

TEN BEST WAYS TO GET A “GREEN” START ON THE NEW YEAR

Alameda County Clean Water Program Tips for Recycling, Home Composting and Properly Disposing of Materials Make it Easy to Keep New Year's Resolutions

If you're tired of making meaningless New Year's resolutions that you know you won't keep, try resolving to protect local waters. Many people contribute to storm water pollution without even realizing it, and are willing to change their ways when they realize how easy it is! The Alameda County Clean Water Program offers the ten best ways to protect local creeks and the San Francisco Bay, making it convenient for people to keep their resolutions.

- 1. Help reduce the number of cars on the road** by ridesharing, taking public transportation, and linking trips/errands.
- 2. Wash your car at a commercial car wash instead of in your driveway** to avoid soapy water from flowing into the storm drain. Even biodegradable soap can be harmful to aquatic wildlife.
- 3. Keep your car free from leaks** by having it routinely serviced. To be safe, place a drip pan under the car to contain fluid leaks.
- 4. Use materials like saw dust or kitty litter that absorb spills and can be swept and disposed of properly.** Place used saw dust in a strong plastic bag and take it to your local household hazardous waste collection center.
- 5. Recycle cans, aluminum, and paper products.** Be sure these items make it into your recycle bin, and not the trash can.
- 6. Properly dispose of toxic materials,** like unused garden and household chemicals, leftover paint, thinners and used solvents, by bringing them to the household hazardous waste drop-off site nearest you. In Alameda County, call the Household Hazardous Waste Division at 800-606-6606 for more information or to make an appointment.
- 7. Collect yard clippings** – don't sweep them into the street or gutter. If your city has a curbside program, use it. Yard clippings are also great compost material.
- 8. Use home compost instead of chemical fertilizers.** Making compost is easy and can even be fun! Garden trimmings, leaves, fruits and vegetable rinds and other organic materials can be composted into natural fertilizer for your garden. Call StopWaste at 510-635-6275 for more information about home composting.
- 9. Avoid using disposable materials** like paper cups, shopping bags and napkins. Instead, use materials that can be reused like coffee mugs, canvas bags and cloth napkins.
- 10. Clean latex paint from brushes and containers in a sink that has a sanitary sewer connection** – never in the street or over the storm drain.

For more information on keeping local creeks and the Bay cleaner and safe, visit www.cleanwaterprogram.org