



OFFICE OF  
SUSTAINABILITY  
COUNTY OF SAN MATEO



# Civics 101 Follow-up Information

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## Purple pipes: What are they and what's the state of them?

- Purple pipes carry recycled water, which is used for irrigation, agriculture, and industrial purposes. The Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA) works with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission on their water supply projects aimed at the use of recycled water. BAWSCA is currently updating their Long-Term Water Supply Strategy (LTWSS), which will likely include recycled water. Local governments have their own strategies and sometimes policies for large new developments. The most recent LTWSS, published in 2015, discusses recycled water efforts and opportunities, including some local projects. The final report can be found at [https://bawasca.org/uploads/userfiles/files/BAWSCA\\_Strategy\\_Phase\\_II\\_Final\\_Report\\_Feb\\_2015.pdf](https://bawasca.org/uploads/userfiles/files/BAWSCA_Strategy_Phase_II_Final_Report_Feb_2015.pdf)

## Single use plastics: What is the new ordinance and how does it affect to-go items for restaurants?

- The County's Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance is in effect in most San Mateo County jurisdictions (click [here](#) for a list of jurisdictions). Key requirements include:
  - Most single-use foodware (plates, clamshells, utensils, straws, etc.) used by restaurants and other food facilities must be non-plastic, compostable, and fiber-based (paper, bamboo, sugarcane, etc.).
  - Single-use foodware must be free of harmful chemicals called PFAS.
  - Single-use accessories (straws, utensils, napkins, stirrers, etc.) must be distributed only upon request or at dispensers that dispense one item at a time. Open containers or bins holding accessories for consumers to grab-and-go are no longer allowed. Additionally, accessories cannot be bundled together; they must be distributed individually as separate items (e.g., each fork, spoon, straw, condiment, etc.).
- Additional information about the ordinance can be found at the County's [Foodware Aware Program website](#).

## Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs): Are there incentives for homeowners to put them in?

- The County and its partners have developed numerous tools and informational resources to assist homeowners in exploring, permitting and contracting to build ADU's, including a [cost calculator](#), links to city [ordinances](#), design and plan examples in the [Idea Book](#), [floor plans that have been pre-reviewed](#) by certain cities and the County, financing guides, and more. These are all available on the County's Second Unit Center website: <https://secondunitcentersmc.org/>
- The San Mateo Credit Union also offers loans for homeowners interested in building an ADU: <https://www.smcu.org/Loans/Home-Loans/ADU-Loan>

## **Landfills: How much compostable waste is going into them, and how is progress towards goals measured?**

- San Mateo County uses data generated by California's Resource Recovery Agency (CalRecycle) to estimate the amount of organics sent to landfills. This data is based on a bi-annual statewide waste characterization study that examines how much of different types of material is disposed of in California landfills each year. In the future, the County plans to work with waste partners like RethinkWaste to conduct local waste characterization studies.
- A new California law, SB 1383, sets statewide goals for organic waste reduction in landfills and requires every local government to implement organic waste diversion programs. CalRecycle will determine if the state achieves SB 1383's organic waste reduction goals through their waste characterization studies. Locally, San Mateo County currently measures its success by 1) progress towards meeting the high bar SB 1383 sets for the County, 2) the success of partnerships with the County's cities, and 3) community-based organizations building out new norms around organic waste prevention, reduction, and recycling.

## **Tree removal in unincorporated areas: What is the County's position on permits for tree removal?**

- The County does require a permit to remove trees in many cases, but there are exceptions, such as for dead or hazardous trees that present a significant fire hazard risk or a hazard to life and personal property. Details for these exemptions can be found at: [Permit Exemption for Hazardous Trees – Extended to July 1, 2023 | County of San Mateo, CA \(smcgov.org\)](#)
- More information can be found on the Planning and Building [Tree Trimming and Removal Permit](#) page, by calling the Planning Counter at 650-363-1825, or by emailing [PlanningProjects@smcgov.org](mailto:PlanningProjects@smcgov.org).

## **Fixit Clinics:**

- Redwood City Downtown Library hosts bimonthly Fixit Clinics in partnership with OOS. The next one is scheduled for 11/30/2022, 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM. OOS will also host two events in 2023, with dates yet to be determined.

## **PlaceMakers, Inc.**

- PlaceMakers Inc., provides general contracting services including deconstruction work. They have a storefront that sells salvaged building materials, and they accept building materials donations and provide a tax deduction receipt.
- <https://www.placemakersinc.com/donations.html> 1062 Center Street, San Carlos, CA 94070