FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
FACT SHEET

City of San Diego Recycling Rate Increases to Record 66 Percent

…and effective immediately, the city will accept more plastics in the blue recycling container.

SAN DIEGO, CA—The city celebrates America Recycles Day, Nov. 15, by announcing two recycling milestones: the waste diversion rate is now a record 66 percent and San Diegans can immediately begin recycling additional plastics.

"Our customers are doing a good job of diverting waste from the landfill by participating in recycling programs and reducing the amount of waste they generate," said Chris Gonaver, director of the Environmental Services Department.

The 66 percent diversion rate, calculated by the Environmental Services Department, is the city's highest achievement to date. The previous best rate was 64 percent in 2008.

This increase is due in large part to the City Recycling and Construction & Demolition (C&D) ordinances that took effect in 2008. The ordinances aim to reduce recyclables from entering landfills to meet California recycling mandates and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The city provides help to residents, businesses, apartment and condo complexes and special event organizers to achieve successful recycling programs. Call 858-694-7000.

The Environmental Services Department's waste reduction web page, www.recyclingworks.com, provides downloadable flyers, sample tenant letters and newsletter articles to be used in setting up a recycling program.

City recycling experts also provide free technical assistance and advice on how to set up successful programs. Call 858-694-7000, or email sdrecyclingworks@sandiego.gov.

(MORE)

Along with this new record recycling rate, the city's curbside recycling program is expanding to accept new and additional types of plastics. City residents can now recycle most plastic food containers and non-food plastics.

"Why waste a good thing?" said Gonaver. "Recycling additional plastics that were once disposed in the trash is good news because these items get a second life as useful products instead of burial in the landfill."

Gonaver added that recycling markets are continually developing and the markets for these additional plastics have now matured to the point that we can add them to the city's curbside recycling program.

The service expansion is in addition to the plastic bottles, jugs and jars already accepted in the blue recycling cart.

New acceptable plastic food packaging containers include round yogurt and dairy tubs, clear PET #1 clamshell plastic, drink cups, deli trays, and berry baskets. All containers must be clean and contain no food waste or trash.

Clean Plastic Food Packaging

New acceptable non-food plastics include plant pots and garden trays, along with rigid plastics such as buckets, toys, and containers that held non-hazardous household products such as detergent or pet litter.

Plastic Buckets, Tubs, Pots, Toys

Other non-food plastics include large items such as plastic crates, totes, laundry baskets, pallets, and lawn furniture. These types of items must usually be broken down to fit into the blue recycling carts. If they are jammed into the carts or protruding out of the carts, the recycling truck may not be able to empty residences' recycling cart.

Plastic containers that held toxic materials such as motor oil, antifreeze, pesticides, solvents, chemicals, etc. are not recyclable. If the containers are empty, place in the trash. If the containers are not empty, call 858-694-7000 for safe disposal options for hazardous wastes.

Plastics ***not*** accepted for recycling:

- Compostable plastics (usually have the letters "PLA" stamped on them)
- Plastic utensils
- Plastic film or bags
- Hazardous materials containers
- Styrofoam products, such as egg containers or packaging material (foam peanuts)

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