

WHY DOES THE CITY OF VICTORVILLE RECYCLE?

Why did the City of Victorville start the recycling program?

California State Law Assembly Bill 939 was passed in 1989 and requires all municipalities to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills by 50% by the year 2000. If the City fails to make progress in meeting these goals, it could face fines of up to \$10,000 per day from the State of California.

Why did the City start a curbside recycling program? Why not just ask people to recycle on their own?

Given the ambitious 50% waste reduction requirement of State law AB 939, the City needed to implement a recycling program which would significantly reduce the amount of waste disposed of by City residents. While some residents might be willing and able to haul their recyclable materials to a buy back center, this would not be true for the majority of residents. In addition, buy back centers usually only purchase higher value items, like aluminum cans or deposit plastic bottles which make up only a small percentage of the residential waste stream. Many buy back centers will not even accept the lower value, but higher volume, items like cereal boxes, phone books, glass jars, other types of non-deposit plastic bottles and other mixed papers like junk mail, magazines, catalogs, envelopes, food boxes, etc.

In view of these facts, the City decided to implement a curbside recycling program for residents. This program makes recycling as easy as taking out the trash and therefore encourages the highest level of participation—and hence the greatest level of waste reduction. This will help the City in meeting the AB 939 50% waste reduction goal.

Why should I recycle?

There are a number of reasons.

- **Help the City Meet AB 939 Goals:** By recycling, you help the City reach the 50% waste reduction goal established by the State. This will enable the City to avoid any fines or penalties from the State for not complying with this law. (Note: If the City were to be fined, the funds to pay the fines would eventually have to come from residents and businesses.)
- **Help Reduce Trash Disposal Costs:** The cost to dispose of trash is included in the “Solid Waste Services Fee” on residents’ sanitation bills. In fact, the disposal cost is \$4.29 of the total. The City must pay to dispose of residents’ trash at the San Bernardino County Landfill located on Stoddard Wells Road in Victorville. The City pays the County \$37.23 (as of July 2008) for every ton of trash that is taken to the landfill by the City’s hauler, Victorville Disposal. Recycling reduces the amount of “trash” that is discarded in the green barrels and this, in turn, reduces the amount of trash that is hauled to the Victorville landfill. Every ton of material recycled by residents is one less ton that the City must pay to dispose of. This helps keep down the Solid Waste Services Fee on residents’ sanitation bills.
- **Recycling Creates Revenues Which Helps Cover Program Expenses:** Recyclables collected through the Curbside Recycling Program are processed at the Victor Valley Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and are then sold. Revenues from the sale of the recyclables are used by the City to

help offset the costs of building and operating the MRF. The more materials that are recycled, the more revenues that are generated, and the larger the percentage of costs which are covered by revenues, rather than user fees. This helps keep down the “Solid Waste Services Fee” which appears on residents’ sanitation bills.

- Recycling Saves Resources: Recycling saves paper, glass, plastic, and metal to be used again. This reduces the need for mining of virgin materials. Making things out of recycled materials cuts down on the amount of air and water emissions during the manufacturing process and saves energy. Today, a significant portion of our Nation’s resource base comes from recycled materials. Did you know that over one third of the raw materials used in America’s paper mills was recovered paper—over 31.4 million tons?
- Recycling Supports Jobs and Industry: The recycling program recovers useful resources and returns them back to industry to be used again. Many industries rely on recycled materials as their raw materials needed to make new products.

I already recycle aluminum and plastic bottles. I don’t have anything for the recycling bins.

There’s a lot more to recycle than just cans and plastic bottles! If you’re taking your cans and bottles to a buy back center, that’s fine, but then use the City’s blue recycling barrel for all the other recyclable items you are probably throwing away. Following is a list of other household items that can go in the blue recycling bin.

- newspapers, magazines, catalogs, tubes from paper towel rolls
- junk mail, old bills, TV guides, phone books, school papers, envelopes
- notebook paper, fliers, advertisements, bill inserts, coupons
- computer paper, xerox paper, file folders, wrapping paper
- cereal boxes, other food boxes, shoe boxes, tissue boxes, toy boxes
- paper bags, corrugated boxes, moving boxes, shipping boxes
- plastic milk and water jugs, plastic laundry detergent bottles,
- pickle jars, soup cans, ketchup and mustard bottles, salad dressing bottles
- cooking oil bottles, cat and dog food cans, baby food jars, shampoo bottles
- other food cans, any glass bottles and jars, peanut butter jars, jelly jars

Where do recyclables go after they are picked up?

Recyclables are taken to the Victor Valley Materials Recovery Facility (MRF), located on Abbey Lane, off of Stoddard Wells Road, in Victorville. The MRF is owned jointly by the City of Victorville and the Town of Apple Valley. It is operated by a private company, Burrtec Waste Industries, under contract to the City and Town.

The MRF is a 38,400 square foot building which contains various conveyors, balers, and other equipment needed to sort the recyclables. It can process 160 tons of recyclables per 8 hour shift.

The MRF is an essential part of the City’s overall recycling program. At the MRF, recyclables are sorted into different categories, compacted into bales, and made ready to be shipped off to industry to be used again. Once the recyclables have been processed at the MRF, they can be sold to industry. (Industries are not interested in using the mixed recyclables as they are originally collected from the blue cans.)

Obviously, there was a cost to build the MRF and operate the MRF. The City shares these costs with the Town of Apple Valley. Revenues received from the sale of recyclables are used to help cover some of the costs of building and operating the MRF. Currently, the revenues do not cover all the costs of building and operating the MRF. Residents can help make the recycling program more cost efficient by recycling as much as possible. This increases revenues and helps cover more of the MRF costs.

Does the City make money on recycling?

Recyclables from the Curbside Recycling Program are processed at the Victor Valley Materials Recovery Facility and are then sold. The City does receive revenues from the sale of the recyclables, and these revenues are used by the City to help pay for part of the costs to build and operate the MRF. Although the City does receive revenues from recycling, it does not make a "profit." At the present time, the revenues from recycling are less than the costs of collection and processing.

You can help make recycling as cost effective as possible by participating fully in the recycling program. The more material which is recycled, the more revenues which are generated, and the larger the percentage of costs which are covered by revenues, rather than user fees from residents.

How else can I reduce waste and help the City control trash disposal and recycling costs?

- **Recycle All Clean Mixed Papers:** Make sure you recycle your junk mail, magazines, school papers, catalogs, advertisements, cereal and food boxes, shoe boxes, toy boxes, and other clean papers. (Of course, don't forget your newspapers.)
- **"Shop Smart:"** When you go shopping, try to purchase items that can be recycled and which have minimal packaging. For a free brochure on "shopping smart" call the City of Victorville Sanitation Department at 955-8615.
- **Grasscycle:** Don't throw your grass clippings in the trash! Leave them on the lawn. Grasscycling means leaving your clippings on the lawn when you mow. Grasscycling does not cause thatch or lawn disease. It does reduce the weight of your trash and provide your lawn with a valuable source of nitrogen. Call the City at 955-8615 for a free grasscycling brochure.
- **Compost:** You can compost leaves, grass clippings, and other garden trimmings in your own backyard. Composting does not take a lot of time or effort. Composting reduces the amount of trash you discard and it will produce a useful soil conditioner for your garden. Call the City at 955-8615 for a free composting brochure.

Questions? If you have any other questions about the City of Victorville's Recycling Program, please call the Sanitation Department at 955-5087.



Victorville Recycling Begins With You!

CITY OF VICTORVILLE
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