

# Manual for Trash Enclosure Volunteers

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

This manual was originally created by Kathleen Epperson for Second Mutual trash volunteers. The Rossmoor community is also indebted to Second Mutual trash volunteers; Carol Weed, founder of Sustainable Rossmoor's TrashTalk; TrashTalk leaders; and Lisa Lankford, Mutual Operations Department, for helping create this incredible resource. The following, detailed information is tremendously helpful in controlling our coupon costs and contributing to a more sustainable Rossmoor.

No trash volunteer is expected to do everything in this manual. The contents are intended only to be a guide and reference. Most important is to keep yourself safe. Don't do anything that would put you or the Mutual at risk. And only do what feels right to you.

If you have suggestions for improvement (what should be added, what could be said better, or what is incorrect), you are welcome to email feedback to [trash.talk.rossmoor@gmail.com](mailto:trash.talk.rossmoor@gmail.com).

#### **ANTS**

If ants are in the trash enclosure, email [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com). Mutual Operations Department (MOD) will send someone to deal with this problem. MOD sprays for ants on the ground around the perimeter of the trash enclosure. They do not spray bins. For more information on discouraging pests, see COMPOST, MAGGOT PREVENTION.

#### **CARDBOARD**

Cardboard boxes and large pieces of cardboard should be broken down into smaller pieces and folded flat. Even tiny boxes should be folded down so they take up less room in the bin.

- **Small cardboard, CLEAN AND DRY (no food residue or other contamination):** Fold flat and put in RECYCLE. Make sure the recycle bin can still close and there is room for your neighbors' recycling. If not, this cardboard should go to MOD Recycle Yard on Rockview Drive.
- **Plain, small cardboard with FOOD RESIDUE, BUT NO OTHER CONTAMINATION:** Fold flat, and

put into COMPOST. Make sure the lid on the compost cart can still close and there is still room for your neighbors' food waste. If not, this cardboard should go into the landfill bin.

- **Plastic-coated or cardboard with a label:** Fold flat and put into the landfill bin.
- **Large boxes:** Bring to MOD Recycle Yard. Would someone in your entry be willing to bring them to MOD?

### **CART or DUMPSTER, OVERFLOWING**

Republic Services assesses an extra charge if a bin's lid won't close because it is too full. This extra charge increases the monthly coupon for all of your Mutual's residents.

To lessen the volume in a bin, ask neighbors to squeeze air out of their plastic bags before putting them in LANDFILL (which reduces most bags to half size); encourage composting; fish out things that don't belong in the trash enclosure (like TV sets or microwaves).

Republic Services and the Public Health Department advise against "tamping down" or manually pressing down on the contents in bins so the lid can close. There may be sharps or other items inside a plastic bag which can poke through when compressed. Also, there may be liquids and other things which could be hazardous. (It is illegal to dispose of sharps or hazardous liquids in LANDFILL -- but we cannot assume it's never done.)

While it is not safe to stomp down trash, the contents can be compressed if a dumpster's lid is locked down, then pressed down. You can leave a sign on the lid, which says, "LANDFILL has no more room, please save your trash until it is emptied." (Unfortunately, some residents will ignore this sign.)

To report an overfull bin or for help removing a heavy object, contact Mutual Operations Department (MOD), 1-925-988-7650 or [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com). If an extra pickup is needed, only a board director of the Mutual can make this request because the Mutual will be charged extra.

### **CART or DUMPSTER, REPLACEMENT**

If fluid is leaking from a green organics cart, if the lid becomes warped or is ill-fitting, or if other carts or dumpsters are broken and need attention, call MOD, 1-925-988-7650, or email [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com).

### **CART or DUMPSTER, SWAPPING ANNUALLY**

Any cart or dumpster can be replaced once per year without a charge. Residents must request this through the Mutual. The Mutual submits this request to the MOD.

**CAUTION:** The replacement bin might not be as good as the one you now have. For example, Republic's manufacturer cannot supply a split lid on 1-yard dumpsters. If the new green cart is leaking or has a warped lid, contact MOD again to have it replaced. (Often the lids arrive bent

because of how they are shipped. Leaving the cart in the sun for a few days or weighing the lid down will unwarp it.)

### **CART, CLEANING**

[See COMPOST, GREEN CART GUIDE for tips on avoiding a smelly green cart.] Some Mutuals use Nice Cans, 1-925-214-1229, as needed, for one-time service. Or you may choose to have trash enclosure carts cleaned on a regular basis on site -- monthly, quarterly, or annually. Remember to ask for the discounted rate for Rossmoor. There's a video of this process on <https://www.nicecansca.com/>. This is not handled by the MOD or most Mutuals. Some small Mutuals have a contract with Nice Cans for their whole Mutual.

Dirty green carts will always be a problem unless someone tosses 4 to 6 inches of newspaper, leaves, or pizza boxes (without sticky labels) on the bottom after the cart is emptied and until all residents wrap their food scraps.

*One summer a trash volunteer cleaned out her entry's green cart (maggots and all) and returned it to the enclosure with a big note attached which said, "I cleaned this disgusting thing out; please keep perishables in your freezer until the day before pickup (Tuesday) so I don't have to do it again." She signed and dated it. People responded very well. They have had few maggot attacks since.*

*One trash volunteer stopped washing out the green cart in her entry because even if the cart is sparkly clean, the moment it is emptied, the insides, including the lid, are yucky again.*

### **CHRISTMAS TREE DISPOSAL**

MOD's landscape crew will pick up live Christmas trees during January – if they are not flocked. (Trees left later will be removed as time allows.) Remember to remove all tinsel, ornaments, stands and other decorations before placing a tree outside on the side of the trash enclosure. Do not block Republic's access to the bins in the trash enclosure!

Trimnings from a tree, dried fruit, or pinecones are a good alternative to synthetic decorations. If you use store-bought decor, make sure to remove any wires, tape, or other non-compostable materials before dropping wreaths or garlands in the green organics cart. (Skip the snow spray altogether!)

If artificial trees or flocked trees are too big to put in landfill, a person needs to take theirs to Contra Costa Recovery Transfer & Station (951 Waterbird Way, Martinez (M-F 7am-6pm, Sat 8am-1pm) or hire a trash hauler.

### **CLEANING TRASH ENCLOSURES**

No resident is authorized to take on the chore of power washing an enclosure themselves. The trash enclosure is Mutual property. Some Mutuals pay to have an outside contractor sweep trash enclosures. Because once a month is not enough, some residents leave a broom and dustpan in their trash enclosure to be used as needed.

If there is a hazardous spill or a sticky mess that won't just dry up and go away, the Mutual may approve a special cleaning. There is a charge for this since an outside vendor is used.

### **COMPOST or ORGANICS?**

Republic Services refers to our green carts as "organics" carts. However, because most people call them "compost," we use that term here.

### **COMPOST QUESTIONS**

#### ***How are food scraps turned into compost?***

Republic hauls the contents of our green carts to the Forward Landfill near Stockton where food scraps become compost in 30 days. The process starts with a crude sorting (removing obvious trash). The second step is putting the contents into a giant grinder which can handle bones (even big bones), shells, and tree limbs (much smaller than tree trunks). Then the right combination of water, air, and time produces compost that looks like, feels like, and even smells like soil.

#### ***If it is labeled "compostable," can we put it in our green cart?***

The only "Compostable" product which can go in COMPOST is a BPI-Certified Compostable bag. Some items labeled "compostable" (like some disposable utensils, plates, cups, biodegradable packing peanuts and insulation sheets) are not acceptable because they take too long to compost.

The composting facility near Stockton has only a 30-day process. 30 days is enough time for (plant-based) BPI-certified compostable bags to completely decompose. RecycleSmart does not want any products made from potato starch, corn husks, and other fibrous plants (like eating utensils) in our green carts because they take longer than 30 days.

You can put wood, bamboo, cardboard, corn husks, plants (but not succulents), and dull-surfaced to-go containers and plates in the green cart because they compost in fewer than 30 days.

#### ***What about "biodegradable" items?***

Biodegradable items are NOT COMPOSTABLE. Put them in LANDFILL.

Manufacturers of biodegradable packing peanuts and insulation sheets recommend dissolving them in water. Instead of wasting water, consider putting them in LANDFILL.

#### ***Can food scraps go in LANDFILL?***

California law requires that food scraps go in COMPOST. Residents who have no green cart in their enclosure, no room for one, and no green cart in a nearby enclosure in the same entry, can still put food scraps into LANDFILL. Fortunately, Republic Services is not yet charging extra when they find food in LANDFILL. (If a resident is senile and cannot grasp how to sort trash, have them put everything in LANDFILL or offer to help them.)

### ***What kind of paper goes in our green carts?***

The following paper materials can be put in the green organics cart – if they are uncoated:

- Pizza boxes (without sticky labels)
- Paper plates and bowls (if dull and uncoated) (but paper cups go in LANDFILL because most have plastic coating on the inside to prevent leakage)
- Paper napkins
- Paper towels
- Paper egg cartons
- Bamboo and wooden utensils (like chopsticks and ice cream sticks)

The fibers in paper egg cartons, which are too thin for recycling, are good for COMPOST. If the top has a label or is slightly shiny, tear it off and put the top in LANDFILL.

All plastic-coated paper, including butcher paper (used for wrapping meat and seafood), milk cartons, juice containers, and frozen food packages, go into LANDFILL.

### ***Can we ever compost facial tissues?***

No, put all facial tissues in LANDFILL, even if they were only used to wipe up a spill.

### ***Are wine corks compostable?***

Put synthetic corks in LANDFILL. They would contaminate composting. You can COMPOST real cork -- if all other material is removed, including the screw lid and foil cover. Or bring corks to a liquor store which collects them.

## **COMPOST, ENCOURAGING NEIGHBORS**

*When one trash volunteer finds food scraps in the recycle bin or food waste in clear plastic bags in the green cart, she gives neighbors a couple of 13-gallon compostable bags along with a note listing some things which go in COMPOST.*

*For one of her entry's monthly potluck dinners, she gave everyone a compostable paper plate (plain, not coated) and a BPI-compostable bag (which you can buy or get free in the produce section of Trader Joe's). She hopes doing this will encourage more neighbors to compost.*

## **COMPOST, FLY TRAP**

Some trash volunteers use a step ladder to hang a fly trap in their trash enclosure. They add water as needed and refill it every three months. Supposedly, the reusable **RESCUE! Outdoor Fly Trap** and the **Victor M380 Magnet 1-Quart Reusable with Bait Fly Trap** are the most environmentally friendly and sustainable ways to trap flies in trash enclosures. Those who do not want to bother refilling, can use the **RESCUE! Outdoor Disposable Fly Trap**.

## **COMPOST, GREEN CART GUIDE**

RecycleSmart's Green Cart guide includes tips to reduce food waste at home, for keeping compost clean, and a guide to composting. You can download this guide or the "Keeping your

green cart clean!" poster at <https://sustainablerossmoor.org/trashtalk>.

As of January 1, 2022, everyone must keep food scraps out of the landfill cart and participate in composting programs. This law does not apply to residents who have no green cart in their trash enclosures, have no room for one, and there is no green cart in a nearby enclosure in the same entry. However, those residents can bring their compost to the "organics" cart in the MOD Recycle Yard.

### **COMPOST, MAGGOT PREVENTION**

Maggots, wasps, ants and flies love loose food scraps!

#### Prevention:

1. Wrap food scraps in newspaper, paper bag, or BPI-Certified compostable bag.
2. Put food scraps in the day before your green cart is emptied.
3. Layer bottom of green cart with 4-6 inches of dry leaves, pine needles, soiled paper (napkins, paper towels), pizza boxes, or newspaper to absorb moisture.
4. Keep the lid closed. If the lid is warped or ill-fitting, contact MOD, 1-925-988-7650 or [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com) to request a lid replacement.
5. Hang a fly trap in the trash enclosure.

#### Maggots Present?

- Spray undiluted vinegar on rim, inside lid, and on top of contents. (NOTE: Nothing other than vinegar should be used because any pesticide will contaminate the compost material.)
- Most maggots fall out when cart is emptied. This is the best time to do #3 (above).

To avoid the problem of smells and flies, it is tempting to put the green cart outside the trash enclosure. One Republic driver encouraged this because raccoons can get in them by jumping up on the dumpster or recycle bins and opening the green cart to get food. If the green cart with all food scraps is outside, flies will go there and not invade the enclosure. Unfortunately, in several places where that was tried, residents got confused and put clothes in the green cart!

### **COMPOST, NO PLASTIC BAGS**

Are you finding food scraps in a plastic bag? This email was sent to residents in one entry:

*"It has been brought to my attention that someone is putting their compostable food scraps in a regular plastic bag, then into the green container. See page 29 in the 2024 Rossmoor phonebook. We should only wrap our food scraps in newspaper or use a paper bag or a BPI-certified compostable bag."*

Trader Joe's supplies BPI-compostable bags free to customers in their produce section.

### **COVID TEST KITS**

Used, unused and expired Covid test kits go into LANDFILL.



## **DIRT**

Shake dirt off before putting a plant in COMPOST (and give the pot away or put it in LANDFILL).

## **DISPOSING of REUSABLE STUFF**

Are you getting rid of reusable stuff which others might want? Instead of putting them into LANDFILL, here are some options for giving them away:

- Bring books to the library.
- Bring books & DVDs, clothes or cloth, collectibles, housewares, small furniture, or medical equipment to Goodwill, Savers, or another thrift store.
- Bring medical equipment to Independent Living Resources in Concord.
- Put eyeglasses and plastic bag tags in a Lions Club collection box. One is in front of the Woodshop, another is in Gateway.
- Bring inkjet & toner cartridges to the Computer Club at Gateway.
- Give away stuff online by joining Nextdoor or by creating an account at Trashnothing.com (you'll be guided to join Walnut Creek Freecycle).
- Sell or give away stuff on Craigslist (but be careful not to be tricked by scammers).

## **DUMPING by FAMILY MEMBERS**

Give the "Move-In/Out" handout to families who are emptying a former resident's manor. If family members are not available, tape it to their front door. (You can download "Move-In/Out" and other handouts at <https://sustainablerossmoor.org/trashtalk>.)

## **DUMPING by OTHER MUTUAL RESIDENTS**

Mutual residents can use any bin in another enclosure in their Mutual – if there is a reason they cannot use their own. But it is still important to sort correctly and leave room for everyday trash from that entry's residents.

Move-in, move-out or remodel debris cannot go in the trash enclosure. It must be hauled outside Rossmoor.

## **DUMPING by OUTSIDERS**

People in several entries have seen outsiders dump move-in, move-out or remodel debris in their enclosures, especially contractors and family members of Rossmoor residents. When you see this happen, get the license number (if possible), the name of any contractor's company (if applicable), and immediately call Securitas, 1-925-988-7899. (See MOVE-IN, MOVE-OUT or REMODEL WASTE)

After calling Securitas, to get a faster response **before 3:00 pm on workdays**, immediately email [modfrontdesk@rossmoor.com](mailto:modfrontdesk@rossmoor.com). Mark the subject line – **"URGENT – ILLEGAL DUMPING HAPPENING NOW."**

Or call **MOD Front Desk** at **1-925-988-7600**. Wait a long time for the **menu**, then wait a long time to get to **options**, then choose option **"9"**. If no one answers, wait another long time to leave a detailed message with street, entry, trash enclosure and, if possible, vehicle license

number and name of the contractor's company.

If you see a contractor or their workers do illegal dumping, you can have a Mutual Operations Department inspector come out to enforce contractor rules. Call Alterations, 1-925-988-7660, or email [alterations@rossmoor.com](mailto:alterations@rossmoor.com).

When work is done with a permit, the contractor or owner signs a contract that specifies no dumping of ANYTHING in residential trash bins/carts, not even the remains of a worker's lunch. If they don't comply with removing everything offsite, they can be barred from working in Rossmoor. Usually they get a warning with their first offense.

Unfortunately, this does not apply to painters because they don't need Mutual Operations Department's approval to paint. However, when contractors dump debris in our enclosures, if we know when and where these contractors are working, ask one of your Mutual board members to speak with the contractor at that address, determine if they have an approved alteration request.

If a mess needs to be cleaned up, call Mutual Operations Department (MOD), 1-925-988-7650, or email [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com). If a gardener is available, they can charge \$35 for this service.

### **DUMPSTER, ORDERING for PERSONAL USE**

The Mutual needs to approve any dumpster ordered for personal use, where the dumpster is placed so it is not in anyone else's way, and how long it can stay there. If the Mutual approves, an individual or their family can order a dumpster directly from Republic Services, 1-925-685-4711. When ordering, the person requesting a special dumpster needs to make it clear that they are paying for this dumpster themselves and that it is not part of Rossmoor's cost.

It usually takes 2 or 3 days for the dumpster to arrive. Dumpsters are not cheap. It may be easier to call a service such as 1-800-GOT-JUNK who can come out within 45 minutes and will move everything from the unit to their truck.

A few times Mutual One paid for community pickup of junk. They used Vets Move Junk.

### **EGG CARTONS**

Keep your clean egg cartons (all kinds, from cardboard to the yellow Styrofoam cartons) out of LANDFILL by giving them to White Pony Express. WPE receives tons of food from grocery stores in Contra Costa County seven days a week, including eggs in cartons where at least one egg has broken so the entire dozen cannot be sold. The broken egg usually stains the carton so WPE volunteers put the unbroken eggs into a clean carton.

Food and clean egg cartons (no egg spill or stuck on shell) can be dropped off daily between 9 AM and 4 PM at White Pony Express, 3380 Vincent Road #107, Pleasant Hill, or left at the

information table in the Rossmoor Farmers Market. A White Pony Express driver comes about 12:30 to pick up produce from vendors and will take these too. Egg cartons can also be left in front of Patty Harrington's door, 4125 Terra Granada Dr #1A Entry 11, or on a table by Gloria Sunshine's door, 2925 Golden Rain Rd #4, Entry 22.

## **ELECTRONICS**

Electronics are considered hazardous waste and should not go into the trash enclosure. Rapid Recycle offers a pickup service for e-waste on Mondays. If the object has a cord or needs a battery, Rapid Recycle will take it. Rapid Recycle will also take wire. This service does not include Waterford which does not have e-waste pickup included in their coupon.

To schedule a free pickup of small electronics with a cord or battery (e.g., a lamp, cell phone, computer, keyboard, printer, metals, tools, cables, small television, monitor or vacuum cleaner), residents must call 1-925-671-9008, Monday through Friday between 9 AM and 5 PM.

Some items have a fee for handling and recycling, which must be paid by the resident when scheduling a Rapid Recycle pickup. Here are the fees in 2023:

- Large TV - \$22
- Refrigerator, freezer or air conditioners - \$45 (includes removal of freon)
- Washer, dryer, dishwasher, stove or oven - \$22
- Cooktop, water heater, or microwave - \$15

Rapid Recycle also accepts small items made predominantly of some type of metal, such as small tables, chairs, and tools. It does not accept aluminum cans.

After scheduling a Rapid Recycle pickup, consider encouraging your neighbors to also call Rapid Recycle so their electronics can be picked up at the same time.

NOTE: Rapid Recycle is closed on Mondays but they answer their phone remotely that day for Rossmoor residents. Calls on Saturday and Sunday normally go to voicemail, as explained in the message. If you call repeatedly on one of those days, you will keep getting voicemail. Please be patient and make sure you are calling on their dedicated Rossmoor line: 1-925-671-9008.

If you leave a voicemail, clearly state your name, complete address, phone number and what you have for pickup. It may take several days to receive a return call as Rapid Recycle must wait for enough calls to come out to Rossmoor. They are normally here on Monday.

You must place your items out at the curb or in plain sight in front of your manor to be picked up. The drivers do not knock on the door if the item is not out. Mutual Operations Department (MOD) advises residents to place the items out the night before since MOD doesn't know how early the truck will come through Rossmoor.

One last note: Rapid Recycle receives calls for pickups outside of Rossmoor. When they explain that this service is offered to Rossmoor residents only, the caller says they have a relative at

Rossmoor and will just bring their materials there. Please remember this is a wonderful service for Rossmoor residents to have and we do not want to abuse it. Please call Rapid Recycle for your own personal items only.

### **ENCOURAGING WORDS when SORTING ERRORS FEEL HOPELESS**

Carol Weed's encouraging words about sorting errors which seem hopeless:

*"After doing this for years, I've learned it's often a very small number of residents who make errors. Identifying them is the hard part. Often, they are surprisingly teachable. It can seem hopeless when the project starts. The in-person meetings are key."*

### **ENTRY PARTIES & TRASH BLASTS**

Periodically some trash volunteers send "Trash Blast" emails to the residents in their entry. Some print out the blast for residents who don't have email. One EPO, who is also "trash cop," has cocktail parties for her entry every Friday afternoon. This is a wonderful way to build good relationships with neighbors. When goodwill is built up, residents are more responsive about asking questions about recycling and receiving periodic "Trash Blast" emails.

### **FLAG of the UNITED STATES**

While it is not illegal to throw away a United States flag, many view it as dishonorable. Instead, consider donating it to a flag disposal site. The closest to Rossmoor are the Veterans of Foreign Wars ([1919 Wendell Lane, Pleasant Hill](#)) and VFW Post 8063 (3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette).

### **GARBAGE DISPOSAL**

We are discouraged from using a garbage disposal for food scraps because scraps waste water and clog up plumbing, especially with our old pipes which we want to keep from breaking. Plus it is better for the planet to compost food scraps by putting them in the green cart.

### **GLASS, BROKEN**

Avoid adding loose glass to recycle bins. Wrap broken glass in newspaper and put in LANDFILL.

Glass bottles, dumped into an empty recycle bin, sometimes break. When the bin is emptied, broken glass sometimes falls on the ground. This is a safety hazard. If there is a small amount of glass inside the enclosure, most residents sweep it up themselves. If there is a lot of glass in the street, MOD, 1-925-988-7650 or [workorder@rossmoor](mailto:workorder@rossmoor), can get someone to clean it up, but it may not be immediate.

### **HAZARDOUS WASTE**

If you have proof of residency, Central Contra Costa Sanitary Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility (4797 Imhoff Pl, Martinez, 7am-2pm, Monday through Saturday) accepts:

- Aerosol cans
- Ammunition & fireworks
- Automotive products & tires
- Batteries

- Cooking oil (in sealed container)
- Fluorescent lamps & light bulbs
- Gardening chemicals
- Household cleaners & solvents
- Mercury thermometers
- Paint
- Propane cylinders
- Unused matches

If completely empty, aerosols can go capless in LANDFILL. There must be no noise or hissing sound remaining. To empty a can completely, spray into a box (e.g., shoe or cereal box) outdoors. When dry, the box can also go in LANDFILL.

Shampoo and cosmetics are generally NOT considered hazardous waste. But nail polish, polish removal, hair dyes/tints, hair removal products, and hair spray (in an aerosol can) are hazardous waste. White-Out is also hazardous waste.

Most cleaning products are hazardous waste and need to go to Martinez -- but empty, clean, dry bottles of cleaning products (without lids) are recyclable. Do NOT rinse these containers out because they are just as bad entering our water system as unused medication. To dry bottles, leave them upside down, then put in RECYCLE.

These cleaning products are hazardous: abrasive cleaners, aerosol air fresheners, all-purpose cleaners, ammonia, bleach, disinfectants, drain cleaners, fabric softeners, glass cleaners, laundry starch, laundry stain removers, mildew removers, oven cleaners, rug and upholstery cleaners, toilet cleaners, and tub and tile cleaners. (This is a good reason to make vinegar and baking soda your main cleaning products.)

The Rossmoor Woodshop will accept some leftover solvents: turpentine, paint thinner, and acetone.

Currently Rossmoor offers no solution for disposing of hazardous waste, including aerosol spray cans. The State of California passed regulations which make it difficult for any hauler to get certified and insured to haul hazardous waste. We understand this law also makes it illegal to collect hazardous waste from others (like in a Rossmoor laundry room because it might cause a fire) and take to Martinez.

### **HAZARDOUS WASTE, PAINT**

A can of dry paint can go in LANDFILL, but liquid paint is considered hazardous waste and cannot be put into the trash enclosure. Free drop-off of paint is offered at some Ace Hardware stores and Contra Costa Transfer & Recovery Station, 951 Waterbird Way, Martinez (M-F 7AM - 6 PM, Sat 8 AM - 1 PM).

### **HOSTING GREEN EVENTS**

The goal is to plan club events that minimize waste -- including waste from food, packaging, and foodware -- so almost nothing goes in LANDFILL.

Planning a greener event starts with site and menu choices. Calculating the exact amount of food needed is impossible, so plan to-go containers and/or donate leftovers to an organization like White Pony Express.

If the event is a potluck, ask participants to bring their own, reusable dishware, utensils, and a plate/bowl for the food they are sharing – and have them take their plates, bowls, utensils and any leftovers home afterward.

Reusing foodware is much more eco-friendly, and often cheaper than buying compostable, recyclable foodware. If you reserve a large meeting room with a kitchen, you can reserve the “dish room” to be unlocked (no extra charge). GRF can recommend hired help to wash and sanitize glasses, utensils, cups, and plates (minimum \$80). Or you can train volunteers (free). Some clubs rotate this task.

Hiring help is cost-neutral for 100 or more members if they bus their own dishes instead of buying compostable, recyclable foodware.

When the site is reserved, whether outdoors or indoors, if your club chooses to use compostable and recyclable foodware, request receptacles for all three waste streams (LANDFILL, RECYCLE, COMPOST).

At the end of the event, encourage servers to put food scraps, compostable plates and napkins in COMPOST and shiny paper plates in LANDFILL. Or have volunteers at the bins help guests sort correctly. Clean aluminum foil can go in RECYCLE. Disposable wrappings, including dirty aluminum foil, go in LANDFILL.

Compostable foodware is far preferable to recyclable. Compostable choices include dull (not shiny) paper plates, paper napkins, paper towels, and wooden or bamboo utensils. Decide not to use tablecloths – or borrow them from a club that has cloth ones (many do). Some clubs also have cloth napkins.

Paper cups and glasses cannot be composted because they are lined with plastic or would leak. They must go in LANDFILL, along with plastic utensils and stir sticks. Plastic glasses must be dry before going in RECYCLE. Dump any liquid in LANDFILL or the sink.

Invite everyone to leave nothing on the table, take leftovers home, and drive safely. Following these tips is good for the pocketbook and the environment!

### **HOSTING GREEN EVENTS, GLASS WINE GLASSES**

To reduce the use of plastic glasses, the Fireside Room and Event Center are now equipped with glass wine glasses for Club use (250 wine glasses in the Fireside Room; 400 in the Event

Center). This was made possible by the Rossmoor Activities Council, donations from several clubs/organizations, and the Recreation Department.

### **HOUSE CLEANERS & CARETAKERS**

Caretakers and house cleaners are a special challenge. Caretakers often don't care. First step is asking each resident if they have a caretaker or housekeeper who collects the "garbage." Second step is finding out if the resident is willing or able to train their helper to sort better. If not, schedule an appointment with the resident at a time when the helper is present. This underscores that the neighbor thinks that sorting correctly is important. Many speak neither English nor Spanish. You may need to communicate by pantomime or role playing. Pages 24 to 27 in the front of the 2024 Rossmoor phonebook have images that are fairly universal.

### **LANDFILL OVERFLOW, WHERE to BRING?**

Do NOT bring bags of trash to the Stanley Dollar landfill bin. According to Lisa Lankford in Mutual Operations Department, residents should not put their personal residence trash into clubhouse trash containers.

When an enclosure is full, we can bring standard daily waste to another trash enclosure in our Mutual -- as long as we leave room for trash from residents in that entry.

This does not include items from spring cleaning, moving in, moving out, or redecorating. They need to be hauled out of Rossmoor. Hauling services are listed in the Rossmoor News.

### **LAW AGAINST TAKING THINGS OUT of RECYCLE**

This does not apply to Rossmoor's trash volunteers. (See REMOVING RECYCLABLES for RESALE)

### **LIDS, PLASTIC or METAL**

Put all lids, both plastic and metal (both big and small) in LANDFILL. While some of us don't understand this policy, we are following this request from our recycler, Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery Center (MDRRC) who doesn't have a buyer for them. It's good to stress no lids because many people still put lids attached to containers in RECYCLE. Often these containers are neither clean nor dry.

### **LIGHTS (FLUORESCENT, LED, HALOGEN & INCANDESCENT}**

Old incandescent and halogen bulbs are not hazardous and can be wrapped or boxed and placed gently in LANDFILL. Fluorescent, CFL and LED light bulbs (if without the LED fixture) cannot be disposed of in Rossmoor because they are HAZARDOUS WASTE. Fluorescent lights (both the tubes and the compact, spiral CFL bulbs) contain mercury. LED circuit boards have lead solder and can also contain nickel, arsenic, and copper. LED fixtures can be put in LANDFILL.

Walnut Creek Ace Hardware, 2044 Mt. Diablo Blvd, has a bin in Aisle 9 for hazardous light bulbs. Or take them to Central Contra Costa Sanitary Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility in Martinez.

Keep yourself safe. If you find fluorescent lights in a trash enclosure, do not touch! Call Mutual Operations Department (MOD), 1-925-988-7650, or email [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com).

*In March 2021, a trash volunteer accidentally bumped into two long fluorescent tubes propped up in her trash enclosure, breaking them. As a result, for a long time, she had to deal with mercury poisoning, including dizziness, unsteadiness, and feeling very tired.*

### **MAGAZINES & CATALOGS**

Magazines and catalogs should go in LANDFILL because the company who processes our recycling doesn't have a buyer for them.

### **MIXED MATERIAL**

Put mixed material (like plastic-coated butcher paper, milk cartons, juice containers, or frozen food packages) in LANDFILL. However, a plastic yogurt container with a trace of metal still left on the rim can go in RECYCLE.

### **MOD CHARGES for HELPING with TRASH PROBLEMS?**

We continually tell residents to contact Mutual Operations Department (MOD) if they have a problem with their trash enclosure. Is the Mutual being charged every time? If yes, how much? Here is Lisa Lankford's response:

*"If we receive a work order request for pest control, small irrigation repairs or landscape maintenance issues, there is no charge for the work order because this is already included in your coupon. Other work orders usually do have a charge, including repairs made to buildings, lights, unclogging sinks or toilets, repairing a mainline, etc. These are usually more time-consuming tasks requiring materials that are charged back to your Mutual.*

*"There is no charge for reporting issues with Republic Services. There is no work order created for this and even if there was, it would not be billed to anyone. I am the Republic Services / Rossmoor liaison, so these issues must go through me. Republic Services will not take a call from a resident.*

*"Your Mutual is charged if a carpenter needs to repair the trash enclosure such as a broken latch or door coming loose. If it will be a costly repair, they obtain authorization from the Board first. Your Mutual sets the dollar amount we can do before approval is needed.*

*"The landscapers still have not billed anyone for removing discarded items inside or outside a trash enclosure. If they ever start billing for this, it is a minimal charge of \$35.00 per our agreement. MOD does not charge for this either."*

### **MOVE-IN, MOVE-OUT or REMODEL WASTE**

When people move in, move out, or remodel, it is their responsibility to remove their waste out of Rossmoor. Move-out debris can be very large and bulky. As you have probably



discovered, many family members toss everything in any available bins or leave it outside of the bins in the trash enclosure. Many pay no attention to instructions.

If you are aware that someone is cleaning out a unit, this is a good time to talk to people or their family members. Give them the "Move-In/Out" handout or tape it to their front door. Pages 27 to 31 in the front of the 2024 Rossmoor phonebook have more information on how to dispose of items. (You can download "Move-In/Out" and other handouts at <https://sustainablerossmoor.org/trashtalk>.)

If anyone sees wrong items being left in the trash enclosure, they can call Securitas, 1-925-988-7899, to come out and talk to them. Hopefully neighbors can keep an eye out for this happening. They don't need to get involved, but it helps that the dumper knows someone is aware.

If the debris is left by an outside company or contractor, immediately call Securitas, 1-925-988-7899. (See DUMPING BY OUTSIDERS)

The MOD Recycle Yard on Rockview Drive is open Monday through Friday from 8 AM – 12 PM and 12:30 PM – 4:30 PM. It is closed during lunch and on weekends. This yard accepts clean cardboard, metal, wood, solid wood or metal furniture (no upholstery, no plate glass), green waste (grass clippings, leaves, and food scraps), and batteries. This is for residents only – no contractors.

Residents, family, and contractors must haul all other move-in, move-out, and remodel waste (including mattresses and box springs) to Contra Costa Recovery Transfer & Station, 951 Waterbird Way, Martinez (M-F 7am-6pm, Sat 8am-1pm) or hire a trash hauler. Several trash haulers are listed in Rossmoor News. A number of residents have had a positive experience with Vets Haul Junk, 1-800-530-9767, and Family Matters, 1-925-398-3182. Family Matters delivers large objects (e.g., furniture) to vets or women's shelters. (For more information see DUMPSTER, ORDERING FOR PERSONAL USE)

#### **MOVE-OUT DEBRIS, CHARGING ESCROW**

If we can provide proof that the Mutual incurred overage charges because an owner left move-out debris in the trash enclosure, it is possible to deduct this charge from the owner's escrow account. Other steps required for this charge are confirming receipt and deposit of \$5,000.00 escrow retention, proof of escrow agreement, and closing statement.

#### **NEIGHBORS WHO ARE BLIND**

If a neighbor's failure to read a posted sign is due to blindness, sometimes the problem can be resolved by explaining the problem and/or offering to help.

*One entry was charged \$40 because one resident kept dumping loose food scraps into the recycle dumpster. Republic Services emptied that dumpster the first two times, but refused the third. At Republic Services' request, someone from that entry and I visited people in that entry*

*to explain the problem. It turns out the oldest resident was trying very hard to do the right thing, but he was blind and couldn't read my sign, plus the recycle dumpster and landfill dumpsters had been switched. He thought he was putting food into the landfill dumpster. I am guessing his food was loose because someone may have told him that everything in that dumpster needed to go in loose.*

*He was very grateful we visited him. When we explained the problem, he immediately said, "It may be me." He took us to his kitchen to show how he carefully sorted. He took us to the enclosure to show where he put stuff. It was a very positive experience for all. Moving forward, the neighbor offered to take his food scraps and put them in the green cart for him.*

### **NEIGHBORS WHO HOARD or HAVE DEMENTIA**

Rossmoor's Counseling Services in Gateway can sometimes help residents who hoard, have dementia, are unable to live on their own, or lack adequate help. Counseling Services, which is staffed by licensed clinicians with professional training and expertise in gerontology, assess concerns and make every effort to work with the resident in question towards creating solutions. The staff will need to know the resident's name, address, plus issues or limitations you have noticed. Their mission is to help Rossmoor residents achieve maximum life satisfaction and maintain their independence. Services provided by the counseling office are voluntary (which means a resident can refuse their help) and confidential. The counselor will not legally be able to report back to you on their work or case progress. They will work to keep your name confidential as well. Counseling Services can be reached by calling 1-925-988-7750 or emailing [counseling@rossmoor.com](mailto:counseling@rossmoor.com). Below are examples of the kinds of situations which prompted contacting them:

*In one entry, Republic Services repeatedly refused to empty a recycle bin because it was contaminated with trash. The woman doing this was very gracious when we explained the problem, but she was incapable of remembering. Despite contacting the Counseling Services, she continues to put all her trash in recycle.*

*In another entry, people fear the potential of a fire and/or a rodent infestation because they live in a building where someone doesn't put her trash in the enclosure. Instead, it fills her manor. After the Counseling Services was contacted, a relative had a dumpster of this trash hauled away. Unfortunately, most open spaces in this manor are again filled with trash. At least now, unopened boxes no longer collect outside her front door.*

### **NEIGHBORS, HOW to APPROACH**

Face-to-face is the most effective way to approach neighbors about trash problems. It takes time to go door-to-door (and return later for those who are out), but creating posters, notes, and flyers also takes time and is less effective.

Do not accuse. Or blame. You can achieve better cooperation if you can form a relationship with a neighbor before tactfully bringing up any sorting problems. Encourage a conversation. Here is one trash volunteer's approach:

*"Our entry is having trouble with extra expenses for our lack of decent recycling and trash management. We're asking everybody two questions.*

- *How do you think our recycling is going?*
- *What would make recycling easier for you?"*

Mention a planned entry party, offer to give them a handout, and/or a recycle tote bag as a "gift." If you give a tote, explain that only the items pictured on it belong in the blue container. Some enjoy learning how the handle on the bottom makes it easier to dump recyclables.

Many trash volunteers now give out the "Top 5 Dos and Don'ts" poster. You can download this and other posters at <https://sustainablerossmoor.org/trashtalk>.

Another popular handout is "3 Steps for Easy Recycling" on p. 26 in the 2023 Rossmoor Phonebook. For a copy of this handout, email [KathleenEpperson@gmail.com](mailto:KathleenEpperson@gmail.com).

If a resident blames a housekeeper/caretaker, make an appointment to meet that person. If the resident seems unimpressed, tell them about the extra charges when trash is put in the wrong bin.

## **PAPER**

According to RecycleSmart's recycle poster on page 24 in the 2024 Rossmoor phonebook, only 5 things go in RECYCLE: empty, clean and dry plastic containers (including #1-7 or hard plastic), metal, glass, paper (newspaper, copy paper, and writing paper), and cardboard (folded down).

Many of us try to recycle the wrong paper. Napkins, paper towels, and parchment go in COMPOST. Cash register receipts, facial tissues, shiny flyers, butcher paper and magazines go in LANDFILL.

## **PAPER, SHREDDED**

Shredded paper in a paper bag, stapled shut, is the recommended way to put shredded paper in RECYCLE. However, Republic Services still accepts shredded paper in clear plastic bags, knotted shut. (This is the only plastic bag allowed in RECYCLE.) The paper bag should be clearly marked "SHREDDED PAPER". Recycle drivers will refuse to empty a recycle container if they see loose shredded paper.

## **PARKING PROBLEM**

While parking issues are not directly related to trash, we include this because some trash volunteers have to deal with parking abuses. Any resident can report parking issues to Securitas, 1-925-988-7899. They will come out and speak to the vehicle owner.

## **PAVING'S IMPACT on ABILITY to EMPTY BINS**

When an entry is being paved and for two more days afterwards, Republic Services trucks are unable to drive into that entry to empty containers in the trash enclosure. If Lisa Lankford in

Mutual Operations Department is notified of this problem in advance, she can arrange to have containers emptied before the paving starts. Call 1-925-988-7650 or email [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com).

### **PEST CONTROL: ANTS, RACCOONS & RODENTS**

Pest control can be addressed with a call or email to Mutual Operations Department (MOD), 1-925-988-7650 or [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com). MOD does not spray the inside of the dumpsters or carts. MOD can treat outside the enclosure for ants and rats and put out a live trap for raccoons.

You can tell when raccoons visit because they leave muddy footprints on the top of containers. While they are cute, raccoons are wild animals. Their sharp claws are dangerous when they are cornered or protecting their young. They leave behind stinky urine and a mess of feces which can contain roundworm eggs. They are one of the most common species to carry rabies.

If raccoons are a problem, make sure the landfill dumpster is not overflowing. Consider locking the dumpster every night by pulling up the bar which hangs across the front. But if you have a 1-yard, split-lid, landfill dumpster which is missing the metal piece which keeps the split lids in place, locking the dumpster will not stop raccoons from pulling out trash.

If raccoons are reaching between the split lids on a one-yard dumpster and pulling out trash -- even when the dumpster is locked -- consider seeing if a heavier solid lid would work in your enclosure. (There are 1-yard dumpsters with solid lids in Running Springs Entry 3 or Leisure Lane Entry 3B.)

What can we do to discourage raccoon parties? First, make sure the landfill dumpster is not overflowing. Consider locking the dumpster every night by pulling up the bar which hangs across the front.

Second, it's harder for raccoons to get into the green cart -- unless the lid doesn't close and needs replacing. If all our food scraps are in the green cart, raccoons will be less inclined to get into our landfill dumpsters.

MOD hesitates to put out raccoon traps because some residents are opposed to trapping the raccoons. Plus a trapped raccoon can make a lot of noise. This bothers nearby residents. In one Mutual, someone let the raccoons out and destroyed three traps. The trap cannot be left out over the weekend because no one is available to deal with it, which would be inhumane.

Even with the traps, any food scraps left on the ground will keep attracting rats and other animals. If fresh food is available, they will ignore the bait boxes.

### **PEST CONTROL: HOW to PREVENT RODENTS DAMAGE to CARS**

Sometimes the rodents who are attracted to the trash enclosure invade cars, causing expensive damage. What can you do?

- Rodents and raccoons are attracted to food scraps. When the lid of a landfill bin doesn't close, raccoons and rodents get in. Keep the bin lid closed.
- Even better, wrap all food scraps in newspaper, a paper bag, or BPI-Certified compostable bag and put them in the green cart. It is harder for raccoons to open the green carts, unless the lid doesn't close. (If the lid is warped or ill-fitting, contact Mutual Operations Department (MOD), 1-925-988-7650 or [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com) to request a lid replacement.)
- Keep food out of your storage closet.
- Repel rodents by spraying your car engine with a natural mouse, rat and rodent repellent. One recommended brand is La Torre's Critter Out Rodent Repellent. Rodent Stopper by Messinas is also highly recommended.
- To trap them, contact MOD. (Warning: A trapped raccoon can become very agitated and make an incredible amount of noise all night, rattling the cage and screeching.)

## PLASTIC BAGS

Many residents continue to put loose plastic bags in the blue carts and plastic bags of food scraps in the green carts. Because of this problem, some enclosures have "NO PLASTIC BAGS" stickers on RECYCLE and COMPOST bins. We encourage this "no plastic bags" message.

Put all plastic bags in Landfill or bring plastic bags which are clean, dry, and free of food residue (plus plastic product wrap and plastic shipping supplies) to Safeway, Kohl's (2302 Monument Blvd, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523), or any other store which will ship them to TREX who turns them into decking, fencing, and furniture. Besides plastic grocery bags, TREX uses bubble wrap, plastic pillows, dry cleaning bags, plastic shipping envelopes, case overwrap, pallet wrap & stretch film, plus bread, produce, and Ziplock bags – but only if they are clean, dry, and free of food residue.

But a store with a collection box is not good enough. Channel 7 did a report in May 2023 that shows most stores in the Chicago area are not actually recycling their dropped off bags: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VXmYOJ2QAhU>

## PLASTIC QUESTIONS

***Since we PAY for India or Viet Nam to take our hard plastics, are we better off NOT putting the numbered plastic items in recycle?***

You're right about Viet Nam or India getting paid to receive our hard plastic recyclables, especially since this plastic might not be really recycled. The best solution is to avoid buying things in plastic as much as possible.

***Do we pay attention to the numbers in triangles?***

Ignore the numbers. Use hard vs soft (e.g., foldable) as a guide for sorting plastics. All Styrofoam (even black meat trays or yellow egg cartons) goes into LANDFILL. "Hard" plastic goes in RECYCLE, even when "hard" isn't very hard (like a plastic bottle). Soft plastic belongs in LANDFILL.

## POSTERS & SIGNAGE REMOVED DURING PAINTING

Signage outside each trash enclosure and posters inside are removed when the enclosure is painted. If you rescue these signs, you can put them back once painting is done or get replacement posters from MOD. If the enclosure signage is missing, Building Maintenance can make sure it is replaced. To request having the outside signage replaced, email [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com).

When enclosure signage is replaced, if the enclosure includes a green cart, make sure the sign has a green circle.

## **POSTERS & TRASH INFORMATION ONLINE**

The TrashTalk website has been redesigned to educate all who live or work in Rossmoor about best recycling practices. Its valuable information includes posters and an itemized, A-Z list on how to dispose of unwanted items: <https://sustainablerossmoor.org/trashtalk>

## **POSTERS, PRINTING**

As of 2023, the best cost and quality for 11x17 posters was at the UPS Store in Moraga. They have extra thick paper for posters and a better machine for that large size. Make sure the UPS Store doesn't charge you extra for placing the order online.

Several have suggested purchasing a laminating machine. If we did this, we would need 11x17 pouches and possibly a ream of 11x17 poster stock. We hesitate purchasing a laminating machine. Who would keep the machine and run it for us? What posters would we laminate?

A less expensive option is to purchase sealable protective 12"x18" closure bags for the 11x17 posters (a package of 100 pieces costs \$31.47):

<https://www.clearbags.com/12-7-16-x-18-1-4-crystal-clear-protective-316x464.html>

## **POSTING SIGNS**

Your Mutual may want to purchase a heavy-duty staple gun that you can borrow for posting signs in your enclosure. You might also need scissors for cutting the tape and possibly a staple remover if the staples don't come out when the tape is removed. You can get RecycleSmart posters from Mutual Operations Department (MOD).

Weatherproof, double-sided foam tape works best for permanent posters. Two recommended brands are 3M Scotch Heavy Duty Mounting Tape and Scotch Mount Clear (or Scotch Mount Outdoors). Be careful how this tape is used. If the poster needs to come down, the tape remains on the wall.

Some trash volunteers question whether putting up posters makes a difference:

*"I do appreciate the posters, but I'm not convinced that my neighbors really pay attention to them. My thought has been that they've already bagged up their trash, recycling and compost before approaching the enclosure. So, the message is too late. My approach has been to periodically print out a short list of Reminders based on the most common mistakes. I place the*

*flyers partially under each neighbor's doormat along with my name and phone number should anyone have questions. I also find it helpful to engage neighbors in conversation when we're both coming or going from the enclosure. I focus on providing support and appreciation not criticism."*

### **POSTING TEMPORARY SIGNS**

Scotch Blue Painter's Tape is the MOD carpentry foreman's preferred choice for posting temporary signs on walls & doors. Please do NOT use staples, packing tape or duct tape to post temporary signs. Staples damage the enclosure door, are hard to remove, and leave little holes. Packing tape and duct tape leave adhesive residue when removed. Scotch tape works well on glass, but leaves adhesive on wood. Masking tape works well on metal, but the adhesives can be a little too aggressive on woodwork. Removing the tape can sometimes also peel away some paint.

### **RECYCLE QUESTIONS:**

#### ***Are boxes with labels or tape recyclable?***

Pull off what you can. Our recycler prefers to have no tape or labels on boxes. But when it is hard to remove them, it is OK to put a flattened box with tape or labels in RECYCLE.

#### ***How tiny is too tiny?***

Jim Nejedly, general manager at Mt Diablo Resource Recovery, said to only recycle something the size of "a credit card or even somewhat larger." If in doubt, put it in LANDFILL.

#### ***Are shiny cardboard boxes recyclable?***

This is a difficult issue. Almost all cardboard boxes are shiny on the outside. Cereal, baking powder, and dishwasher detergent boxes are recyclable. Boxes and cartons which held moist or liquid items go to LANDFILL. For example, a paper coffee cup belongs in LANDFILL because it held liquid.

#### ***What happens when RECYCLE is contaminated?***

Most recycle bins end up having items in them which belong in LANDFILL. Many have recyclables in bags when they are supposed to be loose. These are examples of what Republic considers "contaminated."

If the recycle driver refuses to empty a contaminated bin, the Mutual has two choices:

- (1) Remove the items contributing to the contamination and wait a week for the next pick; or
- (2) Make room in RECYCLE by paying extra for a special pickup so all our carefully sorted recyclables can be hauled to the dump.

Whether or not the Mutual pays for a special pickup, the contents of recycle trucks with contaminated contents are hauled to the dump -- mixed in with all our carefully sorted recyclables.

Selling the urgency to recycle correctly to those who are not "woke" is a huge challenge.

That's why we stress the cost of overages and special pickup charges. Money gets people's attention when nothing else does!

***Can we keep the RECYCLE lid open?***

Keeping the RECYCLE lid open only works if the enclosure is sheltered from wind and rain, if the bin is not overflowing, and if your neighbors are NOT putting in food scraps which attract raccoons, squirrels, birds, bees, flies, and ants.

***Can we recycle attached flip tabs or metal lids?***

Some try this. If there is any risk of your getting cut, do not try to remove a lid's flip tab or try folding down any attached metal lid. Just put the clean, dry, metal containers in RECYCLE.

***If the contents of outdoor recycle bins are wet, can they be recycled?***

Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery Center (MDRRC) said: "We do accept wet recycling. Although it is not our favorite, it does dry enough so we can recycle it."

Some recycle dumpsters have a plug on the bottom corner of the dumpster that can be unscrewed or opened to allow for rainwater drainage. Republic Services doesn't know how many dumpsters have this feature. As long as the lids are closed though, water shouldn't be too big of an issue -- as long as it's just some rainwater (versus other food residue or liquids like sauces, oils, soups or coffee).

**RECYCLE TOTES & COMPOST PAILS**

(See WELCOMING NEWCOMERS for information on how to obtain a recycle tote, compost pail, and Rossmoor Phonebook.)

**RECYCLESMAST POSTERS**

Every trash enclosure should have three RecycleSmart posters: "Recycling," "Organics" and "Landfill." You can get them from Mutual Operations Department (MOD).

**REMOVING RECYCLABLES for RESALE**

A sign on the side of recycle dumpsters states, "NOTICE: It is illegal to remove contents from this container..." This is an old law which enacted anti-scavenging laws to keep people from stealing (and making money from) recyclable materials. We can ignore this sign when we remove trash from RECYCLE. This sign does not apply to us and is not enforced in Rossmoor.

People can return their own bottles to Rite Aid in Alamo Plaza for a CRV refund, but it's against the law to remove bottles from recycle bins for the purpose of selling them. Our recycler, Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery Center (MDRRC), makes money from selling our cardboard, glass, and aluminum cans. Without this income, we'd have to pay for the free recycling services we currently receive.

**RENTERS**

Getting renters to sort trash correctly is sometimes a challenge. See WELCOMING



NEWCOMERS for ideas on welcoming renters, including giving them a welcoming letter and “7 Tips for Sorting Trash.” (You can download “Sorting Tips” from <https://sustainablerossmoor.org/trashtalk>.) If the renter is not compliant, a member of the Mutual Board can escalate this matter to the unit owner/co-occupant. It helps if you have witnesses and photos of a renter filling the trash enclosure with move-in trash.

### **REPUBLIC CHARGEBACK CHARGES**

Republic does not charge for the first bin change in a year. However, Republic does charge for additional changes within that same year.

*If an entry requests to downsize their 2-yard dumpster to a 1-yard dumpster and if this is the first change to that bin for the year, there is no charge for the change. But if within 12 months, the same entry requests to switch back to a 2-yarder, there would be a fee (\$300). This extra charge reflects Republic’s time/labor/bin prep to drive Republic’s bin-delivery truck back again with a 2-yarder and remove the one yarder.*

### **REPUBLIC CHARGES for BAGS or BOXES OUTSIDE BINS**

Republic charges \$15 in 2023 for each extra bag left in the trash enclosure outside containers. Lisa Lankford in Mutual Operations Department is not sure about the charge for boxes left out of the containers. The charge depends on the driver. Some may just take them as a favor if they are neatly stacked and flattened. When Lisa hears about boxes, she sends a landscaper or MOD employee (if available) to bring them to the recycling yard. So far, the landscapers have generously not charged us, even though they are approved to do so. (Landscapers have the right to charge \$35 per visit.)

### **REPUBLIC CHARGES for a SPECIAL PICKUP**

If a bin is overflowing (often due to move in, move out, or remodel stuff which does not belong in the trash enclosure), email [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com). Sending a photo of the situation helps. A Mutual director needs to approve the cost for a special pickup.

There is no charge for properly sorted recycling or organics, as long as the bin lid shuts (no overflow). However, there is a charge for a special pickup to haul the contents of a contaminated recycle or organics bin to the dump. A recycle bin is considered contaminated if it has more than these 5 items – HARD PLASTIC, METAL, PAPER (writing, computer, newspaper), GLASS or FLATTENED CARDBOARD – or if these items are not empty, clean, dry and loose. Bag nothing except shredded paper which must be fastened shut in a paper or plastic bag and labeled “SHREDDED PAPER.”

Charges for an extra recycle, compost or landfill pickup increase the monthly coupon for all residents in the Mutual. Below are the extra rates for special pick-ups effective 3/1/24.

- 32-gallon cart - \$44.12
- 64-gallon cart - \$44.12
- 96-gallon cart - \$44.12
- 1-yard dumpster - \$27.35

- 2-yard dumpster - \$54.70
- 3-yard dumpster - \$82.05

### **REPUBLIC CHARGES for OVERAGES**

Overage charges depend on how much overflow there is. Overloaded bins would be charged \$15.90 per extra bag (if it's a cart), or if it's a dumpster it would be the monthly rate for a 1-yd, 1x/week divided by 4.33 (weeks/month) per extra yard. It could even cost \$35 more if Mutual Operations Department has to send someone to clean up trash scattered all over the enclosure.

In addition to overages, a landfill bin with an open lid or a bag with food scraps on the ground is a health hazard because it attracts raccoons and rats.

To get a report of recent overages charged to your entry, someone in the Mutual needs to track these charges. If you question a charge, Lisa Lankford in Mutual Operations Department can ask for the dated photo which the driver takes for every extra charge.

### **REPUBLIC CHARGES for RECYCLE OVERAGES**

Republic Service changed recycling service days. Their goal was no extra pickups for Rossmoor due to overages AND only servicing the amount of days needed. For many of us with twice-a-week pickup, that meant recycling is now only emptied once a week. Starting in May 2023, Republic Service resumed charging extra for recycling overages. They also charge if recycling is contaminated and needs to be removed as landfill. If the RECYCLE bin in one enclosure consistently is charged for overages, ask Lisa Lankford in Mutual Operations Department for a larger bin or arrange twice-a-week pickup.

**Only five things are recyclable – and only if empty, clean, dry & loose:** HARD PLASTIC (cannot be folded), METAL, GLASS, PLAIN PAPER (writing, computer, newspaper), and FLATTENED CARDBOARD (if it fits). Nothing else goes in recycle!

### **REPUBLIC CONTAINER COSTS**

Basic landfill prices for services increase every year in March. Here are the charges for one pickup a week starting March 2024:

- 96-gallon landfill cart - \$86.99
- 1-yard landfill dumpster - \$118.40
- 2-yard landfill dumpster - \$236.83
- 3-yard landfill dumpster - \$355.24
- Two 1-yard dumpsters - \$236.80
- Two 2-yard dumpsters - \$473.66
- One 2-yard & one 1-yard - \$355.23
- One 2-yard landfill dumpster emptied 2x a week - \$473.64

The increased monthly cost to upgrade from a 1-yard landfill dumpster to a 2-yarder in 2024 is \$118.42 more a month or \$1421.16 more a year.

## **REPUBLIC CONTAINER or LID, UPGRADING OR CHANGING**

If you are considering going from a 1-yard to a 2-yard dumpster, make sure it will fit. A 2-yarder's footprint is 83 inches by 34 inches. It is shorter but wider and makes the aisle 7 inches narrower.

Republic's standard dumpster lid is a solid lid (e.g., the lid on the 1-yard landfill dumpster in Leisure Lane Entry 3B). But the solid lid is too heavy for some. (If a solid, plastic lid gets waterlogged, making the lid way too heavy to lift, request to have it replaced.)

Instead, in most cases, request split lids so frail residents can lift them. A plastic lid is generally preferred to metal because the metal is heavier.

Two 96-gallon carts are 98% of a 1-yarder but cost \$55.58 more a month than a 1-yarder because emptying two carts is more work for the driver. However, the 96-gallon carts are much easier for residents to use. Three 96-gallon carts are 72% of a 2-yarder.

We can ask MOD to request a split-lid for a 2-yard dumpster, but Republic's manufacturer cannot supply a split lid on 1-yard dumpsters. The 1-yarders with split lids in Rossmoor are old and no longer made. (Republic suggested going from a 1-yard to a 2-yard landfill dumpster, but that would double our monthly costs.)

Fortunately, Republic Services approved our using Chris Thompson's fix to keep raccoons out of split-lid, 1-yard, landfill dumpsters! It's really quite simple. A  $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch ID disposal hose, attached by 1- $\frac{1}{4}$  inch hose clamps on both ends, keeps the lids in place. The solution isn't perfect. If the dumpster is full, racoons can still reach in and pull out bags of trash. But doing this ended raccoon-scattered trash on his enclosure floor.

If Republic suggests upgrading to a 3-yarder, please note that it is 7 inches higher than a 2-yarder. Would older residents be able to lift the lid? Some already find it hard to lift a 2-yarder's lid. It is also too big to remove anything which doesn't belong there. (If you would like to see a 3-yard dumpster, there is one in Stanley Dollar Entry 1.)

If you want or have a dumpster with arms that hold the lid open, this is an old version. Republic Services does not supply that model anymore. Please do not try anything to hold the lid open if you don't think it is safe. If possible, it is better to move the bin forward slightly so the lid can open back enough to rest against the enclosure with no chance of closing on someone. Please keep yourself safe.

A 64-gallon cart fits in a space which is 2 feet wide and 29 inches deep.

## **REPUBLIC CONTRACT**

Republic Services contract is handled through Contra Costa County for the entire county, not just Rossmoor. We have no other option over which company we can use.

### **REPUBLIC DRIVER LEAVES a DUMPSTER OUTSIDE the ENCLOSURE**

If a new Republic driver mistakenly leaves a dumpster outside the enclosure, don't push it back. Dumpsters, especially the two-yarders, are very heavy. It is much safer to email [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com) and let MOD put it back.

### **REPUBLIC MISSED A PICKUP**

It helps to know Republic's lift schedule for your enclosure so know if Republic Services has missed a pickup. If a bin was not emptied as scheduled, please make sure it is not contaminated (has no yellow tag). If it has no tag, call MOD, 1-925-988-7650, or email [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com) early in the morning of the next business day. Please include this information.

- Street
- Entry
- Trash Enclosure ID number or letter (A or B.)
- Size of the cart or dumpster (2-yard, 1 yard, 96, 64 or 32 gallon)

**EXAMPLE – Ptarmigan Entry 5 – Trash Enclosure "A" – 2-yard dumpster**

Lisa Lankford in Mutual Operations Department will call Republic Customer Service to arrange a pickup. (Monday may be too late for missed pickups on Fridays but contacting Lisa before the end of Friday's workday might not work because drivers sometimes pick up later than usual if they are busy.)

### **REPUBLIC PICKUP DAYS**

We recommend posting the days each trash enclosure bin is emptied. Having this information is helpful in knowing how long a full bin has to wait before it is emptied.

### **REPUBLIC SERVICES INVOICES**

To avoid being charged thousands of dollars extra, consider carefully tracking all charges on Republic Services invoices, questioning charges that make no sense, and asking Lisa Lankford to get Republic's photos of overages you question.

*Before analyzing Republic invoices, Mutual 1 was being charged for another Mutual's enclosure; Mutual 70, for two enclosures in another Mutual; Mutual 2, for an enclosure that didn't exist. Mutual 1 was paying for eleven 96-gallon carts in an entry which only had 3 or 4; Mutual 2, for four 1-yarder dumpsters in an entry which only had one 2-yarder, plus another 2-yarder was being billed the monthly rate weekly (about 4x extra each month); Mutual 70, for two landfill bins that were smaller than what they were paying for.*

You need a Mutual director's authorization to receive Republic Services invoices from MOD. Understanding these invoices is not easy.

*On a spreadsheet, Kathleen Epperson lists all enclosures in her Mutual, plus the size and type of all bins in each enclosure. On a second spreadsheet, she lists each enclosure in a separate column with the cost of each landfill bin and when it is emptied. Underneath she puts the date and amount of each extra charge and what it is for. In addition to tracking charges, this helps*

*her identify which enclosures have a problem and need help – and celebrate enclosures with no extra charges.*

### **REPUBLIC SERVICES SAFETY REQUEST**

Lisa Lankford in Mutual Operations Department asks us to remind everyone to stay away from the trucks for everyone's safety. The dumpsters are very heavy, especially when full, and it is hard to stop them instantly to avoid hitting a resident.

*Drivers reported an increase in residents behaving in an unsafe manner near the collection trucks (e.g., residents running up to the truck or dumpster, trying to get in their last bag of trash when drivers are servicing enclosures). Recently a woman and her dog got dangerously close between the truck and the driver who was pushing the dumpster towards the truck.*

### **REPUBLIC SERVICES, HOLIDAYS**

Republic Services only takes off on Christmas and New Year's. They work through all other holidays. Their picks up for a week after these holidays are usually a day late, but can be two business days late.

### **REPUBLIC SERVICES, NO FREE PICKUP DAY**

A free pickup day is not offered within Rossmoor. Supposedly we are billed lower rates than most residential areas instead of having a "free day." This was one way to help reduce the coupon. Lisa once considered a free day, but it required too many volunteers to monitor what was being disposed of, by whom and what their cost would be. Plus it is expensive. A 20-yard dumpster recently cost almost \$1,200. Roll-off dumpsters are rounded at the bottom so they don't hold as much. If the Mutual wants to try a free day, Lisa can set up the dumpster rental.

### **SIGNAGE**

When there is a trash problem, some trash enclosure volunteers post signs in their trash enclosure. If you do this, please use removable tape. (See POSTERS for more information about tape.)

### **SMOKE DETECTOR DISPOSAL**

Most smoke detectors contain a minute amount of radioactive material. While it does not pose a risk to human health, the State of California does not allow them to be disposed with municipal waste. You can return it to the manufacturer with a note which indicates the detector is intended for disposal. Mail it to the address on the back of the detector.

### **SORTING CORRECTLY**

See ROSSMOOR RECYCLE GUIDE in the APPENDIX below for updated sorting information. Some house cleaners and caregivers make sorting errors. Consider giving them information about trash disposal requirements in Rossmoor or pointing to RecycleSmart posters which are also in Spanish.

Some neighbors have trouble putting their trash in the correct bins. Consider helping them set

things up correctly in their homes. They may need two separate kitchen trash containers for separating trash from recycling plus a compost pail.

Some frail elderly who can't lift a heavy dumpster lid may need help lifting their stuff into the correct bins in the trash enclosure.

### **STYROFOAM**

Styrofoam (polystyrene) is non-biodegradable and non-recyclable. According to Washington University, Styrofoam takes 500 years to decompose; it cannot be recycled, so the Styrofoam cups dumped in landfills are there to stay.

### **TRASH ENCLOSURE SIGNAGE**

(See POSTERS & SIGNAGE REMOVED DURING PAINTING)

### **TRASH ENCLOSURE, DAMAGED**

Sometimes trash enclosure doors get damaged when a dumpster is being emptied. If this happens to your enclosure, email photos of the damage to [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com). If the damage is serious, the doors can be replaced with new Heavy Duty Metal framed doors. Otherwise, repairs will be made when the entry is scheduled for repairs and painting.

### **TRASH ENCLOSURE VOLUNTEERS & SAFETY**

The goal of a trash volunteer is to improve recycling, composting, and disposing of unwanted items. This is done by answering neighbors' questions about what goes where and notifying Mutual Operations Department or the Mutual's trash team leader if you need help dealing with a trash problem. For sorting information, look on pages 24 to 31 in the front of the 2024 Rossmoor phonebook, visit <https://sustainablerossmoor.org/trashtalk>, or email [trash.talk.rossmoor@gmail.com](mailto:trash.talk.rossmoor@gmail.com).

Keep yourself safe. Do nothing that would put yourself at risk and affect the Mutual's liability. While some trash volunteers choose to be a dumpster diver, please do not do this dangerous behavior while acting as a part of a Mutual's trash committee.

### **TREE BRANCHES**

If the branch is thin and fits in the green cart when broken down, the branch can go there.

*One resident piles broken branches under the tree for the gardener to take. If the branch is large or if there are many branches (like after a windstorm), another resident piles them in the gutter, next to the sidewalk.*

### **WELCOMING NEWCOMERS**

Many newcomers feel overwhelmed. They just want to meet people and get answers to their questions. That's why, whenever possible, it is better if someone in their new entry contacts them. Consider asking if they have any questions about Rossmoor.

Consider welcoming new residents with a recycle tote, compost pail, "Guidelines for Sorting Trash," and a welcoming letter (below). (You can download "Guidelines for Sorting Trash" from <https://sustainablerossmoor.org/trashtalk>.) The most important part of our "Trash Welcome Wagon" visit is person-to-person contact. The "gifts" are mostly an excuse to make that contact.

If you bring your Rossmoor phonebook, you can point out the recycle information on pages 24 to 31 in the front. (Newcomers should already have a phonebook. If they don't, you can get a phonebook for them from the Rossmoor News, 1006 Stanley Dollar Dr.)

You can get totes and pails by emailing [workorder@rossmoor.com](mailto:workorder@rossmoor.com) with your request. Mutual Operations Department (MOD) will email a response letting you know when the items will be ready for pickup.

Avoid making assumptions. When wrong stuff like moving boxes fill up a trash enclosure, someone else, not the newcomer, might have caused this. To avoid a mistaken assumption, focus on giving newcomers a tote, pail, and information about where to find recycle information.

The following letter can be modified for renters, caregivers, house cleaners, the family of a resident, or long-time residents who need more information.

#### **WELCOMING NEWCOMERS, A SAMPLE LETTER**

[DATE]

Dear [NEIGHBOR'S NAME],

Welcome to the neighborhood! I am a "Trash Enclosure Volunteer" for our entry. To welcome you, if you like, I have a recycle tote and compost pail for you. The tote has a handle on the bottom so you can easily shake the recyclables into the recycle bin.

Trash Enclosure Volunteers help minimize increases to the "coupon" we pay every month. We do that by educating and assisting our neighbors with disposing their trash, recyclables, and compost.

Please put your trash in [STREET & ENTRY & ENCLOSURE #]. This enclosure is shared by many of your neighbors, so make sure you leave room for their trash, too.

For more information about how to dispose of trash, please visit:  
<https://sustainablerossmoor.com/trashtalk>.

I invite you to share your email and phone number with me. I will add it to the neighborhood contact list, so you can occasionally receive email updates and special notifications.

As you get settled, please let me know if you have any questions. I hope you will enjoy living in Rossmoor

Warmly,

[YOUR SIGNATURE]

[YOUR NAME]

[YOUR EMAIL]

[YOUR PHONE]

### **WOOD, DISPOSING OF**

The MOD Recycle Yard has a wood bin. If the board fits, it can go there. If you want to dispose of wood inside a trash enclosure, it should be able to fit inside the cart or dumpster while still allowing the lid to close and leaving room for everyday trash from that entry's residents.

Unpainted, untreated wood can go into the GREEN COMPOST cart. Painted or treated wood needs to go to LANDFILL. Wood does not go in the RECYCLE bins.

### **YELLOW TAGS**

Watch out for yellow tags in the trash enclosure! Some warn that the RECYCLE bin is contaminated. It might not be emptied in the future if the wrong stuff continues to be put in recycling. One yellow sign had this warning, "Health Care Workers: Absolutely no pee pads or plastic bags in the blue bin!!"

Frequently, the tag tells why a bin was not emptied. The contamination could be food, Styrofoam, facial tissues, plastic bags, paper napkins, paper towels or even electronics. If you see a yellow tag and the RECYCLE bin was not emptied, you have two options:

1. Remove the items listed on the yellow tag before the next service day.
2. If your entry can't wait a week, the Mutual can pay an additional \$44.12 to \$82.05 (depending on the size of the bin) for a special pickup to have the contents (with all the carefully sorted recycling) hauled to the dump. This will increase your coupon.

### **APPENDIX**

## **ROSSMOOR RECYCLE GUIDE**

### **HOW TO SORT STUFF**

*\* An item marked "mixed material" is made of paper and plastic. The salvage companies cannot separate the components to recycle, so it belongs in LANDFILL.*

Aerosol can (sprayed until empty) → LANDFILL

Aerosol can (not empty) → HAZARDOUS

Aluminum foil or pan (if clean) → RECYCLE

Appliance → RAPID RECYCLE

Automotive products → HAZARDOUS

Bag, paper (if clean, dry, empty) → RECYCLE



Bag, plastic or cellophane → LANDFILL  
Battery (household) → MOD RECYCLE YARD  
Bedding → HAUL to CCTS (our “dump”)  
Biodegradable plastic → LANDFILL  
Bones → COMPOST  
Book, hardback → LIBRARY, DONATE, LANDFILL  
Book, paperback → LIBRARY or RECYCLE  
Bottle (clean & dry without lid or cap) → RECYCLE  
Box (held moist food or liquid) → LANDFILL  
Box, cardboard (flat & fits easily in cart) → RECYCLE  
Box, cardboard (large or can’t be flattened) → MOD  
Box, paperboard (detergent, cereal, shoe) → RECYCLE  
Box, shiny (mixed material\*) → LANDFILL  
Broken glass (bagged) → LANDFILL  
Bubble wrap → LANDFILL  
Butcher paper → LANDFILL  
Cables (electric) → RAPID RECYCLE  
Can, metal (clean, dry, without lid) → RECYCLE  
Candy wrapper → LANDFILL  
Cap or lid → LANDFILL  
Carbon paper → LANDFILL  
Carpet, rug or padding → HAUL to CCTS  
Carton (milk, juice, soup) → LANDFILL  
Cash register receipt → LANDFILL  
Cassette tape → LANDFILL  
Cell phone → RAPID RECYCLE  
Cellophane → LANDFILL  
Ceramics, porcelain → LANDFILL  
Chips bag → LANDFILL  
Chopsticks (metal, plastic or porcelain) → LANDFILL  
Chopsticks (wood) → COMPOST  
Cleaning bottle (if empty, clean & dry) → RECYCLE  
Cleaning product (like bleach or wax) → HAZARDOUS  
Clothing or cloth fabric → DONATE or LANDFILL  
Coffee grounds (wrapped) → COMPOST  
Compostable bag (only if BPI-certified) → COMPOST  
Compostable plastic → LANDFILL  
Computer & peripherals → RAPID RECYCLE  
Construction debris → HAUL to CCTS (our “dump”)  
Corks (plastic) → LANDFILL  
Corks (real, no plastic/metal) → COMPOST  
Cotton balls → LANDFILL  
COVID test kits (used, unused & expired) → LANDFILL  
Cup, paper → LANDFILL

Cup, plastic (clean, dry, no lid) → RECYCLE  
Cupcake paper liner → COMPOST  
Dryer sheets → LANDFILL  
Dust wipes → LANDFILL  
DVD or CD disc → LANDFILL  
Egg carton (all cardboard) → COMPOST  
Egg carton (Styrofoam) → LANDFILL  
Egg shells (wrapped) → COMPOST  
Electronics & cables → RAPID RECYCLE  
Envelope (with or without window) → RECYCLE  
Eyeglasses → LIONS CLUB BOX  
Fabric or clothing → DONATE or LANDFILL  
Flashlight (electronics) → RAPID RECYCLE  
Flowers, leaves & twigs → COMPOST  
Food tray (Styrofoam or plastic foam) → LANDFILL  
Food, cooked or raw (wrapped) → COMPOST  
Frozen food packaging → LANDFILL  
Furniture (only metal or wood) → MOD RECYCLE YARD  
Furniture → DONATE or HAUL to CCTS (our “dump”)  
Gardening chemicals (plant care) → HAZARDOUS  
Gift wrap (plain paper) → RECYCLE  
Gift wrap (shiny, fuzzy or metallic) → LANDFILL  
Glass bottle or jar (if clean & dry) → RECYCLE  
Glass, broken (bagged) → LANDFILL  
Grease (in a sealed container) → LANDFILL  
Hangers (metal, plastic or wood) → LANDFILL  
Hearing aids → LIONS CLUB BOX (near Woodshop)  
Ice cream container or wrapper → LANDFILL  
Ice cream stick (wood) → COMPOST  
Juice pack containers → LANDFILL  
K-Cup → LANDFILL  
Knife (wrap safely, e.g., duct tape) → LANDFILL  
Labels → LANDFILL  
Lamp (electronics) → RAPID RECYCLE  
Laundry basket (plastic, put in upright) → RECYCLE  
Light bulb (fluorescent) → WC ACE Hardware  
Light bulb (standard, LED or halogen) → LANDFILL  
Light bulb (fluorescent, LED) → WC ACE Hardware  
Light bulb (Incandescent, halogen) → LANDFILL  
Light strings (LED) → RAPID RECYCLE, WC ACE Hardware  
Magazine, brochures (mixed material\*) → LANDFILL  
Mailer (Amazon’s “recycle like box”) → RECYCLE  
Mailer (mixed material\*) → LANDFILL  
Matches (unused) → HAZARDOUS

Matches (used) → COMPOST  
Mattresses & box springs → BAY AREA RECYCLE  
Meat, fish, poultry, bones, egg shells → COMPOST  
Medical equipment → ILR or DONATE  
Medical needles & syringes → GATEWAY LOBBY or Walnut Creek CITY HALL  
Medicine & pills (see advice) → GATEWAY LOBBY  
Mesh fruit basket or wrap → LANDFILL  
Metal → RECYCLE or RAPID RECYCLE  
Metal pull-tab (loose) → LANDFILL  
Milk carton (mixed material\*) → LANDFILL  
Milk jug (hard plastic) → RECYCLE  
Mirror → DONATE or LANDFILL  
Name tags → LANDFILL  
Net bag or wrap → LANDFILL  
Newspaper → RECYCLE or COMPOST  
Packing peanuts (bagged) → LANDFILL  
Packing sheets (biodegradable) → DISSOLVE or LANDFILL  
Padded mailer → LANDFILL  
Paint (dried up) → LANDFILL  
Paint (up to 5 gallons) → HAZARDOUS  
Paper (butcher or carbon) → LANDFILL  
Paper (colored & construction) → RECYCLE  
Paper (fuzzy or metallic) → LANDFILL  
Paper (writing, computer or newspaper) → RECYCLE  
Paper cup (most have a shiny side) → LANDFILL  
Paper napkin (clean or dirty) → COMPOST  
Paper plate/bowl (dull, not shiny) → COMPOST  
Paper plate/bowl (with a shiny side) → LANDFILL  
Paper towel (clean or dirty) → COMPOST  
Parchment paper → COMPOST  
Pen or pencil → LANDFILL  
Pet food bag (shiny) → LANDFILL  
Pet food can (if clean & dry) → RECYCLE  
Pet litter, bagged → LANDFILL  
Pet poop, bagged → LANDFILL  
Phonebook (without cover pages) → RECYCLE  
Phonebook cover → RECYCLE  
Photos → LANDFILL  
Pill bottle (empty, without cap) → RECYCLE  
Pillow → HAUL to CCTS (our “dump”)  
Pills (follow instructions) → GATEWAY LOBBY  
Pizza box → COMPOST  
Plastic bag → BOX AT SAFEWAY or LANDFILL  
Plastic clamshells → RECYCLE

Plastic water bottles → RECYCLE  
Plastic, hard (with or without a number) → RECYCLE  
Plastic, soft (foldable) → LANDFILL  
Plastic, tags (as on bread bags) → LIONS CLUB  
Plate, paper (not shiny) → COMPOST  
Plate, paper (with a shiny side) → LANDFILL  
Postcard (mixed material\*) → LANDFILL  
Post-it (anything smaller than credit card) → LANDFILL  
Pot or pan (metal, coated) → LANDFILL  
Pot or pan (metal, no coating) → RECYCLE  
Prescription bottle (empty, without cap) → RECYCLE  
Printer ink cartridge → COMPUTER STORES  
Propane cylinder → HAZARDOUS  
Razor (wrap safely like with duct tape) → LANDFILL  
Ribbon → LANDFILL  
Rubber cement → HAZARDOUS  
Rubber cement, dry → LANDFILL  
Rug or padding → HAUL to CCTS (our “dump”)  
Sanitary product or diaper → LANDFILL  
Sheets, bedding → HAUL to CCTS (our “dump”)  
Shells, egg or seafood (wrapped) → COMPOST  
Shredded paper (separate bag, closed) → RECYCLE  
Smoke detector → RETURN TO MANUFACTURER  
Snack wrapper → LANDFILL  
Solvent → HAZARDOUS  
Soup box → LANDFILL  
Soup can (if clean & dry) → RECYCLE  
Spiral light bulb (fluorescent) → WC ACE Hardware  
Spiral notebook (if wire is removed) → RECYCLE  
String, cord, ribbon → LANDFILL  
Styrofoam (bag if peanuts) → LANDFILL  
Suitcase → DONATE or HAUL to CCTS (our “dump”)  
Take-out box (cardboard, not shiny) → COMPOST  
Take-out box (hard plastic, wiped clean) → RECYCLE  
Take-out box (shiny, dirty or Styrofoam) → LANDFILL  
Telephone book → RECYCLE  
Television (electronics) → RAPID RECYCLE  
Thermometer → HAZARDOUS  
Tissue wrapping paper (colors OK) → RECYCLE  
Tissue, facial (Kleenex) → LANDFILL  
Toilet paper → LANDFILL  
Toothbrush → LANDFILL  
Toothpick, wood → COMPOST  
Tube (from towel or toilet paper) → RECYCLE

Twine → LANDFILL

Utensils (bamboo or wood) → COMPOST

Utensils (compostable plastic) → LANDFILL

Waste, human or pet → LANDFILL

Waxed paper → LANDFILL

White-Out → HAZARDOUS

Wood products (solid wood) → MOD RECYCLE YARD

Yogurt container (large) → RECYCLE

Yogurt container (small) → LANDFILL

### **MORE ABOUT LOCATIONS MENTIONED ABOVE**

**BAY AREA RECYCLE:** Call 1-925-465-5576 to schedule pickup of mattress and/or box springs. There is a charge.

**DONATE:** Give to a charity. Thrift shops accept:

- Books & DVDs (or give to the LIBRARY)
- Clothes or cloth
- Furniture, small
- Housewares & collectibles
- Medical equipment

**HAZARDOUS WASTE:** If you have proof of residency, Central Contra Costa Sanitary Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility (4797 Imhoff Pl, Martinez, 9am-4pm, Monday through Saturday) accepts:

- Aerosol cans
- Ammunition & fireworks
- Automotive products & tires
- Batteries
- Cooking oil (in sealed container)
- Fluorescent lamps & light bulbs
- Gardening chemicals
- Household cleaners & solvents
- Mercury thermometers
- Paint
- Propane cylinders
- Unused matches

**HAUL to CCTS:** Contra Costa Transfer Station, our “dump” (951 Waterbird Way, Martinez, daily 7am-5pm) accepts bikes, rugs, furniture, sand, concrete, rocks, construction debris & more.

**INDEPENDENT LIVING RESOURCES (ILR)** in Concord accepts and loans out medical equipment, everything from hospital beds to walking canes. (Thrift shops also accept medical equipment.)

**LIONS CLUB:** Collects eyeglasses, hearing aids & plastic tags (on loaves of bread) in a small box

near Woodshop and also in Gateway Lobby.

MOD RECYCLE YARD: Residents can bring some recyclable debris to MOD on Rockview Drive, 8am-12pm or 12:30pm-4:30pm, Monday through Friday. MOD accepts:

- Batteries (household)
- Books (or the LIBRARY)
- Cardboard boxes
- Metal or solid wood products
- Some wood or metal furniture (no upholstery, no plate glass)

RAPID RECYCLE: Call 1-925-671-9008 for free pickup of small electronics with a cord or battery, such as:

- Cell phone, small appliance, lamp
- Computer, keyboard, printer
- Metals, tools, wire, cables
- Television, monitor, vacuum cleaner

There's a small fee for a microwave or larger appliance.

SMOKE DETECTOR: To dispose of smoke detectors, mail to the manufacturer. The address is on the back of the detector. More information:

<https://naparecycling.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Smoke-Detectors.pdf>.

TRASH HAULER: See ads in Rossmoor News.

[TRASHNOTHING.COM](https://trashnothing.com): One way to give away stuff that others might want.