



## FROM THE EDITOR

The 2025-26 school year has begun, and San Benito County students are back in the classroom and families are settling into their new routines. We hope that the 4Rs: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rot continue to be a part of every household's rhythm.

This issue of Journeys to Zero Waste includes resources for learning and practicing the 4Rs.

San Benito County residents have been making great strides in reducing waste year after year. Thanks to your efforts, less trash is heading to John Smith Road Landfill. Instead, organic material is going to Recology's organics facility in Gilroy to be turned into nutrient rich compost and recycle products are going to ReGen in Monterey County to be recycled.

Recology is proud to stand alongside San Benito County as we Race To Zero Waste! Together, let's keep the momentum going and make this year our best yet.



Some of our 2025 poster contest winners receiving their certificates by our elected officials at the County's Earth Day event.

## Time to Get Creative

Get out your calendar because the 2026 Art Poster Contest is just around the corner. The theme is Race to Zero Waste.

Recology's annual contest features the artwork of 15 winners on our trucks for an entire year!



Two of the 15 winning posters from the 2025 contest were created by elected officials at the County's Earth Day Celebration held this past April.

Winners also receive a prize package and are recognized by elected officials and other community dignitaries at the annual Earth Day event.

The 2026 contest deadline is March 13. Send an email request to [postercontest@recology.com](mailto:postercontest@recology.com) to be put on a list for future notifications, including detailed guidelines and an entry form.

We can't wait to see your posters!



Thank you for your time,

Recology Waste Zero Team  
**Adrian, Lisa, Crysta, Valeria**

## CONTACT OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE TEAM!

Se habla español

[f](https://www.facebook.com/recologysanbenitocounty) [@recologysanbenitocounty](https://www.instagram.com/recologysanbenitocounty)

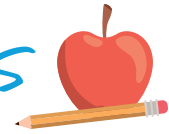
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831.636.7500 or 831.604.1715  
M – F, 8 AM – 5 PM. Messages left after  
hours will be returned the next business day.  
[customerservice055@recology.com](mailto:customerservice055@recology.com)





# BACK TO SCHOOL HELPERS



## RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS

Every year Recology San Benito County sponsors outreach to schools and other youth-related groups. This can take many forms, depending on what teachers, parents, and students are looking for.



Following are just a few options:

- Assemblies for small groups or the entire school. Members of our team can come out and do fun 4R-focused —

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rot — activities, or you can host a performance by a professional “edutainment” group.

- In-class poster-making workshops in the spring. The resulting artwork could be submitted for the Art Poster Contest.

- Our Recology coloring book...and more!  
[recology.com/coloringbook](http://recology.com/coloringbook)

## RESOURCES AVAILABLE THROUGH SBCIWM

Did you know San Benito County offers lots of resources for schools? The county’s Integrated Waste Management department has a great team eager to provide all of the following at no cost:

- Waste Assessments
- Recycling Containers
- Signage

Call 831.636.4110 or email [sbcilm@sanbenitocountyca.gov](mailto:sbcilm@sanbenitocountyca.gov) for more information.



County staff members can provide recycling containers like these for your school!

## MAKE IT A ZERO-WASTE LUNCH PLEASE

Packing a zero-waste lunch is easier and less expensive than you might think, especially once you get a system in place.



Here are five tips to help you get started:

- 1 **Buy reusable bags and wrappers** for sandwiches and snacks. A wide variety of products are available — from plastic bags you can clean in the dishwasher to beeswax-coated wrappers.
- 2 **Pack real utensils.** These can be stainless steel, bamboo, or plastic. Some come with their own carrying case and most are dishwasher safe.
- 3 **Use cloth napkins.** Find them online or make your own using fun fabric prints. (Pro tip: If sewing isn’t your thing, use pinking shears to help ensure the edges don’t fray.)
- 4 **Individual servings** of snacks, dips, fruit, and desserts often come in single-use plastic containers. Instead, **buy these items in bulk** and put them into your own reusable bags and containers. This also saves money because single servings tend to cost more than buying in bulk.
- 5 **Put water, juice, and other drinks in a reusable bottle** or Thermos™. Such a simple act could eliminate hundreds of plastic bottles per year.

Source: [EarthFriendlyTips.com](http://EarthFriendlyTips.com)