



**IRVINE**  
The City  
of Irvine  
949-724-7669

ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROGRAMS



**Waste Management  
of Orange County**  
949-642-1191

**Spring 2007**



# 2007 brings Californians a larger cash return on recycled beverage containers

The New Year brought a greater cash incentive for Californians to recommit to recycling and preserving the environment. January 1st marked the first day of an increase in the cash refund consumers receive when they take their empty California Refund Value bottles and cans to recycling centers.

For the first six months of the year, the recycling refund will be larger than the amount of CRV consumers pay at the checkout stand for most beverages in aluminum, glass, and plastic containers.

Legislation signed into law by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger raised the refund consumers receive from California recycling centers to a nickel for containers less than 24 ounces and a dime for containers 24 ounces and larger. For the next six months, the amount of CRV consumers pay at the store will remain four cents on smaller containers and eight cents on larger ones.

“This is a tremendous incentive for Californians to recommit to recycling their beverage containers,” said Bridgett

Luther, director of the state Department of Conservation, which oversees the bottle and can recycling program. “By approving this legislation, the governor once again affirms his commitment to the environment, because recycling saves natural resources, saves energy, and reduces the amount of waste going to landfills.”

Since AB 2020 established the state’s recycling program in 1986, more than 160 billion aluminum, glass, and plastic beverage containers have been recycled in the state. In 2005 alone, Californians recycled an all-time record 12.4 billion beverage containers, 61 percent of the 20.5 billion that were purchased in the state.

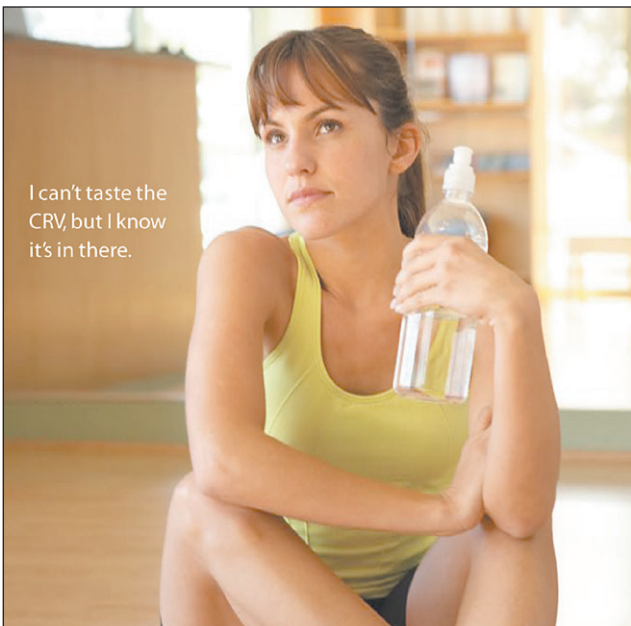
“If we add together all of the containers that have been recycled since the program began, there are enough to fill up all lanes of Interstate 5 with a wall of bottles and cans 14 feet high, the entire length of the state,” Luther said. Nevertheless, billions of bottles and cans also end up in landfills each year.

“When people fail to recycle, it’s not just a waste of money,” Luther said. “It

also means lost energy savings, because recycling saves energy, and those valuable raw materials for manufacturing are tossed away forever.”

Prior to passage of AB 2020 in September of 1986, there was no incentive to recycle bottles and cans other than the “scrap value” recycling centers were willing to pay. CRV was introduced in 1987, which allowed Californians to collect one cent for each beverage container recycled. In 1988, Californians recycled 6.1 billion CRV containers.

CRV later increased to 2.5 cents on containers less than 24 ounces and 4 cents on containers 24 ounces and larger. From 1991-2003, Californians averaged more than 10 billion recycled CRV containers per year. When CRV increased to 4 cents



I can't taste the CRV, but I know it's in there.

(8 cents on larger containers) in 2004, the number jumped to 12 billion recycled.

*Continued on page 4*

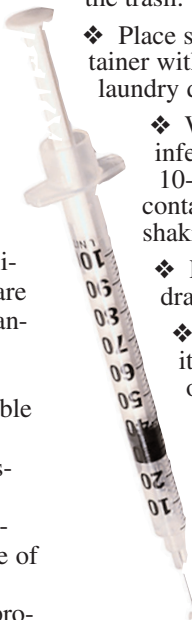
# State bill prompts safe “sharps” disposal programs

SB1305, a bill signed by Governor Schwarzenegger on July 12, 2006, prohibits the placement of home-generated “sharps” in solid waste and recycling containers effective September 1, 2008.

Diabetics and others use thousands of needles every day as part of treatments for chronic medical conditions. Many of these sharps are improperly disposed of and end up in residential trash bins or recycling carts, creating a safety and health risk for children, other people in the community, and Waste Management workers both on the route and at collection facilities. The City and Waste Management are partnering to find alternative ways to handle sharps to comply with the new law, SB1305, by September, 2008.

In the meantime, if you use injectable products of any kind to treat a medical condition, you need to know how to dispose of the sharps properly and safely. Accordingly to EPA guidelines, the preferred method for sharps disposal is one of the following: drop box/collection site, mail-back program, syringe exchange program, or at-home needle destruction. For

- more information, go to [www.safeneeddisposal.org](http://www.safeneeddisposal.org).
- If one of these options is not available to you, then follow these guidelines for safe handling when disposing of needles in the trash:
- ❖ Place sharps in a rigid, leak-proof container with a secure lid (examples are laundry detergent or bleach bottles).
  - ❖ When the container is full, disinfect the contents by pouring a 10-percent bleach solution into the container, closing the lid tightly, and shaking.
  - ❖ Pour the bleach out into a sewer drain, such as your sink or toilet.
  - ❖ Close the lid tightly, and seal it with heavy-duty packing tape or duct tape.
  - ❖ Then dispose of the sealed container in your regular trash.
- For more information, visit [www.wastemd.com](http://www.wastemd.com) or contact Chrystal Fennel-Denning at Waste Management at 714-480-2315.



# Meet the “Irvine Recycles” Team

Our “Irvine Recycles” team will take part in several special events this spring. We hope to see you there!

**UCI Earth Day**  
**Saturday, April 21**  
**10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**  
**Aldrich Park, UC-Irvine Campus**

UCI Earth Day will feature an exhibit of electric vehicles, hands-on educational booths, community service projects, as well as art and entertainment—all to raise awareness of environmental issues. The Irvine Recycles team will be on hand to encourage pollution prevention, waste reduction, and recycling. Educational materials and handouts will be available. Plus, the team will have its popular, interactive Pollution Prevention Wheel Game where lucky winners will receive a promotional prize.

For more information, call 949-824-3500 or visit the website at [www.uci.edu/celebrate](http://www.uci.edu/celebrate).

**Woodbridge Spring Street Fair**  
**April 28**  
**9 a.m. to 2 p.m.**  
**Barranca Parkway, between Lake and Creek**

The Street Fair will feature a Home Improvement Show, Swap Meet, Fine Art Show, Health Show, entertainment, food booths, and much more. In addition, there are also fun attractions for the kids, such as the moon bounce and pony rides. The

Irvine Recycles team will be on hand to encourage pollution prevention, waste reduction, and recycling. Educational materials and handouts will be available. Again, we’ll have our Pollution Prevention Wheel Game where lucky winners will receive a prize.

For more information about the event, contact the Woodbridge Village Association at 949-786-1800, or visit their website at [www.wva.org](http://www.wva.org).

**Children’s Water Festival**  
**May 1 & 2**  
**8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.**  
**Hidden Valley Park,**  
**8800 Irvine Center Drive**

This tenth annual festival is an environmental and water education event for over 6,000 fourth and fifth grade students and their teachers and parents. The festival features more than 70 interactive and hands-on activities that teach children about the environment, water resources, recycling, and ecology. The goal of the festival is to educate children about our ever-decreasing water supply, necessary environmental stewardship, and groundwater and surface water protection. The festival is presented by the Orange County Water District (OCWD), OCWD Groundwater Guardian Team, Disneyland Resort, and the National Water Research Institute.

To learn more about the event, visit the website, [www.ocwd.com](http://www.ocwd.com).

# 10 Tips for Creating Compost

You can make your own backyard compost. The ingredients you'll need are readily available—"green" and "brown" organic waste, water, and air. After you've mixed these ingredients and given them some time to cook, you'll have a finished compost that will make a nutritious amendment for your soil.

Follow these steps to create your own compost:

1. Choose a level area in your yard. You don't want your compost bin or pile to be in the way, but you don't want it too far away from your source of organic material either. You'll need at least a 3 by 5 foot area to give your pile or bin room to

2. breathe and you room to work.
2. Select a spot that is out of direct sunlight most of the day.
3. Make sure that you have access to water nearby and a hose that will reach the spot.
4. Use a heap, build your own bin, or purchase a commercial compost bin. The size and type will depend on how much organic material you have available and how fast you want your compost to cook.
5. Layer "brown" yard waste, such as dry leaves and dead plants, with "green" organic waste, such as grass clippings and fruit and vegetable scraps. You'll want about 2 parts

"green" for every one part "brown." If you are grasscycling most of your lawn clippings, coffee grounds are a good "green" organic material (even though they are colored brown); coffee grounds are a source of nitrogen, as are other "greens." Mix the material as you fill your compost bin or build your heap. Be sure that food scraps are at least 10 inches below the surface of the pile—this will keep unwanted visitors away.



6. Chop larger waste, such as twigs, into smaller pieces. You can chop this material manually using trimmers or loppers, or you can run twigs and branches through a chipper/shredder. (You could share a chipper/shredder with your neighbors or rent one.) Chopping this woody waste will help it rot more quickly.
7. Turn the pile at least every other week. Use a pitchfork, a shovel, or a compost turner. Be sure that the material is thoroughly mixed each time you turn it. The more often you turn your pile, the more quickly your material will decompose.
8. Add water if your pile becomes dry. Mix the water evenly through the material. During most weather conditions, your pile should be moist but not soaking wet. If your pile becomes soggy during wet weather, turn and mix the material to add air and help dry it out. A tarp can help keep your composting materials from getting too wet during heavy rains.
9. Give your compost up to six months to cook and cure. For faster compost, turn the pile more often. When the

waste has become dark and crumbly, you have compost!

10. Spread the compost as mulch around trees or under bushes, mix it into your garden soil, or combine it with soil or sand to make a great potting soil.

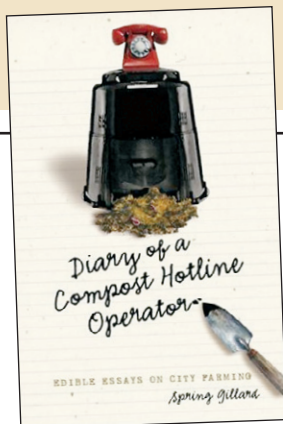
For more information, visit [www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/composting/by\\_compost.htm](http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/composting/by_compost.htm) or contact the Cooperative Extension Service.

## DO compost these:

- Grass clippings
- Twigs and leaves
- Coffee grounds, filters, and tea bags
- Egg shells (ground into tiny pieces)
- Fruit and vegetable scraps
- Shredded newspaper
- Dryer lint

## DON'T put these in the pile:

- Diseased plants
- Weeds that have gone to seed
- Plants that are spread by runners, such as Morning Glory or Buttercup
- Cat, dog, hog, or human waste
- Chemically treated wood products
- Glossy or coated papers
- Ashes
- Meat and fish scraps and bones
- Oils and other fatty food products
- Milk products



## A composter's diary

Do worms have lungs? Can corks go in compost piles? These are just two of the questions handled by compost hotline operator Spring Gillard at City Farmer, Vancouver, British Columbia's non-profit

urban agriculture group that has been thriving for 25 years. Gillard began her diary with online posts in 1996. Through humorous stories, silly scenes, and even a compost "rap," the posts touched on the essentials of composting, alternatives to pesticides, organic and edible landscapes, compost teas, drug-free lawns, rainwater harvesting, and urban agriculture in big cities. Laugh and learn as you read *Diary of a Compost Hotline Operator: Edible Essays on City Farming* by Spring Gillard (New Society Publishers, 2003).

## The Possibilities Are Endless... Compost!

International Compost Awareness Week is May 6-12, 2007. Compost Awareness Week would be a great time to show off your compost pile to the neighbors, start a new pile, buy compost to use in your garden, or plant a tree using compost to prepare the soil. For more information, visit [www.CompostingCouncil.org](http://www.CompostingCouncil.org) and click on "Compost Week."

# How green is your party?

We're fast approaching the season of graduation parties and weddings. Each year in the United States, more than 2.7 million youth graduate from high school, nearly 1.2 million adults graduate from college, and 2.27 million couples marry. That's over 6 million pieces of paper—just for the diplomas and marriage certificates.

When you add to it the invitations, announcements, greeting cards, and thank-you notes, as well as the special clothes, the decorations, the food, and the gifts, you have a huge pile of stuff, some of which almost immediately becomes waste.

For instance, if you purchase a "Congratulations, Graduate!" banner, what happens to it after the party? What becomes of the wedding reception centerpieces? How about the envelopes that held the invitations, cards, and other correspondence? If you use paper plates and cups for the party, where are they at the end of the day? As you can see, these celebrations have the potential to leave behind a lot of waste.

You can make your festive occasions

less wasteful. Whether you are hosting a graduation party, a wedding reception, a family reunion, a retirement celebration, or a business or school meeting, you can plan ahead and create less waste. Here are some ideas to help you get started:

- Avoid a lot of extra paper in invitations, such as double envelopes and reply card envelopes. If you need replies, request a phone call, an e-mail, or include a stamped, self-addressed postcard.
- For less formal events, e-mail your invitations. Remember to call to invite people who don't have e-mail addresses!
- Print everything, from invitations to programs, on recycled-content paper.
- Look for used clothing for the occasion. If you need formal wear, costumes, and or just a different summer dress, shop at secondhand or vintage stores. Accept hand-me-downs with thanks!
- Rent or borrow apparel that you won't use again. For the men, rent tuxes or

suits or borrow a friend's jacket for the event. Women can also rent many items or borrow from a friend or relative. If you often attend semi-formal events, create a "swap shop" with your friends so that you can trade clothes and have something new-to-you to wear.

- Decorate with what you already have. For instance, if you're toasting a graduate, decorate with childhood photos.
- Use washable and reusable plates, cups, napkins, and tablecloths. If you are hosting an event and don't have enough for the number of guests who will be attending, rent or borrow extras. Minimize your use of disposables, and you'll minimize your waste.
- Whatever kind of party you're hosting, recycle! Be sure that beverage container recycling bins are located near each trash bin. For multi-day events, such as family reunions or meetings, be sure to provide newspaper recycling, too.

- Send leftovers home with guests. Donate unopened and non-perishable leftover food to a food pantry.
- Avoid party favors. Your guests are there to share your special event—not to take a goodie bag home! If you think you must give some kind of party favors, give things that are consumable, such as candy, cookies, teas, or coffees.
- If you register for gifts, be sure to register for things you really need and will use.
- Instead of gifts, ask guests to donate to a cause or charitable organization or to bring canned or boxed goods to donate to a food pantry.
- When you buy gifts, look for durable and reusable products. Or, consider giving future events that the recipient will enjoy, such as a museum membership, theater tickets, movie passes, or restaurant gift certificates.
- Donate or re-gift items that you can't use rather than storing what you don't need and won't use.



# Share the good news about Earth Day

In the early 1960s, Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, proposed a nationwide conservation tour to President John F. Kennedy. The tour, which took place in September 1963, was overshadowed by other events. However, six years later, in the summer of 1969, Nelson got the idea for a national “teach-in” about the environment. Planning began for this teach-in, which was dubbed Earth Day and set for April 22, 1970. A call went out. And Americans responded.

Going into that first Earth Day, no one could have predicted what was about to occur. School children, college students, community leaders, public officials, and citizens mobilized a huge, grassroots effort. By April 22, 1970, 20 million Americans, or 10 percent of our nation’s population in that year, took part.

This demonstration for the environment brought about sweeping changes at the federal and state levels. Later that same year, President Richard Nixon established the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency by Executive Order. In the years that followed, dozens of environmental laws were passed, protecting our coastlines, clearing our air, and cleaning up our water supplies.

Today, nearly 40 years later, the successes of Earth Day are readily apparent. The worst of our day-to-day environmental problems have been addressed. In most places and by most standards, we have cleaner air and safer water than we did four decades ago.

However, this year and every year, Earth Day reminds us that there is still work to be done. We’ve cleaned up many of our old messes, but we aren’t finished. Plus, we need to continue to monitor our progress, making adjustments and improvements as testing and technology change. And, of course, along the way, we’ve created some new problems, such as the huge pile of electronics that we discard each year.

The good news is that Earth Day—then and now—is about individuals acting to make a difference. Today, you can make that difference. Get involved. Reduce the amount of waste in your life—conserve energy, save water, and create less trash. Recycle all that you can, providing useful materials to the manufacturing process. And, spread the word, especially to children and youth. Someday soon this will be their environment. Show them how and why to take care of it now.



## A checklist for the planet



It’s almost Earth Day. Are you ready? Use this checklist to help you evaluate your actions. This will also give you some ideas for improving your planet-friendly habits.

- ☐ I turn off the lights when I leave the room.
- ☐ I have replaced at least some of my incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescents.
- ☐ I turn off TVs, games, music players, and computers when I’m not using them.
- ☐ When I purchase new electrical appliances and electronics, I look for the “Energy Star” certification.
- ☐ I keep my showers short.
- ☐ I turn off the water while brushing my teeth.
- ☐ I walk or bike for short trips instead of hopping in the car.
- ☐ I plan my errands and trips so that I drive the fewest possible miles and spend the least possible amount of time stuck in traffic or sitting at stop-lights.
- ☐ I turn off my engine and walk inside rather than idling in drive-through lanes.
- ☐ I buy secondhand and used goods whenever possible.
- ☐ I am creative in reusing what I have by finding new uses for old stuff.
- ☐ I’m a regular at the local library, borrowing books, movies, CDs, and more.
- ☐ I use both sides of paper.
- ☐ I recycle all of the materials accepted in my local program.
- ☐ When I travel, I look for and use recycling bins for beverage containers and newspapers.
- ☐ I use refillable water bottles.
- ☐ I never mix hazardous chemicals or other hazardous waste with my household trash.



## QUOTES REQUOTED

Every increased  
possession loads  
us with a new  
weariness.

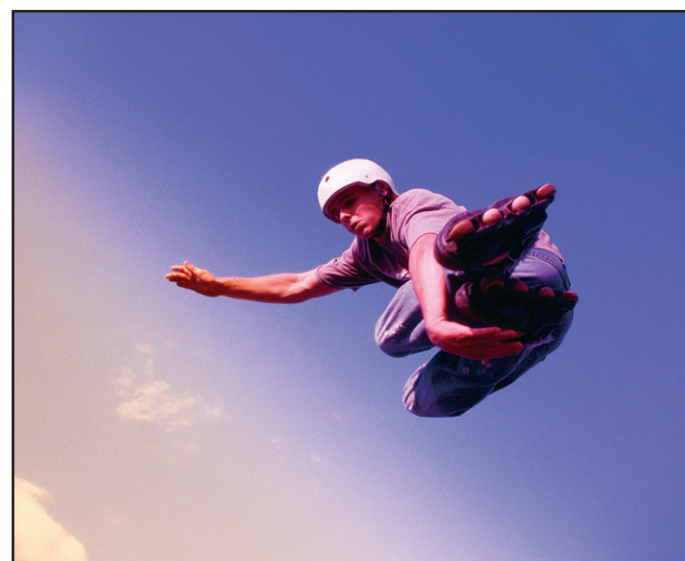
John Ruskin, 1819–1900  
Author and Social Critic

## Eco Action through Action Sports

The X Games are all about extreme action on the ramps and the slopes. But the organizers are also serious about extreme environmental activity. From on-site recycling and environmental education for spectators to clean energy credits to offset carbon emissions created by the event, the X Games are walking their talk, or should we say “grinding their rail.”

Here are a few of the eco-friendly actions that have been a part of the recent Winter and Summer X Games. The plastic bottles from Winter X 10 were used to create 21,000 snow jackets insulated with fiberfill made from recycled plastic beverage bottles. The 360 truckloads of dirt used to build the Moto X track for Summer X 12 will be reused to build tracks at future action sports events. The skateboard ramps at the summer games were made from wood grown in sustainable forests or built using reclaimed wood from previous events. This wood will be reused for future events.

For more information about the X Games “Environmentality,” visit <http://disney.go.com/environmentality/xgames/index.html>.





Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) periodically holds **free residential landscape workshops** for the public to promote water efficiency. Some of the workshop topics include how to water for plant health and lower water bills and landscape design basics. For more information on the workshops, visit IRWD's website at [www.irwd.com](http://www.irwd.com).



Irvine single-family residents with curbside service have on-going **bulky item collection** available year-round. Residents are entitled to two free pickups each year, with up to four large items accepted per pickup. This is a special service and residents must call to schedule an appointment. Bulky items include large hard-to-handle items, such as furniture, mattresses, appliances, computers, televisions, and electronic waste. For more information about the program or to schedule a bulky item pickup, call Waste Management's Customer Service Center at 949-642-1191.

Residents who live in apartments or other multi-family complexes should inquire with their property manager about bulky item service.

## Litter is a costly problem

Have you noticed a lot of litter lately? We have, too! We're sure some of the litter is accidental. For instance, on windy collection days, some lightweight items blow out of trash cans or recycling bins. Some litter may be the result of carelessness. For example, if you have loose paper and empty plastic bags on the floor of your car, they can blow out and away quickly when you open the doors. But at least some of the litter must have been thrown out on purpose. You know what we mean—chairs don't accidentally end up along creeks, car ashtrays don't accidentally get dumped at red lights, and fast-food bags don't accidentally fly from the windows of moving vehicles.

The California Department of Transportation spends \$41 million each year on litter removal—and that's just on the state and federal roadways they main-



**DON'T TRASH CALIFORNIA**

CALTRANS

tain. In addition, Irvine and Orange County spend a substantial amount of your tax dollars each year cleaning up other people's messes! Finally, there is the time spent by homeowners picking up along their own properties and volunteers participating in public cleanup events. It adds up to a lot of time and money devoted to removing something from along our roads and sidewalks that should never have been there.

In order to have less litter, we need to make sure that each person is careful and considerate. Here are some tips. Feel free to share these with your friends, family members, and neighbors.

- Keep lids closed on trash and recycling containers. If your container doesn't have a lid, make sure heavier items are at the top on collection day. Or if your cart lid is damaged or broken, call Waste Management's Customer Service Center at 949-642-1191 for a repair or exchange.
- Cover and tie down any loads that you carry in the back of a pickup truck.
- Remove debris from the bed of your

truck so that it doesn't become a projectile at highway speeds.

- Tossing litter from moving vehicles is dangerous—especially to cars and bicyclists behind you. Don't do it!
- Littering is also illegal. If you are caught littering, you may be subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 per occurrence.
- A car litter bag reduces parking lot and roadside litter. Loop an old plastic shopping bag over an arm rest, and you have a convenient, on-the-go litter bag.
- Pick up after yourself. If you drop something on the ground, stop and pick it up. Dispose of it in a trash can or recycling bin.
- Help pick up litter. You can take part in community cleanups. You could organize a cleanup. Or you can simply carry a trash bag along with you on your walk once a week or so. Be sure to wear gloves to protect your hands. Wash your hands thoroughly when you're done.

Learn more about preventing, reducing, and cleaning up litter at these websites: [www.dontrashcalifornia.info/index.htm](http://www.dontrashcalifornia.info/index.htm) and [www.keepcaliforniabeautiful.org](http://www.keepcaliforniabeautiful.org).

## Garage clutter

### Eliminate it in no time!

Professional organizer Barry Izsak has some advice for you—clear out the clutter in your garage and create storage that works! His recommendations can be found in *Organize Your Garage...In No Time* (Que Publishing, 2005).

In Izsak's book, he explains how to handle seasonal items and sports gear. He shows you how shoe boxes, resealable bags, margarine and sour cream tubs with snap-on lids, old filing cabinets, and more can be "repurposed" to become handy and needed organizers. The book even includes a guide to the ever-popular garage-clearing event—the garage sale!

If you enjoy this book, there are several others in the series, helping you organize your home, office, family schedule, finances, and work day.



Look for these books at your local library or a used bookstore and put reuse into action!

### Containers... Continued from page 1

Most beverages packaged in glass, aluminum and plastic—such as soft drinks, water, beer, sports drinks, juices, and coffee and tea drinks—are included in the CRV program. Notable exceptions are milk, wine, and distilled spirits.

Californians have several convenient options for recycling and redeeming CRV bottles and cans, primarily the approximately 2,100 certified recycling centers statewide. Consumers who choose to forego reclaiming their CRV have a variety of recycling options, including neighborhood curbside recycling programs and various drop-off locations through which bottles and cans are redeemed by the enti-

ties that collect them. To find the nearest certified redemption center, visit [www.bottlesandcans.com](http://www.bottlesandcans.com) or call the Department of Conservation toll-free hotline, 1-800-RECYCLE.

A recent recycling innovation from DOC is the free "Recycling Starter Kit" available to businesses, schools, gyms, and office buildings. California businesses interested in starting a beverage container recycling program can receive the Recycling Starter Kit by ordering online at [www.bottlesandcans.com](http://www.bottlesandcans.com) or calling 1-800-RECYCLE.

All aspects of the state's beverage container recycling program are paid for with unclaimed refunds of CRV beverage containers, at no cost to the state's general fund.

## Keep household hazardous waste out of the trash!

Household hazardous waste (HHW), such as automotive fluids, lawn and garden chemicals, and toxic household cleaning products, should never be placed in your household trash. Instead, deliver HHW for safe disposal to one of the County of Orange permanent Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers (HHWCC). The HHWCC also accepts cathode ray tubes, such as computer monitors and televisions, along with other electronic waste items, which are banned from disposal with household trash.

We are fortunate to have one of the HHWCCs located in Irvine, so drop-off is close and convenient. The Irvine Regional HHWCC is located at 6411 Oak Canyon, which is off of Sand Canyon between the 5 and 405 freeways (use the same driveway as the Bark Park). The HHWCC is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. This center also includes a "swap" area where you can pick up usable household chemicals for free.

For more information, call the county's hotline at 714-834-6752 or visit [www.oilandfills.com](http://www.oilandfills.com).



**We want your suggestions, questions and comments!**

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*The views and statements of environmental organizations referenced in this publication do not necessarily represent those of the City of Irvine.*



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