

Environmental Activities Calendar

Thursday, May 9th, 2019

Join the fun on May 9 for the biggest bike day of the year! Thousands of people all around the Bay Area will be riding together for Bike to Work Day. Visit the City's Energizer Station from 7am-9am on the Ohlone Greenway across from the Plaza BART Station for your free goodie bag, full of bike-friendly swag. Whether you're bicycling to work, school, or even just around your neighborhood, we look forward to seeing you! For more information, contact El Cerrito's Community Development Department at (510) 215-4362.



1st Wed. Monthly	3 PM to 4 PM	Free Monthly Tour of the Recycling + Environmental Resource Center: Interested in a behind-the-scenes look at the LEED Platinum Certified Recycling Center? Join us for a guided tour. Tours at an alternative time can also be scheduled for a fee. For more information, call City staff at (510) 559-7686.
Fri.-Sun. May 3-5	Various Times and Locations	6th Annual Hillside Festival: Join the Environmental Quality Committee, Trail Trekkers, the Historical Society, and many others in discovering the Hillside Natural Area through talks, hikes, and displays on the unique history and beauty of one of El Cerrito's best-kept secrets. Visit ectrailtrekkers.org for a schedule of events.
Sun. May 5	10 AM to 5 PM	Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour: Enjoy a free, self-guided tour of nearly 40 native gardens in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, co-sponsored by the City of El Cerrito's Clean Water Program. Visit bringingbackthenatives.net for more information or contact El Cerrito City Staff at (510) 525-7622.
Sat. May 11	1 PM to 4 PM	El Cerrito Fixit Clinic: Have a broken item you wish you could fix? Join Fixit coaches (and helpful neighbors) at the El Cerrito Community Center Garden Room (7007 Moeser Lane) and they will guide you through the repair process. For more information, contact City of El Cerrito Environmental Staff at (510) 525-7622.
Sat. May 18	9 AM to 3 PM	Spring Citywide Garage Sale: Find great deals while keeping waste out of the landfill and getting to know your neighbors. The finalized map of locations and listings will be available online and in hardcopy on Thursday, May 9. Visit el-cerrito.org/garagesale or call City staff at (510) 559-7686 for more information.
May 27, July 4, Sept 2	All Day	Recycling Center Holiday Hours: The El Cerrito Recycling + Environmental Resource Center will be closed for Memorial Day on Monday, May 27, Independence Day on Thursday, July 4, and Labor Day on Monday, September 2. Curbside pick of garbage, recycling, and green waste will occur as normally scheduled.
Sat. Jun 1	10 AM to 12:30 PM	Green Teams Clean-Up: Join El Cerrito's Green Teams and volunteers from the El Cerrito Rotary Club to clean up the northern entryways to town. Meet on Knott Avenue at the parking lot east of San Pablo Avenue. All ages welcome (under 18 with guardian). Sign up to volunteer today! For more information, call City staff at (510) 215-4350 or contact green@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us .
Thur. Jul 4	10 AM to 6 PM	2019 City of El Cerrito & worldOne 4th of July Festival: Music, rides, games, food and more on July 4 from 10am to 6pm. For more information, visit el-cerrito.org/July4Festival .

A Greener El Cerrito

News from the City of El Cerrito Operations + Environmental Services Division

Citywide Garage Sale

Saturday, May 18
9:00am—3:00pm



The finalized map of locations and listings will be available online and in hardcopy on Thursday, May 9. For more information visit www.el-cerrito.org/garagesale or call City staff at (510) 559-7686.

6th Annual Hillside Festival

May 3-5

Enjoy hikes, talks, and other activities throughout the Hillside Natural Area. Choose events in advance at the Trail Trekkers website, at www.ectrailtrekkers.org or by picking up a map and schedule at City Hall, the Community Center, Library, or Recycling Center.



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El Cerrito, CA 94530
green@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

Help El Cerrito Manage a Fluctuating Recycling Market

As previously noted in this publication, the 2018 Chinese policy which severely limits the import of recyclable materials, particularly mixed paper and scrap plastic, has created unprecedented disruptions in international recycling markets, especially for curbside programs in the United States. The policy has created a glut of recycling materials going to countries such as Vietnam and India, resulting in some of these countries also limiting their acceptance of material. For instance, India also passed a policy to stop receiving international loads of scrap plastic for recycling. The pressure to: 1) find markets for curbside recyclables, and 2) provide high quality uncontaminated loads of material, has sharply driven up the costs of processing curbside material in the U.S.

While El Cerrito has been somewhat insulated from the worst effects of these market changes, El Cerrito's waste rates were increased in 2018, in part, due to a steep decline in the amount of revenue received from the sale of our curbside



recyclables. With market disruptions continuing, the City has recently received notice from its recycling



processor that the company will need to start charging a fee to cover its costs of processing recyclables from the City's curbside program. This is becoming the norm for recycling programs throughout the country.

As of this writing, the City is currently investigating all available options and alternatives to maintain stable rates for customers, while ensuring materials are diverted from the landfill. However, City Staff do anticipate the need to consider potential rate increases to ensure the recycling program can continue to operate, while offering the same levels of service El Cerritans know and love. The results of this research will be reported out to City Council in late Spring.

To ensure the recyclables you put in your grey bin retain value and end up being recycled into new products, please make sure your recyclables are "Empty, Clean, and Dry." Better yet, the City receives the best pricing for materials that are sorted and collected at the Recycling Center. While it is still perfectly good to use your grey bin for recycling, the Recycling + Environmental Resource Center provides another option for people who wish to support our recycling programs.

For more information, contact the City's Operations + Environmental Services Division at (510) 215-4350.

El Cerrito Offers Transfer Tax Rebates for Seismic and Conservation Projects

In last November's election, voters approved Measure V, designating El Cerrito as a Charter City. The passage of Measure V also authorized the City to collect a real property transfer tax (RPTT) on all property sales, equal to \$12 for every \$1,000 in sales price. The RPTT went into effect on January 14 of this year and is currently being collected on all sales that occurred on or after that date.

Voters also approved of a rebate program, in relation to the RPTT, focusing on property seismic upgrades and conservation projects. Projects that qualify for rebates include:

- Installation of electric vehicle charging stations
- Installation of rooftop solar energy systems
- Voluntary measures listed in the California Green Building Standards Code for Energy Efficiency, Water Efficiency and Conservation, or Water Reuse
- Installation of stormwater retention systems that comply with the California Plumbing Code

- Corrective work on buildings listed on the City of El Cerrito inventory of potentially hazardous, unreinforced masonry buildings
- Work that would qualify for the California Earthquake Brace + Bolt program

Other seismic and conservation projects may be considered for approval by the City's Building Official.

Qualifying seismic and energy or water conservation upgrades must be completed either up to one year prior to the transfer of real property or within one year after the transfer. The total rebate amount cannot exceed one-third of the total transfer tax amount.

See the City's website for further information, including procedures to apply for the rebate, at el-cerrito.org/TransferTaxRebate, or call the Community Development Department at (510) 215-4360.

Greening El Cerrito's Stormwater Infrastructure

The City of El Cerrito is drafting a Green Infrastructure Plan as part of a regional stormwater permit requirement. The Plan is intended to outline how Low Impact Development (LID) drainage designs will be incorporated into the City's current "grey" stormwater system to clean and reduce runoff to the San Francisco Bay. The "green" infrastructure mimics wetland processes by using drought tolerant vegetation, soils, and natural processes to capture stormwater, slowly drain and filter it, then return it to the natural water cycle. This includes bioswales, rain gardens, porous pavements, planting trees, and using rain harvesting or catchment systems.

El Cerrito has already taken measures to implement Green Infrastructure into the City, such as the rain gardens along San Pablo Avenue, at El Cerrito City Hall, at the Ohlone Greenway and Fairmount Avenue, and at the Recycling + Environmental Resource Center (RERC). The RERC is also equipped with a rainwater catchment system that uses the shed roof to collect stormwater and store it in an 11,000 gallon tank. The water that is captured is

then reused for the facility's flush fixtures and site irrigation.

Green Infrastructure offers many benefits to residents beyond cleaner water, including a beautified landscape, improved air quality, reduced flood risk, and reduced heat island effects. The plan will help the City reach pollution reduction targets established for 2020, 2030, and 2040. The Plan is expected to be available for review in the Spring/Summer 2019.

For more information, contact Will Provost at wprovost@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.



6th Annual Hillside Festival



The El Cerrito Trail Trekkers and El Cerrito Environmental Quality Committee are proud to host the 6th Annual Hillside Festival which will take place May 3-5, 2019. The Hillside

Natural Area is a park full of grasslands, creeks, and woods in El Cerrito. The Hillside Festival engages community members of all ages in hiking, playing, and learning all about nature and the history of El Cerrito. Events and activities will include, among others:

May 3rd

- 5pm: The Hillside Natural Area, Its History and Natural History

May 4th

- 10am: Young Persons' Nature Hike led by Madera Elementary School PTA and Foundation members

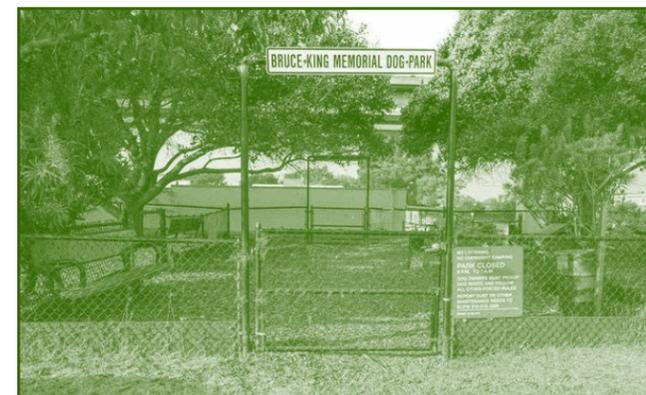
- 11am: Dog Scouts of America—Merit badges, community service and therapy work
- 12pm: Geology Walk co-sponsored by the Northern California Geological Society
- 2pm: Boy Scouts Nature Hike and Habitat Preservation
- 4pm: Beginner-General Level Plant Walk
- 6:30pm: Family-Friendly Evening Ramble

May 5th

- 8:30am: Early Morning Bird Walk
- 10am: Family-Friendly Geology Stroll
- 11am: Preventing Wild Land Fires Walk
- 12pm: Nature Scavenger Hunt
- 1pm: Insect Hike
- 2:30pm: Easy Wildflower Walk
- 3:30pm: Hidden Poetry/Geocaching Hike
- 5pm: Enjoy the View, Snack and Good Company
- 7pm: Meditation in Nature

For more information and a complete schedule, visit: ectrailtrekkers.wordpress.com/hillside-festival-2019.

Human and Pet Waste: Best Landfilled and/or Flushed, Depending



Did you know that diapers and bags of pet waste are common, and very much unwanted, contaminants in El Cerrito's curbside recycling and composting bins?

Products designed for human and/or pet waste, such as diapers, should never be recycled or composted due to

concerns associated with contamination and different types of bacteria that could potentially pose a health hazard.

Clean or dirty diapers also contain a lot of plastic, which is unsuitable for both composting and recycling. Diapers for babies, adults, or even dogs, can be landfilled by placing them in your blue trash container for curbside pickup.

Unfortunately, cat feces are potentially harmful for the environment due to possible *toxoplasma gondii* contamination. If flushed, this parasite passes through our waste water treatment system, entering the bay and ocean, and has been linked to diseases in marine mammals. As a result, scooped cat feces and soiled cat litter should not be flushed. Please make sure to put soiled cat litter in the trash for landfilling.

If you have questions, please contact the City Recycling + Environmental Resource Center at greenassistant@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us or at 510.215.4350.