



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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PRESS RELEASE

Date: September 8, 2017

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RESIDENTS ASKED TO REDUCE USE OF PLASTICS

Responding to a sharp decline in global demand for recycled materials, the County of Santa Cruz is asking residents to reduce the use of plastics to help protect the environment.

While County residents are pioneers in recycling household materials and recycling is an important facet of the County's position as a sustainability leader, a "perfect storm" in the international recycled materials economy has made the market for used plastics challenging. More than one-third of California's recycling centers have closed.

What can residents do to reduce waste? Follow these easy steps to be kinder to the planet and cut down on the use of plastics and other wasteful materials:

- Shop at farmers' markets
- Skip the plastic bag when buying produce
- Bring containers from home and buy in bulk
- Avoid products with excess packaging
- Don't buy bottled water – most is just repackaged tap water
- Bring your own travel mug to the coffee shop
- Say no to plastic straws
- Always bring your own shopping bag

For more information, go to www.santacruzcountyrecycles.org.

In 2016, the recycling rate across California declined to less than 50 percent for the first time. Declining oil prices have made plastic production less expensive, undermining the market for recycled plastic. Responding to these challenges, the County is suspending the collection of used plastics at its Buena Vista Landfill and Ben Lomond Transfer Station. While GreenWaste Recycling still collects plastics from residents in unincorporated areas to hold until the market improves, the County is encouraging those residents to reduce plastic use as well.