City of West Sacramento

SUSTAINABILITY DIVISION NEWSLETTER

Winter 2024

SMART TRUCK UPDATE!

This year, the City adopted a new program called "Smart Truck" that monitors for contamination and overages in our waste streams. So, how's it going so far? The answer is: awesome! **Before the program launched, contamination and overage incidents ranged around 400-500 per week. That number has now dropped below 100 per week!** This means our waste streams are cleaner, leading to a higher rate of recycled and composted material. This translates to a reduction in methane from our landfills and the extension of the lifecycle of produced materials. If you are curious about the biggest source of contamination— it's plastic bags by a mile! They represent nearly 90% of all contamination in recycling and organics streams. If residents can place all plastic bags into their trash carts, our City will be well on its way toward a brighter future.

UNDERSTANDING THE CITY'S STORM DRAIN SYSTEM

The City's storm drain system is a vital infrastructure that helps manage rainfall, prevent flooding, and protect properties and roadways. It is a shared system composed of interconnected facilities, including pipes, culverts, canals, ditches, detention basins, and pump stations, owned and maintained by various entities such as the City, Reclamation Districts 900 and 537, and CalTrans. Among these, Reclamation District 900 (RD900) maintains the largest share of non-City facilities.

How It Works

The storm drain system operates as a unified network, managing rainwater runoff from homes, businesses, and public spaces. Runoff flows through a vast system of over 4,000 storm drains, 130 miles of storm mains, over 48,000 linear feet of storm drain channels, and eight stormwater pumping facilities before reaching major outfalls like Lake Washington, the Sacramento River, the Yolo Bypass, or the Deep Water Channel. This integrated approach ensures water moves efficiently across facilities owned by multiple agencies. Each of these components plays a critical role in draining watersheds and protecting the community from flooding.

Why It Matters

Every storm drain and facility within this network contributes to the City's ability to manage stormwater safely. By understanding the collaborative nature of the system and the resources involved, residents can appreciate the importance of protecting and maintaining our shared infrastructure.

For more information about the City's storm drain system or to report issues, please visit **https://wsac.city/sustainability**.

WEST SACRAMENTO'S WASTE JOURNEY

Have you ever wondered where your banana peels, yard clippings, or soda cans end up after leaving your curb? Here's a look at the journey they take and how that journey makes a positive environmental impact.

ORGANIC WASTE: A PATH TO FERTILE GROUNDS

When you toss food scraps, coffee grounds, or yard trimmings into your organic waste bin, they begin a journey to the Northern Composting Facility at the Yolo County Central Landfill. This state-of-the-art facility transforms organic waste into nutrient-rich compost through the following process:

1. Trash and other contaminants are sorted out, and the organic material is ground into smaller pieces.
2. The organic material is put into Covered Aerated Static Piles (CASPs) that are aerated, irrigated, and temperature-controlled for 22 days to begin the breakdown process, while also killing weed seeds and pathogens.
3. The compost is removed from CASP and cured for 40 more days.
4. The compost is screened for contaminants one last time.

Composting not only diverts waste from landfills, it also helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions by preventing organic materials from decomposing into methane in an oxygen-starved environment. Instead, these materials are turned into a valuable resource that helps enrich soil and support local agriculture. To learn more about the composting process at Northern, visit **https://wsac.city/ycclcompost.**

RECYCLABLES: SORTING IT ALL OUT

Your recyclables (including bottles, cans, cardboard, and paper) are sent to the newly upgraded Waste Management Sacramento Recycling and Transfer Station. This advanced facility ensures that recyclable materials are carefully sorted, processed, and sent to manufacturers to create new products.

This state-of-the-art facility uses a variety of technology to efficiently sort recyclable material into the correct commodity streams.

- Optical sorters identify specific material types and air valves eject unwanted materials.
  - → Each optical sorter can sort up to 1,000 items per minute!
- Eddy current separation creates a magnetic field that causes aluminum and non-iron metals to "float" up while the other materials fall off the belt due to gravity.
- Paddles alternate to separate flat materials like paper, which move upward and over the paddles, from rigid items like bottles and jugs, which roll back down.

This efficient system maximizes the recovery of valuable materials, reduces the demand for raw resources, and keeps unnecessary waste out of landfills.

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