



For Immediate Release

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SAN CARLOS RESIDENTIAL WEEKLY FOOD SCRAPS PROGRAM STARTS MARCH 9 First Food Scraps Program in the SBWMA Service Area

SAN CARLOS, CA – February 24, 2009 – Starting the week of March 9, 2009, single-family residents who live in the City of San Carlos will be able to place all food scraps and food-soiled paper products in the green Yard Trimmings cart for composting. Food scraps and food-soiled paper include items such as fruits and vegetables, meat and bones, coffee grinds, egg shells, pizza boxes, and paper cups, plates and napkins.

The City of San Carlos is the first of the South Bayside Waste Management Authority (SBWMA) Member Agencies to roll out a food scraps composting program to its residents. Other SBWMA communities will likely be adding the program by January 2011 when the new Solid Waste Collection and Shoreway Recycling and Disposal Center Operations agreements take effect. These agreements will include the rollout of new single stream curbside collection programs to San Carlos and all of the SBWMA Member Agencies. Businesses in the SBWMA service area, including many restaurants, already have a program for composting their food scraps.

“The City of San Carlos is proud to be once again working with the SBWMA and Allied Waste on a new program for San Carlos residents,” said San Carlos Mayor Bob Grassilli. “San Carlos was the pilot agency for the residential battery and cell phone recycling program that has now resulted in over 77,000 pounds of these materials being recycled throughout the SBWMA. The Food Scraps program promises to increase residential recycling and we look forward to it becoming as successful as the residential battery and cell phone recycling program in the months ahead.”

To kick off the program, residents will be receiving a 2-gallon kitchen pail next week for in-home use to collect the food scraps. The new program promises to be easy and convenient. Residents simply place any food scraps in the kitchen pail, empty the contents into their large green Yard Trimmings cart, and set the cart out for collection.

As part of the new program, the Yard Trimmings cart will also now be collected weekly (as opposed to every other week) starting the week of March 9th. There will be no changes to residents' garbage collection day schedule. Recyclables, such as bottles and cans, mixed paper and cardboard, will still be collected every other week. Once collected, the mixed food scraps and yard trimmings will be taken to a facility in Santa Clara County for composting.

“Food scraps make up approximately 30% of the waste that ends up getting buried at the landfill,” said Kevin McCarthy, Executive Director for the South Bayside Waste Management Authority (SBWMA). “By taking food scraps out of the waste stream, we are not only preserving the landfill, but also reducing our impacts to the environment.”

Food scraps and yard trimmings placed in garbage cans go straight to the landfill, decompose and create methane gas, one of the most potent greenhouse gases (GHG) contributing to global warming. In fact, methane gas is 23 times more potent than carbon dioxide (CO₂). By placing these compostable items in their Yard Trimmings cart instead, residents can greatly reduce the amount of methane produced and create beneficial compost for gardening and agriculture. Compost is used to improve soil conditions, reduces the need for fertilizers and pesticides, and helps soil retain water.

“Thanks to the efforts of the San Carlos community, we are putting a food recycling program into effect two years early,” said San Carlos Green Task Force Member Patricia Potter, a citizens group collaborating with the City on green programs, conservation and resource management best practices. “This program will extend the life of our landfill, reduce air pollution, and increase our waste diversion. It is an exciting reminder of how all of us working together can create a greener San Carlos.”

Residents are encouraged to participate in the convenient Food Scraps and Yard Trimmings program, and not place food scraps in their garbage cans or down their kitchen sink's garbage disposal. Disposing of food scraps, oils and fats in the garbage disposal can ultimately create major problems for residents' sewer systems by blocking pipes as well as increasing their sewer bill by requiring the sewer treatment plant to process this material. Fats and oils should be drained into a container and placed in their garbage.

The new Food Scraps and Yard Trimmings Collection Program is a partnership among the City of San Carlos, SBWMA and Allied Waste Services of San Mateo County who collects and composts the materials. Residents can find additional information on the program by visiting www.cityofsancarlos.org, www.RethinkWaste.org, or www.alliedwastesmc.com, or calling 650-592-2411.

South Bayside Waste Management Authority (SBWMA)

Formed in 1982, the SBWMA is a joint powers authority comprised of 12 member agencies (Atherton, Belmont, Burlingame, East Palo Alto, Foster City, Hillsborough, Menlo Park, Redwood City, San Carlos and San Mateo along with the County of San Mateo and the West Bay Sanitary District) in San Mateo County and is a leader in implementing innovative waste reduction and recycling programs. The SBWMA also owns and manages the Shoreway Recycling and Disposal Center in San Carlos consisting of a permitted solid waste transfer station and a recycling processing facility.

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