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Recology Sunset Scavenger and Recology Golden Gate, your local recycling companies

RECYCLE
COMPOST

Recycling supervisor's idea becomes program for social good

David Nanney, a supervisor at Recycle Central, the recycling plant Recology operates on Pier 96 in San Francisco, noticed the occasional BART ticket moving across a set of screens inside the plant.

BART riders often have multiple tickets with some value remaining, but not enough to pay for a trip. Some people toss these "tiny tickets" in their blue bin, which is designated for bottles, cans, paper, and hard plastics. But because the tickets are made of a very thin plastic and are small and lightweight, they present unique challenges inside the plant.

At Nanney's suggestion, plant management enlisted the help of the recycling sorters to watch for the occasional BART tickets and toss them in special collection boxes. In six months the value of the tickets collected totaled more than \$2,500. The redeemed value of the tickets will be donated to the

San Francisco Food Bank and Friends of the Urban Forest.

Managers overseeing Recology's collection operations in San Francisco heard about Nanney's idea and expanded the program.

San Franciscans are now encouraged to tape BART tickets earmarked for donation to the lid of their blue bin or hand them to a Recology recycling collector.

When our drivers finish their routes, they will place all BART tickets they collect in a donation box in our dispatch office. We will send the tickets we collect to a community foundation that redeems them and sends the money to the two local nonprofit organizations.

We call the new program **Turning Tiny Tickets into Trees**.

"Recycling is truly amazing when it can turn unused BART tickets into trees for San Francisco," said Dan Flanagan, executive director of Friends of the Urban Forest, which promotes community tree



planting, care, education, and advocacy.

The Food Bank delivers food to 225,000 people through 450 local nonprofit groups, such as neighborhood pantries, soup kitchens, senior centers, homeless shelters, and youth programs.

"Donations from the tiny tickets can quickly turn into much-needed meals on the family dinner table," said marketing and communications manager Lisa Mizokami.

Repurposing inspires creativity



Discover the joy of creating something unique from reused materials.

Mason jars that once held spaghetti sauce become jazzy flower vases or eye-catching herb pots.

Old photo slides (remember those?) are repurposed to create a colorful lampshade.

Plastic milk jugs can be refashioned as Halloween skeletons.

Recycling and crafting pair beautifully. The results are often clever and functional. All it takes is a little imagination, and anything "old" — glass, wire, wood, paper, fabric, plastic — can be made new again.

"It lets you be creative and make something unique," said Mimi Chan, a route maintenance specialist at Recology Sunset Scavenger.

Crafty recycling projects reduce waste and produce artistic items for use in the home, garden, even the tool shed.

The best part about using recycled materials to make crafts is "spending time with the kids," said Chan, mother of two young children.

And it's fun. Making crafts from recycled materials can be done in many different and unusual ways. Faucet handles from discarded plumbing, for example, can be painted different colors and serve as knobs on drawers and cabinets.

You can find all sorts of terrific ideas and photographs showing crafts created with recycled materials at Pinterest.com. So go online, gain inspiration, grab some garbage, and get crafting.



Two more places to recycle plastic bags

Recology encourages customers to decline plastic bags and carry canvas totes when shopping. Doing so reduces the amount of garbage generated and reduces dependence on plastic, which is made from oil and natural gas.



The City of San Francisco's ban on single-use plastic checkout bags, which applies to supermarkets and chain pharmacies, will include all businesses and retail establishments beginning Oct. 1. Restaurants have until October 2013 to comply.

Plastic bags have been ubiquitous in the waste stream for many years. Other film or flimsy plastics remain a staple in packaging. Therefore, at the City's request, Recology is conducting a test program that provides two new locations where customers can take plastic bags and other film plastics for recycling.

- While residents can return plastic bags to grocery stores for recycling, now Recology has set up drop-off bins at:
 - **The solid waste and recycling transfer station at 501 Tunnel Ave.**
 - **Recycle Central, the recycling plant Recology operates on Pier 96.**

The weigh master at these sites will direct customers to specific bins for only film and flimsy plastics such as bread bags,

shrink wrap, and dry-cleaning bags.

We only accept film or flimsy plastics through this program. Do not mix any other material, such as paper or hard plastics, with the film plastic.

Recology's drop-off locations for film plastics may be used by San Francisco residential and commercial customers during regular business hours at no additional charge.

Please do not place film plastics in the blue carts at your home and business as such plastics wrap around and clog recycling equipment.

Please continue placing bottles, cans, paper, and hard plastics, such as molded plastic packaging and plastic cups and tubs, in the blue recycling bins at home and work.

Recycling transfer station welcomes two bee hives

By Angela Goebel

Recyclers aren't the only busy workers at the recycling transfer station, fondly known as the city dump.

Honey bees, which play a critical role in plant reproduction, fly from two hives at the south end of the property to gardens in Visitacion Valley and to Candlestick State Park.

Recology employee-owners are learning the art of beekeeping from San Francisco Bee-Cause. Both organizations support local agriculture through their work.

Recology collects food scraps and plants to produce nutrient-rich compost used on vineyards and farms, including urban farms. SF Bee-Cause works to help ensure an adequate presence of bees in the city to pollinate fruits and vegetables.

The buzz about bees began at Recology last year with lunchroom discussions about the crucial connection between bees, the food supply, and the environment. Employees decided to tend bee hives and asked Karen Peteros, co-founder of SF Bee-Cause, for advice and assistance.

"Without the work Recology does, including efforts to educate San Francisco residents about best practices concerning household hazardous waste, our bees would have a considerably less healthy environment in which to forage for needed pollens and nectars," Peteros said.

Employee-owners Julio Gomez and Sam Selak poured two hive platforms using recycled concrete and coated the beehives with recycled paint, one in blue and one in green. In February, Bee-Cause brought two hives from Hayes Valley Farm to the transfer station and installed them near a storage yard.

About one-third of the food supply depends on pollination. Without honey bees, Americans would be deprived of dozens of produce staples, from apples to zucchini.

"Plenty of worker bees have been returning with legs covered in red, yellow, or orange pollen," said Gary Keep, a senior compliance specialist at the transfer station.

Some years, Peteros said, hives yield pounds of honey; some years nothing. Honey or not, the employee-owners at



One of two beehives at Recology San Francisco.

Recology are excited and proud of the project, which helps sustain plants and farms.

Angela Goebel is a customer service representative at Recology Sunset Scavenger and serves on the Board of Directors of Hayes Valley Farm.

