

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**ALAMEDA COUNTY UNINCORPORATED AREA PARENTS:
MAKE REUSABLES A LUNCH AND SNACK TIME FIXTURE FOR KIDS**
Teach trash-free habits early and reduce litter in our waterways

ALAMEDA COUNTY, CA—We teach even our youngest children simple lessons in being good stewards of the environment with information about everything from recycling to conserving water. Now the Alameda County Unincorporated Area Clean Water Program offers a simple idea that allows children to take action at a young age: make their lunch boxes and snacks as trash-free as possible.

When litter hits the ground it's more than just an eyesore. Litter is easily washed into storm drains by rain. It then travels to local creeks and the Bay, where it disrupts delicate ecosystems, harming fish and wildlife. Eventually, litter from our cities also adds to the floating garbage patch in the Pacific Ocean—something many children have heard about in school.

The Alameda County Unincorporated Area Clean Water Program asks parents to demonstrate responsible ways to live trash-free.

Here are some tips for a trash-free lunch box for school, daycare or on-the-go families:

- Pack lunch in a reusable bag or lunch box
- Store sandwiches in reusable containers or wrap them in a cloth napkin
- Use a thermos or reusable bottle for drinks. Avoid wasteful juice boxes.
- Don't purchase fruit in individual packaging
- Avoid single-use items like paper bags, plastic baggies, chip bags, pudding cups, etc. Save money and resources by sending individual servings in reusable containers
- Lunch boxes and containers are available in a range of prices. Food containers and jars can also be reused to make a free "trash free" lunch
- Pack cloth napkins instead of paper ones. Old dishtowels can be repurposed as napkins
- Start a compost or worm bin and save compostables from lunches Get your children involved in the trash-free lunch packing activity and ask them for their ideas

The Alameda County Unincorporated Area Clean Water Program has more water pollution prevention tips at <http://www.cleanwaterprogram.org/indexHTML.htm>.