

Redwood Empire Recycling News



The Ratto Group

A family of companies

Fall 2014

unicycler.com

Contact Us:

Redwood Empire Disposal
707-585-0291



Online Chat at:
unicycler.com

Office Hours

Monday - Friday 7am-6pm
Saturday - Sunday 7am-3pm



[/NorthBayUnicycler](https://www.facebook.com/NorthBayUnicycler)

Upcoming Events: Christmas Tree Pickup

Cloverdale (city limits)

Curbside Collection:

January 5th -
January 9th

Drop-off Location:

December 26th -
January 15th

Daily 8am-4pm
at the Cloverdale
Citrus Fairgrounds
Washington St.
Entrance



Healdsburg (city limits)

Curbside Collection:

December 29th - January 9th

Drop-off Location:

December 26th - January 16th

Daily 8am-5pm at the City Corporation Yard
(550 Westside Rd.)

Unincorporated Sonoma County

Curbside Collection:

*Collection dates vary, please see schedule
online at www.unicycler.com after Dec 1st

**Place whole trees at the curb on scheduled
collection day

Drop-off Location:

Sonoma County transfer stations

General Holiday Information:

-**General Holiday Collection:** Customers with
service on Thursday and Friday will be de-
layed one day during the weeks of Christmas
and New Year's Day

-**Green Waste Cart Collection:** Trees are
accepted in Green Waste Carts ANYTIME.
Trees **MUST** be cut to fit inside cart with the
lid closed. Flocked trees **NOT** accepted

-All lights, tinsel, ornaments and stands **MUST**
be removed prior to any collection

-Flocked trees are considered trash and will
NOT be collected at curbside, green cart or
drop-off program

Get a "Bag Habit"

If you haven't made the switch to reusable shopping bags, now's your last chance. As of September 1st you'll be charged 10 cents per paper bag at grocery and retail stores throughout Sonoma County.

As of February 19, 2014 the City and County members of the Sonoma County Waste Management Agency passed Ordinance No. 2014-2 establishing a Waste Reduction Program for Carry-out Bags and a related administrative penalties law. The law is intended to reduce litter, keep plastic bags out of local waterways, and encourage the use of reusable bags. Just in Sonoma County, it is estimated that 232 million plastic bags and 46 million paper bags are used each year.

"Bag Your Bags"

The Ratto Group at Redwood Empire Disposal knows that there are still bags being produced so until plastic bags are obsolete, we will accept them! Please just be sure to place all bags into one big bag before placing it in your recycling cart or bin! Examples of recyclable plastic bags are all clean, dry bags labeled #2 or #4, bread bags, case wrap from water bottles, or dry cleaning bags just to name a few. Grocery stores will have drop off locations for plastic bags as well.

Most grocers' and large retailers such as Target and Wal-Mart now accept the plastic bag, wrap, and film for recycling. Look for a bin near the front of the store or check for local recycling options nearest you.

To help residents get the bag habit and support local jobs, the Sonoma County Waste Management Agency has contracted with BPE-USA Santa Rosa, to produce 10,000 reusable shopping bags. The reusable bags are produced from local sources that have an overstock of materials. Funding comes from the Sonoma County Waste Management Agency with support from community organizations, individuals, and businesses.

Some tips to help you to get the bag habit include putting your bags where you will see them. Carry them next to you in the passenger seat or hanging from a knob instead of the trunk or backseat of your car. Before you go into a store, check to make sure that you have your reusable bags in your cart or basket. If you forget a bag, you can find reusable bags for sale in most stores. If you only go shopping for a few items, you can also avoid the charge by going bag-less.

Plastic Bag Facts

- Plastic bags are the most visible source of litter we see on most streets and freeways today.
- One single plastic bag can take up to 1,000 years to degrade and also remain toxic after they break down.
- Though efficient to produce, it is crucial that plastic bags be reused and recycled and kept out of natural environments because they do not biodegrade quickly and can cause problems for wildlife when improperly disposed.

You can see a calendar of events at www.recyclenow.org/reduce/carryout_bag_reduction.asp get your bag (while supplies last).

Visit <http://www.recyclenow.org/business/carryoutbags.asp> to get the facts about the ordinance, to find suppliers of ordinance-compliant checkout bags and to download bilingual customer education materials. For additional questions, email recyclenow@sonoma-county.org or call 707-565-3375.



Keep Your Green Clean!

Keep your cart clean by wrapping your food scraps in a brown paper bag or newspaper.

The following materials are banned from your yard waste cart.

- garbage • sod or dirt • rock • gravel or concrete • lumber
- playground bark • plastic bags • nursery pots or plastic • pet waste • palm fronds • processed or treated wood products
- bamboo • cups, packaging & straws • liquid waste & ice
- plastics • cardboard • take-out containers • compostable plastics (even bio-bags) • synthetic corks • waxed cardboard • poison oak • Sudden Oak Death infested material • BBQ ashes • tree stumps • meat & bones
- seafood & shells • cheese • dairy products



Redwood Empire Recycling News

Guidelines & Reminders from Customer Service

To help us provide the best service to you, please observe the following:



- Place carts at the road edge the night prior to your service day.
- Please leave 3 feet between garbage, recycling & yard waste carts.
- Place garbage loosely in your cart. Carts that are overstuffed or have material jammed into them may not empty completely.
- Please remove your containers from the road edge as soon after they have been serviced as is practical.

- Be sure all items are contained inside your carts. Carts that have items sticking out of them or have material piled on top may not be emptied or may receive additional charges.
- You may opt to set out recycle and yard waste carts only when full if you choose.

For everyone's safety and convenience, we request that you pay special attention to the following:

- Do not place carts within three feet of vehicles, mailboxes, fire hydrants, other obstacles or personal property.
- Collection vehicles need 14' overhead clearance. Carts should not be placed in an area with overhangs, trees or other obstacles.
- Please park your car in your driveway the night before your collection day whenever possible. There may be a delay in collection of blocked carts.
- Please dispose of medications properly at a safe medicine disposal site. Throwing them away or flushing them down the toilet can contaminate our drinking water supply. Contact your City for the nearest drop-off location in your community.
- If you have any questions, please call or check out our new on-line chat option at unicycler.com.

Extra Trash

- If you have an overloaded garbage cart or extra bags of garbage piled on top of, or alongside your cart, you may receive an automatic charge for each extra bag or can of garbage. Carts are considered overloaded if the lid will not close.
- If you have extra garbage, call our office at 585-0291 by 2:30 pm the day before your regular collection day to order extra service and avoid confusion when you receive your bill. Do not overstuff your carts as they may not empty completely.

Bulky Item Pickups

The Ratto Group - A family of companies local hauler (Redwood Empire Disposal) offers Bulky Item Pick up for items that are too large for your cart.

Items such as mattresses, couches, and large furniture items can be picked up for a fee* for single-family residential customers. Call Redwood Empire Disposal at 585-0291 to schedule a pick up.

We make any attempt to reduce, reuse and recycle your bulky items and keep them out of the landfill. Help us out by trying to donate your item before disposing of it.

Please Remember:

- We are unable to pick up hazardous waste. Call the HHW hotline at 795-2025 or visit unicycler.com for more information.
- Please direct reusable items to thrift or second hand stores.

*Certain items have pick-up fees. Please call or chat online at unicycler.com for details.



Our "Green Family" - Partners in Food Waste Recycling

Our "Green Family" consists of businesses in our community who currently take advantage of our Food Waste Recycling program. Please support and thank them for making every effort to reduce our local footprint.

Want to join our "Green Family"?
Email now to GreenFamily@unicycler.com



Save Yourself Some Money!

If you are generating less waste, you can reward yourself with a smaller garbage bill by exchanging your current cart for a smaller size.

We offer four levels of service. Super recyclers or small families may be able to reduce their waste and subscribe to the 20 gallon service.

If you would like to change your service level, please contact our office for details and rates.

Cart Placement Guidelines

Please observe the following guidelines regarding proper cart placement to assure that garbage, greenwaste and recycling collection operates smoothly:

Keep carts three-feet away from other containers or structures.

Place carts three feet from other carts, telephone poles, automobiles, mailboxes, or other structures.

Be sure the arrows on the lid are pointing towards the street.

Face each cart so that the arrows on the lid face the street and the hinges face away from the street. If the hinge faces the wrong way, the lid or hinges may be damaged.

Got Cooking Oil?

Plan on cooking this holiday season? Not sure what to do with leftover oil and grease? Fortunately, there is a solution. Several Sonoma County restaurants accept clean, liquid vegetable oil that is mostly free of any solids, meat scraps or water. Yokayo Biofuels, a CDFA-licensed grease collection center based in Ukiah, collects used vegetable oil and processes it into biodiesel. Visit recyclenow.org and see the Recycling Topics Database Search and look under "grease/food service oils" for additional Sonoma County locations that accept clear cooking oil. Or call 565-DESK for more information.

The following locations accept up to 10 gallons of clean vegetable oil that is free of any solids or water. Please call for hours and delivery instructions.

Make sure that there is a twelve-foot vertical clearance above carts.

Keep carts away from low phone or electric wires, low hanging tree branches or other overhead obstructions.

Do not place carts behind parked cars, fire hydrants, trees or other obstructions.

Do not place carts where access to them is blocked.

Place carts no more than two-feet away from the curb or road edge.

The automated lifting arm, when fully extended, has a horizontal reach of only three-feet. Be sure the cart is placed on a level surface.

Betty's English Fish n' Chips
4046 Sonoma Hwy Santa Rosa, (707) 539-0899

Coco's Bakery Restaurant
1501 Farmers Ln. Santa Rosa, (707) 545-2626

Big John's Market
1345 Healdsburg Ave. Healdsburg, (707) 433-7151

Puerto Vallarta
3333 Cleveland Ave. Santa Rosa, (707) 575-4374

Black Bear Diner
201 W. Napa St. # 34 Sonoma, (707) 935-6800

Willowbrook Ale House
3600 Petaluma Blvd N. Petaluma, (707) 775-4232

Ask the Unicycler

Dear Unicycler,

I really don't want to send gift wrap to the landfill during the holidays this year. Can wrapping paper go in the blue recycling cart instead?

Signed,

Wrapping Waste Worrier

Dear Wrapping Waste Worrier:

Fortunately, a lot of gift wrap options can be recycled! Any non-metallic wrapping paper, tissue paper, gift boxes, and paper gift bags can go in the blue recycling cart, even if they still have tape and gift tag stickers attached. However, metallic wrapping paper, bows and ribbons, metallic gift bags, and filling such as Styrofoam peanuts and shredded plastic, must all go in the trash.

An easy way to avoid sending gift wrap to the landfill is by using eco-friendly alternatives. For example, you can re-use paper you already have in the house as gift wrap such as newspaper, brown paper bags, old maps, or colorful calendar pages. If you do want to use traditional gift wrap, try to purchase wrapping materials that have recycled content whenever possible. Also, try wrapping the gift in a reusable item that can be a part of the gift such as reusable tote bags, baskets, scarves, or other textiles that can be used as wrap. In addition, try and save bows, bags, and gift boxes to reuse for the following year. Reusing materials will save money and decrease the amount of waste going to the landfill. A win-win!

Have a recycling or environmental question? Ask us at greenteam@unicycler.com. Or, like us on Facebook and post your questions there.

Unicycler Offering Full Construction Services Plus an 82% Diversion Rate!

The Unicycler has been busy as of late. We are proud to announce that the Ratto Group is now offering full construction services for all of your disposal needs. By "Construction Services" we mean just about everything a general contractor would need to get a building project going. This also includes disposal of the construction and demolition materials which we are diverting at a rate over 82% from the landfill. Exchanges of debris boxes can even be done same day. We now offer a full array of the following:



Give us a call at 707-585-5222 or visit us at www.unicycler.com

Single-Stream Recycling Guide

Place all recycling together inside the blue cart

Mixed Paper and Cardboard

Flatten or cut boxes to fit loosely inside cart. Place shredded paper in clear plastic or paper bag.

Yes!

- White & Colored Paper
- Office Paper & Junk Mail
- Newspaper
- Magazines & Catalogs
- Cereal & Shoe Boxes
- Corrugated Cardboard

No!

- Napkins, Towels, Tissues
- Food-Contaminated Paper
- Photographs or Blueprint Paper
- Waxed Cardboard or Paper



Milk Cartons and Juice/Rice/Soy Boxes

Remove straws. Empty before recycling.

Yes!

- Milk Cartons
- Drink Boxes

No!

- Plastic-Lined Cartons
- Straws or Pop Tops



Glass Bottles & Jars

Empty before recycling. Leave caps screwed on.

Yes!

- Clear & Colored Glass
- Food & Beverage Jars

No!

- Window or Mirror Glass
- Ceramic, Dishes or Stemware
- Loose Caps less than 4"



Plastic Containers

Wash & squash. Empty before recycling. Leave caps screwed on.

Yes!

- Plastic Containers
- Milk & Water Jugs
- Soda & Juice Bottles
- Yogurt & Deli Tubs
- Consolidated Plastic Bags
- Rigid Plastics

No!

- Loose Caps less than 4"
- Styrofoam



Metal Cans

Wash & squash, leave labels on. Empty before recycling.

Yes!

- Aluminum Cans
- Steel & Tin Cans
- Bimetal Cans
- Empty Paint/ Aerosol Cans

No!

- Plastic Caps
- Styrofoam
- Loose Caps less than 4"



Why is it Important to Recycle Used Motor Oil and Oil Filters?

- Used oil can contain contaminants such as lead, magnesium, copper, zinc, chromium, arsenic, cadmium and chlorinated compounds.
- Don't pour used motor oil down the drain or on the ground. One gallon of used motor oil can pollute one million gallons of drinking water.
- Used motor oil represents more than 40 percent of the oil pollution in our country's waterways.
- Used oil is easy to recycle. It can be re-refined into usable motor oil.
- Recycle your used oil filter. Even after draining, used oil filters contain about 10 ounces of used oil, as well as one pound of reusable steel.
- All the used oil filters sold annually in California could be recycled into 67 million pounds of steel, enough to build three large football stadiums!

Here in Sonoma County we recycle 3,800 gallons of oil per year. Recycling used oil and filters reduces our dependence on foreign oil, saves valuable resources, protects the health of our families, and is the only legal way to dispose of them! You haven't finished changing your oil until you've taken this last important step. There are two convenient options for recycling used oil and filters in Sonoma County:

Curbside recycling service for used motor oil and filters!

Call Customer Service at 585-0291 or 800-243-0291 to request a special container and zip-lock filter bag. Then call our office to request a pickup. Place oil and filter at the curb next to (not in) your recycling cart for pickup on your regular collection day. The driver will leave a replacement container when your full one is collected.

Drop-off Recycling Locations!

There are many locations in Sonoma County that accept motor oil for recycling. Most also take filters. To find a list of locations nearest you, visit http://recyclenow.org/toxics/motor_oil_dropoff.asp. Or check your Sonoma County Recycling Guide in the AT&T Phone Book. Find it behind the tab under Recycling in the AT&T Yellow Pages.



New!

No need to spend your time on the phone. Simply go to unicycler.com during business hours and click on the "Chat Now" option on the right side. A Customer Service Agent will be able to handle whatever situation you may have. Or, if it's past business hours, click on "Leave a message" and we'll get back to you within 24 hours.



Redwood Empire Disposal

PO Box 14609
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Tel (707) 585-0291
Tel (800) 243-0291
Fax (707) 586-5543

Compostable Plastics: Friend or Foe

By now, almost all of us have seen the new “plastic” products that are actually made from plants and labeled as compostable. These compostable plastics are also known as bioplastics. While consumers may think they are making a sustainable choice by using a disposable product made from plant material over a disposable product made from petroleum, these products pose quite a dilemma in Sonoma County. Most of Sonoma County’s food and yard waste is taken to and processed at Sonoma Compost, where they turn the waste into new soil. Their facility cannot accept these compostable products for a variety of reasons.

One of the problems with compostable plastics is that they have no time requirement to break down, meaning it may take years or more to biodegrade. To be labeled as compostable, the American Society for Testing and Materials require 60% biodegradation of the plastic in 180 days. Sonoma Compost creates finished compost in as little as 70-98 days, which does not provide sufficient time for the breakdown of many so called “compostable” plastic materials.

Sonoma County is proud that we have a facility that provides exceptional organic compost, contributing to the great agriculture we all enjoy. However, the National Organic Program will not permit synthetics in the food and yard waste supply that feeds the compost. These compostable plastics are accepted at some other commercial composting facilities; however these facilities are not part of an organic program. Composting plastics in Sonoma County would jeopardize Sonoma County organics certification.

The compostable plastic industry has done a great job in mimicking conventional plastics. While this may look good to the consumer, a problem arises when plastics and other garbage is sorted from raw compostable materials. Unless there is a clear identification system, compostable plastics are seen as conventional plastic, and sorted as trash.

This lack of distinguishing can also cause a problem in the recycling sorting process. The first stage of the recycling sorting system is done by hand, where non-recyclable items are picked out and discarded. Since a compostable plastic cup looks exactly the same as a petroleum based plastic cup, they will not be removed, and the compostable plastics will be combined with recyclable plastics. When these items are manufactured, they contaminate the material, making weak or thin spots in products.

If compostable plastics cannot be composted in Sonoma County, and they cannot be recycled, where do they go? Unfortunately, they go to the landfill. Landfills are designed to entomb garbage, and without air, sun, and organisms, none of the trash will break down. Studies have been conducted where landfills were excavated, and researchers found newspaper from the 1940’s that were completely legible. Even with time, compostable plastics will not break down and biodegrade if they go to the landfill.

These are serious issues for the citizens of Sonoma County, as these compostable plastics are rapidly reaching the consumers and therefore wrongly entering both the composting and recycling stream. As consumers, we must each look at our consumption and purchasing practices. There are no easy solutions to replace the habits of a single use society, but we can all agree that the use of any product that must be sentenced to the landfill is not a sustainable way to go.

Thanks to Will Bakx, Soil Scientists and Co-Owner of Sonoma Compost



TOXICS DISPOSAL IN SONOMA COUNTY

SERVICE OPTIONS FOR RESIDENTS

Household Toxics Facility

The Household Toxics Facility is open every week for free drop-off of toxics from Sonoma County residents.

Appointment: Not required

Hours: Thursday, Friday & Saturday 7:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Location: Central Disposal Site (Bldg. 5) 500 Mecham Rd., Petaluma

Community Toxics Collections

Every week there is a toxics collection somewhere in Sonoma County. Bring your ID to prove residency.

Appointment required: Call 795-2025 option 3 or toll-free 1-877-747-1870 or email toxicsdisposal@cleanharbors.com

Hours: Tuesdays 4-8 p.m.

Toxic Rover Pickup Service

Have your toxics picked up at your home. Services are provided on a first-come-first-serve basis.

Fee: \$50/pickup (limit 440 pounds). Limited free pickup available for seniors over 80 years of age and housebound residents.

Appointment required: Call 795-2025 option 4 or toll-free 1-877-747-1870 or email toxicsdisposal@cleanharbors.com

Hours: Wednesdays limited appointments

2014-15 Community Toxics Collections schedule

| September 2014 | November 2014 | January 2015 |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 2 Oakmont | 4 Guerneville | 6 Sebastopol |
| 9 Forestville | 11 Windsor | 13 Cloverdale |
| 16 Healdsburg | 18 Oakmont | 20 Sonoma |
| 23 Santa Rosa, NW | | 27 Oakmont |
| 30 Sonoma | | |
| October 2014 | December 2014 | February 2015 |
| 7 Cloverdale | 2 Santa Rosa, SE | 3 Healdsburg |
| 14 Santa Rosa, NE | 9 Kenwood | 10 Santa Rosa, NE |
| 21 Petaluma | 16 Santa Rosa, NW | 17 Petaluma |
| 28 Larkfield | | 24 Rincon Valley |

Locations of Community Toxics Collections will be provided when you schedule your appointment. Call at least 24 hours prior to the collection event. For a complete schedule, visit www.recyclenow.org

Transportation & packing: State transportation laws limit each vehicle to a maximum of 15 gallons of liquid (with a maximum of 5 gallons per container) or 125 pounds of solid material • Never mix chemicals • Place in sealed containers in the trunk, packed to prevent spills • Syringes/needles must be in a sealed and labeled approved container. **Not accepted:** Explosives or ammunition • Radioactive materials • Electronics • Biological wastes (except syringes) • Controlled substances.

SERVICE OPTIONS FOR BUSINESSES

Household Toxics Facility

Located at the Central Disposal Site, the Household Toxics Facility is open for drop-off of hazardous waste from qualified Sonoma County businesses.

Appointment required: Call 795-2025 option 2 or toll-free 1-877-747-1870 or email toxicsdisposal@cleanharbors.com

Forms & fees: Paperwork required. Download forms at www.recyclenow.org. \$25 processing fee plus disposal fees based on type and quantity of waste.

Hours: Tuesdays & Wednesdays 7:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Location: Central Disposal Site (Bldg. 5) at 500 Mecham Rd., Petaluma

Community Toxics Collections

Every week there is a toxics collection somewhere in Sonoma County. Space may be limited for business appointments and is based on availability.

Appointment required: Call 795-2025 option 2 or toll-free 1-877-747-1870

Forms & fees: Paperwork required. Download forms at www.recyclenow.org. \$25 processing fee plus disposal fees based on type and quantity of waste.

Hours: Tuesdays 4-8 p.m. for a complete schedule of Community Toxics Collections, visit www.recyclenow.org

