

# TOP TIPS

## BE GREEN WITH BURLINGAME

# \$4,000

### FOR A HEAT PUMP

Is your gas water heater on its last leg? Switch to a modern, efficient, and safe heat pump. \$4,000 PCE rebates available until May 31, 2026!



# \$100

### FOR AN ELECTRIC LEAF BLOWER

Get a rebate for an electric leaf blower or charging equipment.

Residents: **\$100**

Commercial Landscapers: **\$500**



### BORROW AN INDUCTION COOKTOP

Try cooking on an induction cooktop at home!

Induction cooktops are higher performing, safer, and less polluting than gas cooktops.



# \$500

### FOR LANDSCAPING

Enough with boring, water-intensive grass. Switch out your lawn for landscape and get **\$500**.



# SORT YOUR TRASH

#### BLUE BIN

Cans  
Glass  
Aluminum foil  
Paper & cardboard  
Plastic containers



#### GREEN BIN

Yard waste  
Food  
Napkins  
Paper plates  
Pizza boxes



#### BLACK BIN

Broken items  
Plastic packaging  
Diapers & pet waste



[www.burlingame.org/sustainability](http://www.burlingame.org/sustainability)

# COMPOSTABLE PLASTICS ARE NOT ACTUALLY COMPOSTABLE.

## AND WHY YOU SHOULD AVOID THEM.

In recent years, the demand for eco-friendly packaging has driven many businesses to adopt “compostable” plastics such as utensils, cups, bowls, and plates made from bioplastics like PLA (Polylactic Acid). These are often marketed as sustainable alternatives to traditional plastic and often feature green labels and compost symbols that make them appear environmentally responsible. This is often referred to as “greenwashing.” In most cases, compostable plastics do not break down in local composting systems, and their use often creates more problems than they solve.



### Why Local Compost Facilities Reject Compostable Plastics

While the term “compostable” suggests these products will break down harmlessly in the environment, that is only true under very specific industrial conditions. Compostable plastics like PLA require high heat (above 130°F), consistent moisture, and a controlled microbial environment to break down. These conditions are not present in backyard compost piles or many industrial composting facilities. As a result, most compostable plastics:

- Do not break down fast enough at the facility. Composters often screen out materials that do not fully decompose within their required 30–60-day cycle.
- Look like regular plastic. It’s difficult to visually distinguish compostable plastics from conventional ones, which increases contamination risk.
- Damage trust and product quality. Consumers expect finished compost to be clean of contamination and plastic-free. Finding bits of “compostable” forks or lids in compost undermines credibility and usability.

### Better for the Planet, Consider These Alternatives:

- Durable, reusable dishware whenever possible.
- Paper-based or fiber products.
- Clear signage and waste sorting
- Education to help residents dispose of materials correctly.
- Reusable San Mateo County is working to eliminate our county’s single-use food ware by championing a reusable culture. To learn more, visit: [ReusableSanMateoCounty.org](https://ReusableSanMateoCounty.org).
- Learn more about our compost giveaway program, visit [RethinkWaste.org/Compost](https://RethinkWaste.org/Compost).

