

How to recycle materials generated by home-improvement projects



The weather is good, and for many San Franciscans this is the season to address maintenance and construction projects.

Home improvement projects often produce significant amounts of debris and other materials that should be carted away and recycled. Often such projects create more debris than anticipated.

Do not stress. Recology offers simple solutions.

People undertaking small- and medium-sized maintenance and improvement

projects can order a 3-, 4-, or 6-cubic yard metal bin from our debris box department. This service is called Bin-by-the-Day; it's super convenient for customers.

Recology will deliver the bin where you want it. Give us a call at (415) 330-1350 to ask about size options and pricing.

For larger jobs, we offer debris boxes (big metal boxes) in numerous sizes. The largest will hold a whopping 40 cubic yards of material.

We take the materials collected in these boxes to our construction debris recycling plant in San Francisco. We recycle over 65 percent of the material brought to this facility.

If you want to haul debris in your own vehicle, you can take it to the transfer station at 501 Tunnel Ave. We operate a warehouse on the property where contractors and self-haulers drop off single-vehicle loads. We run material unloaded in this warehouse over a special sorting line so most of it gets recycled. Call (415) 330-1400 for rates.

And, if you have leftover paint and are a San Francisco resident, we can accept and recycle your paint. We will even recycle your paint cans after emptying them.

Just bring your paint to our Household Hazardous Waste Facility between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Thursday, Friday, or Saturday, 501 Tunnel Ave.

We also accept motor oil, household cleaning products, and unwanted gardening products, such as fertilizers. Customers bringing these materials must show a driver's license or other valid identification proving they are a San Francisco resident.



Recycling keeps materials out of landfills, saves trees, and supports green jobs. Please use the **blue bin**.

Bulky Item Recycling at your service

Be kind to your neighborhood. Please don't toss worn-out chairs and other large discards on a sidewalk or street corner. Doing so is considered illegal dumping and could result in a City fine.

When you need large or bulky items hauled away, schedule a special collection through Recology's Bulky Item Recycling program. This service is for items such as used mattresses and broken furniture. Even old appliances — including washing machines, dryers, and TV sets — are accepted.

Recology provides curbside collection of large or bulky items at no additional cost to residential customers who make appointments at least a week in advance. To see program rules, go to RecologySF.com or BulkyItemRecycling.com.

Pickups are scheduled on a first-call-first-served basis, so please contact us at least a week in advance. To book an appointment, call our customer service department at (415) 330-1300. We recycle more than 65 percent of the material we collect through this program.



Call (415) 330-1300 to schedule a Bulky Item Recycling pickup.

Zero waste awareness inspiring more recycling, composting

Every year more people hear about the zero waste movement.

More cities are following San Francisco's lead and setting zero waste goals, and it's having an impact.

Communities that establish zero waste initiatives increase discussions about reducing and reusing discards, improving and expand recycling programs, and ultimately recycling and composting more of the trash generated in their communities. That helps keep materials out of landfills and incinerators and supports green jobs.

In surveys customers report that knowing about zero waste causes them to be more attentive to recycling and

composting when discarding materials. That is welcome news in San Francisco because our community wants to boost recycling rates and send as little to landfill as possible.

"I am so very proud to live in a city that has made zero waste a top priority," says Ingermarie Davis, who lives in Bernal Heights. "I believe that working toward zero waste is a small, yet incredibly effective step each one of us can do to protect the environment. San Francisco's leadership in making it so easy for its citizens to be part of the solution is one of the most important reasons I love living here."

Nature itself offers the best example of zero waste. There is no waste in nature. The zero waste movement is, in many ways, an effort to model nature.

Local kids now learn these lessons at a young age. They are well aware of environmental impacts when it comes to trash and are often shocked when they discover places that have not yet replicated San Francisco's recycling and compost collection programs.

When writing school papers, students often contact Recology and ask when San Francisco established its zero waste goal (2002) and other questions about the subject.

The word recycling has positive connotations for most Americans, and composting is gaining new fans all the time. Someday the term zero waste could surpass both, boosting awareness of our collective efforts to help protect the environment and inspiring people to always do the right things with their discards.



Bernal Heights resident Andrzej Davis Krukowski, 11, and his family are avid recyclers and composters.

SIMPLE WAYS TO BE A ZERO-WASTER

Bring your own bags

Keep a few canvas carry bags on a hook in your home. Grabbing them when you go to the store will soon become second nature and help eliminate waste.

Go natural

Baking soda, castile soap, and white vinegar can clean just about anything so you don't have to buy separately packaged, chemical-laden cleaning agents for housework.

Decline products in plastic packaging

Many things that used to be in glass are now sold in plastic. When we refuse to buy food and goods that come in plastic packaging, we send a powerful message to producers and marketers.

Shop at a farmer's market

Farmers can't afford expensive or fancy packaging. They like the common-sense approach of customers who buy apples from a loose bin. Just put them in the scale, pay, and place them in your tote. No trees were felled for this process, no petroleum products were extracted to make plastic bags.

Grow your own food

San Franciscans with small yards or decks can grow their own lettuce and herbs. They flourish in our weather. Doing so is fun and satisfying, and produces zero waste.

Nice to know

Neat trick

Ever wonder what to do with the used oil in the bottom of the frying pan after cooking eggs or fish?

We've got a lifehack that will make cleanup easy, save water, and benefit the environment.

The microorganisms in compost love fats and oils from the foods we eat. Microorganisms also love short paper fibers. We've got a tried-and-true method of



combining those things to help make good compost and keep the kitchen clean: Keep a half roll of toilet paper in your kitchen cabinet. When you have residual oil in a frying pan, wipe it out with a few sections of toilet paper. Then toss the oily paper in your kitchen compost pail. You will be amazed at how clean this gets the pan and how much water you save.

Adding small pieces of paper to your compost bin also helps control odors because the paper absorbs moisture. And local farmers will love you because you are helping make more and better compost.

How do you recycle plastic bags?



Here is one answer: Bring them back to the grocery store.

Here is another: Decline to take them.

But plastic bags still have a way of creeping into our lives. A magazine or newspaper, for example, may arrive in a plastic bag.

Here is a third answer to the question above: Put them in a plastic bag dispenser at a local dog run.

Dog owners will appreciate the assist, and dog runs and city parks will be cleaner.

Check the Community Clean Team Calendar

Every year San Francisco Public Works organizes more than a dozen Community Clean Team Events as a service to residential customers.

Residents can drop off large or bulky items, such as used mattresses, old TV sets and other electronics, and yard trimmings.

It is the agency's largest and longest-running volunteer program.

The events rotate to different neighborhoods. Go to sfpublicworks.org/volunteer to check when the next Clean Team event is scheduled for your neighborhood.

Recology provides several services, including collection and staffing, as part of Clean Team events.

Clean Team events occur on Saturdays and beginning at 8 a.m. Residents are encouraged to come early to avoid the busy drop-off periods.

RECYCLING, COMPOST, AND TRASH COLLECTION:

Recology Sunset Scavenger
(415) 330-1300

Recology Golden Gate
(415) 626-4000

Debris Box Service
(888) 404-4008

BulkyltemRecycling.com
(415) 330-1300