

# GreenWays

THE QUARTERLY RESIDENTIAL NEWSLETTER FROM GREENWASTE OF PALO ALTO SUMMER 2021

## IS IT RECYCLABLE?



1) No, it's landfill. 2) Yes! Recyclable (Place inside a clear plastic bag with other film plastic and knot the top of the bag). 3) Yes! Recyclable. 4) No, paper milk cartons should be composted. 5) No, pizza boxes should be composted. 6) Yes! Recyclable (must be empty).

## GREENWASTE HIGHLIGHTS

### • VISIT THE HHW REUSE ZONE:

The Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Reuse Zone allows the public to pick up gently used, good quality household products such as paints, cleaners, and unused motor oil for FREE.

The HHW Reuse Zone is located at 2501 Embarcadero Way and is open to the public during regular HHW Station Hours, which are Saturdays from 9-11am and the first Friday of each month from 3-5pm. Visitors picking up reused products can take up to 5 items per visit.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Due to COVID-19, these events may be adjusted to allow for proper health and safety protocols. Visit the website or call Zero Waste Palo Alto for more information.*

### • WORM COMPOST WORKSHOP:

Saturday, July 17, 10am-12pm  
Cubberley Community Center, Room U-7  
4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

### • COMPOST BASICS WORKSHOP:

Saturday, August 7, 10am-12pm  
Cubberley Community Center, Room U-7  
4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

# THE MANY BENEFITS OF COMPOST

The process of creating compost from organic materials – such as food scraps and yard trimmings – has many positive environmental benefits. But did you know that applying compost to soil also has considerable environmental benefits? Compost plays a key role in creating healthy soil and can be an invaluable resource for home gardeners.

## The benefits of applying compost to your soil include:

- » Conserving water by improving the soil's water holding capacity and moisture retention.
- » Combating climate change by increasing the soil's ability to absorb and sequester carbon.
- » Enriching soil and reducing the need for chemical fertilizers by adding valuable plant nutrients.
- » Encouraging beneficial soil microorganisms such as fungi and bacteria.
- » Improving soil structure and permeability, helping to slow soil erosion.

In addition to composting at home or in your backyard, you can also participate in the composting process by placing your household compostables such as food scraps, soiled paper, and yard trimmings into your green compost cart. The materials in your green cart go through a 21-day composting process that turns these compostables into finished compost that can be used by residents, gardeners, landscapers, and farmers to help feed the soil and grow healthy plants and crops.

As a bonus, certified organic compost delivered by GreenWaste and the City is available for free to Palo Alto residents at the Eleanor Pardee Community Garden Compost Giveaway Station! Bring a shovel & bucket, Tuesday – Sunday, 9am – 4pm.

## FILO "JR" ALCONTAR: 45 YEARS SERVING PALO ALTO

JR first rode in a Palo Alto garbage truck as a child, son of the then residential route supervisor for the City's former waste management contractor, Palo Alto Sanitation Company (PASCO).

In 1976, at age 19, JR began working as a garbage man himself, riding on the back of a PASCO collection truck and jumping off at every household to unload material from backyard garbage cans. He was later promoted to driver and throughout his career has worked almost every driver position there is in Palo Alto. JR's most cherished memory is receiving his 20-year work anniversary ring. He keeps it safely tucked away next to his father's 25-year work anniversary ring.

Now, 45 years later, JR will be retiring at the end of 2021. The departure is bitter-sweet. After a lifetime developing relationships with the Palo Alto community, JR says, "It has been a pleasure, but am I ready to call it quits? This is all I've ever known." Like all of us at GreenWaste of Palo Alto, JR values the relationships he has cultivated with community members and folks he has seen along his route for years. JR enjoys many aspects of the job itself but acknowledges that interacting with residents and developing lasting relationships with his fellow drivers "are what make it great." He will be sorely missed, but we cannot wait to see what the next chapter holds for him! JR's parting message to the community: "Respect each other."



## ZERO WASTE LIVING

Recycling is good, but to reach our Zero Waste goal we need to move beyond recycling to reducing, reusing, and repairing.

Here are some examples of products and practices that reduce packaging and disposable waste caused by common, everyday activities. There's something for every lifestyle and every budget. Making even one change will add up to big results – which action will you start with?

### Zero Out Packaging

- » Simplify life with everyday products that reduce or eliminate packaging: shampoo bars, laundry detergent strips, toothpaste tablets.
- » Eliminate disposable packaging by choosing retailers that offer refillable or returnable packaging: personal care products, groceries, cleaning products.

### Zero In Reusables

- » Replace disposables with durable, reusable alternatives: beeswax wraps, washable fabric snack and sandwich bags, silicone zip bags, wool dryer balls, reusable wipes and cleaning pads.
- » Reuse your own bottle and make homemade cleaning products! Using vinegar, lemon, baking soda, and borax reduces waste and toxics in your home. Visit the Zero Waste website for recipes.

Visit [www.cityofpaloalto.org/zwliving](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/zwliving) for more information and ideas.