled days, all 65,000 single-family homes in the RecycleSmart service area can set out gently used household items at the curb, at no additional cost, to be picked up by Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery (MDRR).

I recently visited the 18,000 sq. ft. warehouse in Pittsburg where all the reusable items collected from the curb end up. It was a bustling scene of incoming trucks and a sorting crew separating small furniture, appliances,



electronics, clothing, home décor, medical supplies, school supplies and books, scrap metal and batteries. The warehouse is more organized than many homes, thanks to dedicated MDRR staff Jim Nejedly and Adriana Medina.

Adriana had so many stories of where our Central Contra Costa reuse items end up, from the Paradise fire victims to Contra Costa schools needing sporting equipment. She happily connected me with "Make it Home," a non-profit in Walnut Creek that Social Services uses to help furnish apartments for those previously unhoused or aging out of the foster care system. "Giving is not just about making a difference," Adriana said. "To pick up items, sort them, and to see the smiles on the faces of the families and charities who come in and get what they need from us is such a rewarding process."

Since RecycleSmart contracted with MDRR in 2015, over 22 million pounds of reuse items have been donated to East Bay Depot for Creative Reuse, St. Vincent DePaul, HOPE Solutions, Homeless Action Coalition, Uplift Family Services and many other charitable organizations. Over 32,000 homes placed reusable items at the curb in 2022, and RecycleSmart saw the program's highest participation in 2020-2021 when we all had plenty of time to clean house. Residents can also take advantage of the Cleanup Day provided by Republic Services, the day after the Reuse Day, for any junk or unusable materials.

Reusing materials is even better for the environment and the community than recycling. RecycleSmart is a national leader in curbside collection of reusable items and has inspired other communities to develop similar programs. We are proving the old adage that one person's trash is another person's treasure. To learn more about the Reuse and Cleanup Days Program, or to look up your upcoming dates with our new search tool, visit [RecycleSmart.org/Cleanup](https://www.recycle-smart.org/Cleanup) or scan the QR code.



New life for your old stuff

Ever wondered what happens to your household items after they get picked up? Have a look below!

Day 1: Reuse Day



Place your reusable household items—clothes, shoes, books, sports equipment, garden equipment, electronics, furniture—that are not torn, stained or broken out onto the curb by 6 a.m. on your Reuse Day



Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery (MDRR) comes by and picks up the donatable household items



The items get taken to the MDRR warehouse where they are sorted



Usable items get distributed to families, thrift stores and local charities

Day 2: Cleanup Day



You can put two cubic yards, or up to 14 32-gallon trash bags, on your curb.

Following Reuse Day, you can put out your broken, non-recyclable items out onto the curb by 6 a.m. on Cleanup Day



Republic Services picks up items that MDRR wouldn't be able to donate that meet the Cleanup Day size requirements



The items get taken to the landfill



Note: Household Hazardous Waste, electronics (including batteries) and organics, including yard trimmings, leaves and wood, are not accepted on Cleanup Day. Visit [RecycleSmart.org/HHW](https://www.recycle-smart.org/HHW) for free disposal options.

Need More Info?



Editor, Janna McKay
Janna@RecycleSmart.org

For tips, resources and other recycling services!

www.RecycleSmart.org
925-906-1801
Authority@RecycleSmart.org

For questions about your bi-annual Reuse Day contact Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery at 925-692-2286 or visit [RecycleSmart.org/reuse-day](https://www.recycle-smart.org/reuse-day)



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.



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"I'm pitcher perfect for someone!"



EXTRA COLLECTION SERVICES

In addition to the bi-annual Reuse and Cleanup Days, single-family home residents can call Republic Services at 925-685-4711 to schedule an on-call landfill cleanup once a year, and a recycling and/or organics cleanup up to four times per year.

For more information, visit [RecycleSmart.org/ExtraServices](https://www.recycle-smart.org/ExtraServices)



Save Paper—Sign Up For the Digital Newsletter

Matthew C., Orinda

I love the RecycleSmart newsletter! I look forward to getting it so I can learn fun new tips on how to be a better recycler, composter and all-around good person to the environment.

I recently found out that instead of receiving the paper newsletter, I can sign up for an e-newsletter—that has all the same information as the print version—on the [RecycleSmart.org](https://www.recycle-smart.org) homepage.

Once I signed up, I emailed Authority@RecycleSmart.org with my service address to stop my print service. It's that easy!

Now I get my quarterly newsletter delivered straight to my inbox so I can stay informed AND reduce my paper use.



HAVE TIPS TO SHARE?

Send your ideas to
Authority@RecycleSmart.org