Reduce, Reuse…Refuel Your Fun!

As spring breezes and warmer temperatures bring the promise of summer activities, many start planning for family camping trips, landscaping projects and planting gardens. Tools used for those activities — camp stoves, barbecues and some lawn equipment — often require an energy source, and many choose the portable one-pound propane canister. Californians toss millions of single-use propane canisters in the garbage every year because there are no options to refill them, and few to properly dispose of them. These gas cylinders pose significant health risks to waste handlers and the environment. The good news is, there is finally another option — refillable propane canisters!

At least two manufacturers are now making the refillable gas cylinders — Flame King and Manchester Tank. Approved by the Department of Transportation, the refillable cylinders can last up to 12 years. Locally, Kamps Propane is selling the Little Kamper and, later this spring, establishing an exchange program through Pick-Up Propane™. Currently, George’s Fuel and Auto Repair at 996 East Evelyn Ave. will refill the reusable canisters. For a complete list of retailers selling, exchanging or refilling the one-pound propane canisters, visit Recycling.inSunnyvale.com or RefuelYourFun.org.

The next time you purchase gas cylinders for your outdoor activities, look for the environmentally friendly alternative and choose the refillable canister. If the store doesn’t sell them, ask the store manager to consider stocking them. For proper disposal, take empty single-use propane canisters to a household hazardous waste drop-off event.

Change to Household Hazardous Waste Events Coming in July!

Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off Events will continue on the third Saturdays of April, May and June at 164 Carl Road in Sunnyvale from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Beginning July, Sunnyvale HHW drop-off events will (1) move to a new location, (2) be held on a quarterly basis, and (3) require appointments for residents.

The County HHW Program hosts drop-off events every Friday (8 a.m. – noon) and Saturday (8 a.m. – 1 p.m.) except on holidays. Appointments are required.

Visit HHW.org, or call (408) 299-7300 for appointments and event locations.
Smart Sorting Begins at Home

It’s no surprise many aren’t always sure which materials are recyclable. Given the vast differences in packaging materials and plastics used to contain the products we buy, sorting them for proper disposal can be confusing. At one time or another, most of us have tossed things in the recycling cart without double-checking their recyclability, or tossed recyclables in the garbage because it’s just easier, or more convenient at the moment.

So, why is it important to be a smart sorter? Doing a better job of sorting recyclables at home ensures cleaner recyclables that will fetch higher market values. Recycling revenues are fed back into the recycling program to help offset service costs.

Here are a few tips to keep things sorted properly.

- Foam food containers, all black plastics and “clam shells” (hinged containers) — NOT recyclable, throw them in the garbage;
- Frozen food boxes and drink cartons — place in the garbage — the plastic layer that keeps them from falling apart when wet makes them non-recyclable.
- Paper egg cartons — these go in the garbage too. While theoretically recyclable, our overseas markets don’t want them.
- Pizza boxes — often contaminated with food and oily residue — can only be recycled if they are clean.
- Glass containers — ALWAYS RECYCLE GLASS bottles and jars and their metal lids.

Bay County Waste Services, the SMaRT Station operator, continues to improve the sorting facility to increase the types of material that can be recovered. In 2015, they plan to install an optical sorter to aid with sorting containers. Optical sorters use light and sensors to identify targeted materials and blow them out of the stream to be more easily recovered. While such a machine will help with sorting, the best recyclables sorting happens at home, so keep sorting smartly.

If you don’t know whether or not to recycle an item, look at your recycling cart labels, visit Recycling.inSunnyvale.com or call (408) 730-7262.

Karen Gissibl, Environmental Programs Manager, shows black plastic and plastic clamshell containers often found in recycling loads.

Residential Recycling Guide

The decision to recycle is made when we get rid of an item. Help keep recyclables contamination-free using this easy reference for recycling right — at home.

Recycle Paper

Small cardboard pieces OK

Residential Recycling Carts

Recycle Metal, Glass, Plastic #1-#7

Multi-family Recycling Carts

Visit Vimeo.com/121302357 to learn more about sorting recyclables from curb to market.
Litter Events Collect 3+ Tons

In 2014, Sunnyvale staff hosted four successful community litter clean-up events. A huge thank you goes out to all our volunteers and youth groups, who collected 6,465 pounds of litter preventing them from entering local waterways and the Bay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of Volunteers</th>
<th>Event Location</th>
<th>Approximate Distance Cleaned</th>
<th>Approximate Weight of Litter and Discarded Debris Collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great American Litter Pickup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 19, 2014</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Columbia Neighborhood Center, Serra Park, John W. Christian Greenbelt, and area around San Miguel School</td>
<td>4 square miles</td>
<td>1,655 lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National River Clean-up Day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 17, 2014</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Sunnyvale East Channel and Calabazas Creek, near Baylands Park</td>
<td>2.7 miles of banks</td>
<td>1,030 lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal Clean-up Day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 20, 2014</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Sunnyvale West Channel and Guadalupe Slough</td>
<td>3 miles of banks</td>
<td>2,290 lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knock Out Litter</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Columbia and Gateway Neighborhood Centers and Bishop School</td>
<td>3 square miles</td>
<td>690 lbs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Upcoming litter clean-up events are the Great American Litter Pick Up on April 18, 9 a.m. to noon, and National River Clean-up Day on May 16, 9 a.m. to noon. For more 2015 clean-up events, or to become a volunteer, visit WPCPevents.inSunnyvale.com, or call (408) 730-7777, TDD (408) 730-7501.

Did You Know …

Pet medications are just as hazardous as human medications when it’s time to dispose of them? Proper hazardous waste disposal is the key to protecting our local waterways and the Bay. Never flush medications down toilets or drains, or throw them in garbage or recycling carts or bins. Residents may take medications to any Sunnyvale Fire Station or hazardous waste drop-off event.

To learn more about proper disposal of medications, visit Recycling.inSunnyvale.com, Pharmaceuticals and Sharps, Baywise.org, or call (408) 730-7717.

Get Your Free Estuary Magazine

The San Francisco Estuary Partnership offers a free subscription to its ESTUARY News magazine that reports on many San Francisco Bay and Delta planning, restoration, science, endangered species and watershed topics. Sign up to receive the magazine at SFEstuary.org.
New Restaurant Glass Recycling Program Aims to Keep Glass Out of the Garbage

The City of Sunnyvale Recycling Program has partnered with the San Jose Conservation Corps (SJCC) to begin a one-year pilot program in Sunnyvale for collecting restaurant glass separately. The intent of the program is to reduce contamination of recyclables at the SMaRT Station. “Many restaurants throw their glass in the garbage because they don’t have space to store it, or time to recycle it,” states Karen Gissibl, the City’s Environmental Programs Manager. When glass is disposed of in the garbage, it breaks during the sorting process at the SMaRT Station and cannot be removed from organic materials destined for composting. We wanted to help simplify the process for restaurants, so SJCC is offering in-house collection containers and collection service, at no charge, creating a win-win solution for everyone.”

Outreach efforts began mid-December when SJCC and Recycling Program staff visited restaurants to explain the new program and invite them to participate. Nine restaurants in the historic Murphy Avenue area signed up within the first few weeks. By January’s end, 18 restaurants and bars began recycling their glass. Within a month, a total of 1.8 tons of glass was recycled and kept out of the trash, reducing contamination of other recyclables at the SMaRT Station.

Efforts continue to encourage restaurants to recycle their glass. Restaurants or bars interested in signing up should contact Alyssa Rice-Wilson at (408) 459-6484, or email her at arice-wilson@sjcccharterschool.org for details.

Chef/Owner Ali Farrokhzad demonstrates the ease of recycling wine and beer bottles at the House of Kabobs.

Special Community Events

Fit & Fun Earth Day Fair
Don’t miss the Fit & Fun Earth Day Fair celebration on April 25, at the Columbia Neighborhood Center, 785 Morse Ave., 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. The Sunnyvale community is invited to attend the celebration of health and wellness with special entertainment, food, music and kids’ crafts in honor of Earth Day 2015.

Greenlight Film Festival
The Greenlight Film Festival 10-Year Anniversary Awards night will be April 23 at the Cubberley Theater in Palo Alto. Young film producer finalists will share their video commentaries on how we impact the environment and their concerns about environmental issues. Grand prize winners will be announced. Take the whole family to this free, live televised event. Visit MidPenMedia.org/Greenlight for details or call (650) 494-8686. Can’t make it? View the recorded broadcast on channel 27 on Sundays.

Call for Entries
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