



## Gourd Thinking!

Making a jack-o-lantern this Halloween? Get the most out of your pumpkin before it goes in your green organics cart:

- **Bake it:** After you've carved your pumpkin, separate out, bake and dress pumpkin seeds for a sweet or savory treat. Tip: If you separate out your seeds on newspaper or a paper bag, you can compost the leftover pumpkin "guts" and paper.
- **Craft it:** Hollow out your pumpkin and fill it with bird seed for a festive snack-o-lantern. Or add edible googly eyes with frosting for frightfully delightful decor!
- **Compost it:** Pumpkins make a great alternative to fertilizer. Help your parents cut up your pumpkin and add them to your backyard compost or bin—remember to remove candles before composting!
- **Keep it:** Didn't carve your pumpkin? Use it as a centerpiece for your Thanksgiving holiday!

When you're done with your pumpkin creations, you can put them in your green organics cart. Go to [RecycleSmart.org/newsletter-fall-2024](https://RecycleSmart.org/newsletter-fall-2024) for more ideas!



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

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



# Our 2023 yearly report

The numbers are in! Our annual analysis provides valuable insight into our operations, along with a sense of how we're doing as a community. Good job, everyone! Let's keep it up!

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

- How to sort that holiday stuff!
- Squash waste with our gourd guide
- The spooookiest sweets!



Photo by Craig Isaacs of BlueGoo Photography

## Park Theater seat-quel

Lafayette's iconic Park Theater is prioritizing reuse during their renovation.

Originally designed in 1941, the theater has been closed since 2005. In 2018, the City established the Park Theater Trust (TPTT), an all-volunteer community task force, to work on a plan to come up with solutions to get the site up and running. TPTT successfully purchased the Park building in December 2021.

TPTT is finding ways to recycle key elements of the existing Park at every turn, restoring the iconic neon marquee and tower; the charming sidewalk box office; stunning Art Deco sconces; and the vintage Wagner cast metal marquee letters. The letters were refurbished in 2024 as an Eagle



### Stop Junk Mail!

Reduce unwanted junk mail sent to your home this holiday and election season:

- USPS recommends opting out of junk mail by going to [DMAchoice.org](https://DMAchoice.org) to sign up to unsubscribe.
- You can also go to [BayAreaRecycling.org/stop-junk-mail](https://BayAreaRecycling.org/stop-junk-mail) for a list of resources for stopping junk mail, catalogs, spam email and more!

Remember, paper envelopes with windows, magazines, paper documents, and shiny junk mail are all accepted in your blue recycling cart.

TPTT Board Members John McCormick and Tracey Farrell

Scout project by Clark Laskey of Lafayette Troop 200. It's a real community effort!

Reuse efforts don't stop there. TPTT recently sold 100 of the rose velvet seats to a Hollywood staging business for an event. Afterwards, the chairs will go to a prop shop for industry rentals.

When the theater reopens, it will include two theaters, a community room and a rooftop terrace lounge. Organizers plan to offer a robust daily calendar of movies and live music, as well as rental opportunities. Their goal is to reopen the theater in 2025, just in time for the Park Theater's 84th birthday.

Learn how you can pitch in, or just follow the progress at: [www.parktheatertrust.org](https://www.parktheatertrust.org)

Hello 🗋️ I'm a talking recycling bin! Text me your item and I'll tell you which bin it goes in.



**44,064 tons**  
OF TRASH

**26,564 tons**  
OF RECYCLING

**62,529 tons**  
OF ORGANICS

Picked up from residents in 2023

**270 tons**  
HOLIDAY TREES RECYCLED

equal to the weight of 1,350 reindeer

**1,051 tons**  
REUSABLE MATERIALS DONATED

through our bi-annual Reuse Days Program (that's the weight of 5 blue whales!)

**68 schools**  
participated in the School Waste Reduction Program

**EXTRA! EXTRA! EXTRA! CURBSIDE SERVICES**

Do you have a particularly large amount of recyclables, yard trimmings or trash? RecycleSmart customers get four on-call curbside pickups for recyclables and/or organics, and one landfill collection each year at no additional cost. Just call Republic Services at 925-685-4711 to schedule. Remember to put yard trimmings in paper or BPI-certified compostable bags, not plastic. Visit our website for set-out guidelines at [RecycleSmart.org/extraservices](https://RecycleSmart.org/extraservices)

**757**  
RESTAURANTS participated in the Food Recycling Project





# Keep it spooky and sustainable

Halloween is full of frightful fun, however, all of the single-use holiday decor and costumes often create a ton of excess waste—now that's scary!

Here are some ideas for you to try out this year to reduce unnecessary waste or consumption:

- Upcycle old costumes, or better yet, start the festivities early with a fun Halloween costume swap with friends or neighbors! You can also check out websites like Facebook Marketplace or OfferUp for costumes.
- Use household items as costume props (we're looking at you, broom!).

- Go to your local thrift store to get pieces you can wear beyond the season (you can also donate your costume afterwards).
- Get creative with face paint and makeup instead of buying a plastic mask.
- Make your own decorations, like bats out of egg cartons and construction paper, spider web out of cotton or hemp string or ghost lanterns out of milk jugs.

Now that's something humans and zombies can love! Happy haunting!



Scan here!

## Holiday Tree Collection

The holidays will be here and gone before you know it. When it comes to tree collection time, remember that trees must be free of tinsel, ornaments, lights, stands and other decorations before placing it on the curb, and trees over 6 feet tall must be cut in half.

Flocked trees—or trees with fake snow—should be cut and placed inside your black landfill cart, or call 925-685-4711 to schedule a curbside pick-up in advance.

Keep an eye out for your holiday tree collection and pickup schedule in the mail, or you can visit our website at [RecycleSmart.org/2025treecollection](https://RecycleSmart.org/2025treecollection)



## Need More Info?



Editor, Janna McKay  
Janna@RecycleSmart.org

For tips, resources and other recycling services!

[www.RecycleSmart.org](https://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://RecycleSmart.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.



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

# Cart sorting: Holiday edition

One of the best ways we can prevent waste this holiday season is to use items like washable and reusable plates, dishes, cups, cutlery, cloth napkins and dish towels. For everything else, check out our holiday sorting guide below. If you're not sure about an item that's not shown, go to [RecycleSmart.org](https://RecycleSmart.org) for more detailed lists.

Remember, there are some holiday items like batteries that do not belong in any of our carts. You can find out how to dispose of them on our website at [RecycleSmart.org/hhw](https://RecycleSmart.org/hhw)

## Recycling



CLEAN AND DRY ALUMINUM PIE TINS, COOKIE TRAYS AND TINFOIL



EMPTY, CLEAN, AND DRY ALUMINUM AND TIN CANS



PLAIN PAPER HOLIDAY CARDS, BAGS AND GIFT BOXES



NON-METALLIC GIFT WRAPPING PAPER



FLATTENED CARDBOARD BOXES

Tape and labels are OK!

## Organics



UNPAINTED PUMPKINS AND PUMPKIN "GUTS"



ALL FOOD SCRAPS



COFFEE GROUNDS AND TEA BAGS



LIVE HOLIDAY GARLANDS AND DECOR



TWIGS AND LEAVES



FOOD-SOILED PAPER NAPKINS, PAPER TOWELS, AND UNCOATED PAPER PLATES

## Landfill



TINSEL AND PLASTIC GARLANDS



GLITTERY OR METALLIC WRAPPING PAPER



RIBBONS, BOWS AND STRING THAT IS NO LONGER REUSABLE



TREES WITH FLOCKING OR FAKE SNOW



PLASTIC UTENSILS AND STRAWS



PLASTIC PACKAGING AND BUBBLE WRAP



## HOME COMPOSTING WORKSHOPS

On November 2, we will be hosting our final composting workshop of 2024. Don't hesitate! Classes fill up fast. Go to [RecycleSmart.org/workshops](https://RecycleSmart.org/workshops) today to register for free to learn how to turn food scraps, yard trimmings and other organics into a nutrient-rich soil amendment.

Start gathering your home composting supplies! Purchase a home compost bin—residents in RecycleSmart's service area can get a bin for 50% off! Get your coupon at [RecycleSmart.org/compostbins](https://RecycleSmart.org/compostbins)



My Tip

## Delicious Zero-Waste Decor

This newsletter's My Tip comes from RecycleSmart's very own Janna M., who made some showstopping decor out of fruits and vegetables!

For my grandson's birthday party, we dressed up fruit and veggie platters to be characters of his favorite action heroes: Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles!

It was easy:

- For the face, I chose one green fruit or vegetable for each character: green grapes, celery, honeydew and cucumber.
- To make the masks, I used other colored fruits and vegetables that went with each turtle: red cherry tomatoes, blueberries, purple grapes and carrots.
- Then, I used different dips and olives to make the eyes, and used blueberries and black olives for the smiles.

Ta-da! A fun centerpiece that tastes as good as it looks, with no waste at the end!



### HAVE TIPS TO SHARE?

Send your ideas to [Authority@RecycleSmart.org](mailto:Authority@RecycleSmart.org)