

# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MANDATORY COMMERCIAL RECYCLING & COMPOSTING LAWS

**75%**  
REDUCTION BY  
**2020**

Two laws passed by the California Legislature earlier this decade — AB 341 and AB 1826 — set ambitious goals to reduce statewide solid waste disposal up to 75% by 2020. These two laws target commercial recycling and composting (especially food waste) to achieve this goal.

**Good news: it's easy — and in many cases costs nothing extra — to be in compliance.** Mill Valley Refuse Service has the programs you need to comply with the law, and in most cases you're already paying for these services. Your trash bill

includes unlimited recycling service and a limited amount of compost service, which can be increased for a charge, if needed. You may be able to reduce your bill by increasing your use of these services. Learn more about the law and our services at [millvalleyrefuse.com](http://millvalleyrefuse.com), or call our office at 415-457-9760.



## FOOD WASTE—HOW MUCH CAN WE DIVERT RIGHT NOW?

**AB 1826 spells out when businesses must subscribe to organics services:**

- **January 1, 2017** Businesses that generate 4 cubic yards of organic waste per week must arrange for compost service. Organic waste includes food, landscaping debris and food-soiled paper.
- **January 1, 2019** Businesses that generate 4 cubic yards or more of solid waste per week must arrange for compost service. Solid waste includes any kind of trash.



Most businesses don't fall under the 2017 deadline, but many more will in 2019. Even if you don't, *why wait?* The benefits of composting include preserving landfill space, reducing greenhouse gasses and maybe even lowering your trash bill.

MVRS invites all businesses — no matter what your size or how much organic waste you generate — to call us today. Ask for a representative to visit your site to discuss starting organic waste composting.

**You should be able to tell your customers that your food scraps do NOT go into the landfill.**

## FOOD DONATION

While composting your organics is great, it's even better to get surplus food (including produce, baked goods, dairy that has reached its expiration, packaged goods and meat) into the mouths of those who need it.

Visit Zero Waste Marin's website at [zerowastemarin.org/foodwasteprevention](http://zerowastemarin.org/foodwasteprevention) for resources and ideas.

We are lucky to have Extra Food, a nonprofit organization in Marin County, dedicated to helping you manage surplus food. Extra Food will pick up excess fresh food from businesses & organizations and immediately deliver it to nonprofits serving Marin's most vulnerable children, adults, and families. Currently they reach over 5,000 individuals per month. Contact [extrafood.org](http://extrafood.org) (415-997-9830) to make an appointment with their expert staff who will walk you through the whole process. It's easy, simple and free! And your business will benefit from a tax deduction based on your donation.

# Food Scrap Recycling



## YES

- FRUITS
- VEGETABLES
- DAIRY
- BREADS & GRAINS
- MEATS
- SEAFOOD
- FOOD-SOILED PAPER
- PLANTS

Reminder: All clean, recyclable paper and cardboard goes in Single Stream cart.

## NO

- GLASS
- PLASTIC
- METAL
- LIQUIDS
- FOAM CONTAINERS
- WAXED CARDBOARD
- PET WASTE
- DIAPERS



# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

## COMMERCIAL RECYCLING

### IT'S EASY TO RECYCLE AT YOUR BUSINESS

- Make sure your business has arranged for recycling services.
- Use the list below to help employees learn what items can be recycled.
- Separate recyclable items from trash inside your business.
- Do not bag your recyclable items, instead place loose items in MVRS recycling carts for collection.

*Note: Any business or individual may donate, sell and/or otherwise arrange for the pickup of recyclable materials.*



### PAPER

Advertisements  
Brown paper  
Brown paper bags  
Carbonless paper  
Catalogs  
Cereal and other food boxes (*remove liners*)  
Chipboard  
Colored paper  
Computer paper  
Construction paper  
Corrugate cardboard (*flatten and bundle*)  
Coupons

Envelopes  
Inserts  
Junk mail  
Kraft bags  
Kraft paper  
Legal pad backing  
Magazines  
Mixed paper  
Newspaper  
Office paper  
Office ledger  
Paper egg cartons  
Paper milk cartons  
Paper towel & toiler paper tubes

Paperboard  
Shoe boxes  
Telephone books

#### DO NOT INCLUDE

Wax or plastic-coated paper  
Tissues  
Photographs  
Hardcover books  
Soiled paper\*  
Paper towels\*

*\*These items can go in your green compost bin*

### GLASS

Bottles  
Brown glass  
Clear glass  
Green glass  
Jars  
*Please rinse lightly to remove food contamination. Remove lids and caps and toss them in loose so they can be recycled too. No corks.*

#### DO NOT INCLUDE

Ceramics  
Pyrex  
Stemware or drinking glasses  
Light bulbs  
Window glass  
Mirrors

### PLASTIC

All plastic containers labeled 1 through 7  
Plastic bottles  
Soft drink bottles  
Water jugs  
Aseptic beverage boxes (such as juice or soy milk boxes)  
*Please rinse and empty before recycling. No need to remove labels, but do remove caps (because they are made from a different type of plastic than the container), and toss caps in to be recycled too.*

#### DO NOT INCLUDE

Styrofoam  
Plastic bags  
PVC pipe

### METAL

Aerosol cans (*empty*)  
Aluminum  
Aluminum cans/foil/food containers  
Bi-metal cans  
Ferrous metal  
Metal lids and caps  
Metal containers  
Paint cans (*dry and empty*)  
Tin  
Steel cans  
*Please make sure all cans are completely empty and dry. No need to remove labels.*

#### DO NOT INCLUDE

Scrap metal  
Propane tanks  
Hangers  
Containers with liquid



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## CONTAMINATION CAN UNDERMINE YOUR BEST RECYCLING EFFORTS

Last year, prices for recyclables plummeted, and there is no recovery in sight. This has created a problem at processing plants—plant workers are no longer tearing open plastic bags full of material as they come across the sorting belts. That means that if your workers carry recyclables outside in a plastic bag and drop the whole bag into your brown cart, it might not get torn open or recycled at all. Instead of spending extra labor time to tear them open, these bags usually end up in the trash.



*These photos, taken at a recycling plant this year, show actual contamination in loads collected by Mill Valley Refuse Service.*

Don't let good recyclables end up in the trash. **Please train your workers to dump out the loose contents of those plastic bags into your carts** (throw the plastic bags in the trash). That will ensure that your recyclables are actually recycled. Thank you!

Visit us online at [www.millvalleyrefuse.com](http://www.millvalleyrefuse.com) for downloadable recycling instruction flyers (in English and Spanish) that can be posted for your workers' benefit.