

Mission Trail Waste Systems

# Los Altos Quarterly Commercial Newsletter



*Proud to Serve the Los Altos Community*

## START THE YEAR STRONG: Waste Reduction for Commercial Properties



Even small operational changes can have a big impact across your business. Choosing reusable service ware, reducing single-use plastics, and minimizing unnecessary packaging all support waste-reduction goals and help businesses meet SB 1383 organics recycling requirements. MTWS encourages all commercial customers to adopt sustainable practices that reduce landfill disposal and improve overall diversion.

### Business Sorting Basics

Accurate sorting is essential for compliance with California's mandatory organics recycling law. In commercial settings—offices, retail, food service, and industrial spaces—improper sorting can increase contamination and jeopardize compliance.

### Remember:

- Recyclables must be clean and dry.
- All food scraps, food-soiled paper, and plant trimmings must go into the green organics container, as required by SB 1383.
- All material placed in your gray garbage bin should be securely bagged to help maintain clean enclosure areas.

A few extra seconds spent sorting correctly supports regulatory compliance, reduces contamination fees, and improves the efficiency of your collection service.

### Reduce Single-Use Plastics in the Workplace

Eliminating single-use plastics in your breakroom is an easy way to cut waste and support a more sustainable workplace. Encourage employees to choose reusable mugs, bottles, plates, and utensils, and stock the breakroom with durable dishware instead of disposable cups, cutlery, and stirrers. Provide clearly labeled recycling and organics bins to support proper sorting. Small changes in daily habits can significantly reduce waste and help create a greener, more responsible workspace.

### Helping Your Business with Diversion Assessments & Training

MTWS provides commercial diversion opportunity assessments and employee training to help businesses comply with recycling and composting laws. Our team evaluates your current waste setup, identifies opportunities to expand recycling and organics service, and recommends operational improvements to increase diversion and reduce contamination.

These assessments give business owners the tools they need to meet state requirements and improve sustainability performance. Please contact us to learn more!

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### Head West Marketplace March 22nd 11 am-5pm

Shop small with local makers, merchants, crafters, designers and artists, as Head West Marketplace returns to Downtown Los Altos on Sunday, March 22rd, from 11am-5pm



### Los Altos Farmers Market April 30th 4pm-8pm Main and State Streets

The Downtown Los Altos Farmers Market opens for the season along State Street on Thursday, April 30th, from 4-8pm. (The market returns to Downtown Los Altos each Thursday through October.)

Please remember that single-use plastic foodware and carryout bags (thick and thin) are no longer permitted for use or distribution by Los Altos businesses. For food establishments, ensure your operations remain compliant by utilizing reusable items for dine-in and fiber-based alternatives for takeout. For more information visit <https://www.losaltosca.gov/242/Single-use-Plastic-Foodware-Ordinance>.

# AROUND THE OFFICE

## Clear messaging is key to increased diversion

A strong office recycling program starts with simple, consistent messaging. Clear labels and easy-to-understand signage help employees and customers place materials in the correct containers. Diversion improves significantly when clean paper, cardboard, bottles, cans, and plastics are properly sorted.

## Helpful Resources

Find printable signage and recycling guides on our website. These can be hung in break rooms, copy rooms, common areas, and other high-traffic employee locations: <https://missiontrail.com/los-altos-commercial-resources/>



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## Best Practices for Recycling Right

**Keep Materials Empty, Clean & Dry.** To reduce contamination, ensure all recyclables are emptied, rinsed, and free of food residue. Place bins strategically. Position clearly labeled recycling, compost, and garbage containers in offices, break rooms, loading docks, and customer areas to support proper sorting habits.

### Accepted Materials

- Bottles & cans
- Clean Paper & cardboard
- Plastics #1-7

### Do NOT Place in Recycling

- Batteries
- Car parts
- Exercise weights
- Construction debris
- Garden tools or sharp items
- Wood, hoses, wire hangers, electronics, power cords, umbrellas, or pressurized containers

### Small Actions Create Big Returns

Taking a few seconds to hang more visual aids will assist all workplace employees and patrons to think about the big returns when recycling is done right. It helps reduce waste, support sustainability goals, and keep recycling operations safe and efficient.



Contact us:

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