

Humboldt County, CA: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle –Green Tips for Humboldt County California Living

The current discussion with Eureka City Council, here in Eureka, California is “Mandatory Garbage/Recycling Pickup”. Now I know it hasn’t been implemented yet, and there are mixed feelings from the local community about making garbage and recycling roadside pickup mandatory, primarily because you will be billed for the service whether you use it or not. But the city is moving in that direction in an effort to reduce waste to it's landfills, as well as deter illegal dumping.

Personally the idea doesn’t bother me much, because Dave and I make a huge effort to reduce, reuse, and recycle the waste we generate. My philosophy is if it can’t be recycled, put in the compost machine or give it to the dog. Then and only then, do we throw it away.

So pickup service makes it easier for us. At least we can carry less to the Eureka Recycling Center. But in the meantime, while the city continues the discussion about mandatory garbage and recycling pickup, for those of you interested in living a greener lifestyle, here’s a few things you can do to get started.

Do you want to lower your garbage rates, improve your flowerbeds and gardens and improve not only yours, but your community’s quality of life?

There are so many ways to decrease the amount of waste you send to the landfills. Here’s a few:

1) Recycle instead of throwing recyclable items in the garbage:

The [Eureka City Recycling Center](#) and the [Arcata City Recycling Center](#) recycle almost everything you can imagine, even chipboard (which your cereal boxes are made from). And the center has made it easier than ever to drop off your recycling, by combining recyclable materials so you have less to sort out at home.

Now all the paper products: chipboard, cardboard, newspaper, magazines, and office paper go in the same bin. While glass, aluminum cans, and all plastics go into another bin. That way you spend less time figuring out where everything goes when you are there. Dave and I make a trip to the recycling center about every other week and it literally takes us less than five minutes to dispose of all our recyclable waste.

Each recycling center is different. You’ll have to check your local recycling center to see what recyclables they will accept.

2) Compost

It's easy to do and all you need is an Earth Machine to get you started. You can get yours at the Eureka Recycling Center, and it's very affordable. You just find a place in your yard (preferably in a corner furthest away from your house – it will smell quite organic at the beginning when you get started). And you literally put all your unused veggies in here. **No meat or dairy products allowed.** However, you can put eggshells in your composter. You occasionally want to stir up your compost mixture, and by next spring (especially if you started in the fall) you will have rich compost to put in your garden beds.



3) Doggie Scraps

We usually save any scraps of meat, some of the fat trimmings and any unused bread that we don't use in our cooking and collect it in a large yogurt container. After a couple of weeks the container is full and we boil it down for the dog. I call it the "Glop". We use this as a supplement in addition to his dry kibble. We've been doing this with my dog Benjamin for a couple of years now. His coat is much shinier and healthier looking and he looks forward to the daily treat.



Because of the items above we only need to use the smallest available garbage bin. The smallest bin you can buy in Eureka is a 20-gallons, which only costs around \$13 a month.



So there you have it, some tips to get started on living a Greener Lifestyle. Stay tuned for other tips on easy affordable ways to reduce your energy costs while helping the planet at the same time.

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