

# A Greener El Cerrito

COMMERCIAL EDITION

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

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[www.ecenvironment.org](http://www.ecenvironment.org) | 510-215-4350

## EARTH DAY

Get involved!



**El Cerrito  
Earth Day  
Sat., April 18**

**Work Parties  
9AM—12PM**

**Volunteer  
Appreciation Lunch  
12PM—1:30PM**

Earth Day is a fun way to get involved in your community. Have a work project or want to volunteer?

Register at [el-cerrito.org/earthday](http://el-cerrito.org/earthday) or call 510-559-7686.

## Expanded Foodware Ordinance Public Meeting March 10

The City of El Cerrito adopted a Foodware Ordinance in 2013 to prohibit expanded polystyrene foam (“Styrofoam”) take-out containers, and require the use of reusable, recyclable, or compostable foodware. Now, the City is proposing changes to the municipal code to phase out single-use plastic foodware items in the city and encourage the use of reusable and compostable containers to help protect waterways, promote environmental sustainability, and reduce waste. If approved, this would apply to all food providers in the city and would prohibit products such as non-compostable, non-reusable straws, eating utensils, and food containers. The ordinance would also require food providers that provide compostable or reusable straws to keep plastic straws in stock for customers who rely on durable, plastic straws for drinking and request them due to disabilities or medical needs.

This ordinance would support the City’s goals to reduce the community’s environmental impact, to reduce recycling contamination and costs, and to decrease greenhouse gas emissions, in line with the City’s Climate Action Plan and Strategic Plan goals.

City Staff are currently sharing information, listening to concerns, answering questions, and gathering input as we continue to develop the



ordinance. This will include letters and in-person outreach to over 100 businesses that will be impacted, hosting multiple public meetings, print and online outreach efforts, and engaging with stakeholders from the business community, the Environmental Quality Committee, and the City’s ADA Working Group. Staff anticipate bringing the draft ordinance for City Council consideration in late Spring 2020. If the Ordinance is adopted, the City will provide an instructional brochure and free, on-going technical training to all affected businesses and food providers and build public awareness to support a smooth transition.

Interested parties can review the Draft Ordinance and find more information at [el-cerrito.org/foodware](http://el-cerrito.org/foodware). Or, attend an upcoming meeting to provide input:

**Public Meeting  
March 10, 2020 at 7pm  
El Cerrito City Hall**

For more information about the proposed Expanded Foodware Ordinance, or to submit comments, contact Will Provost at 510-525-7622 or [wprovost@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:wprovost@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us).

## New Guide for Recycling and Composting!

The City recently released an updated guide for commercial accounts titled “Everything you Ever Wanted to Know about Recycling, Green Waste & Garbage Services in El Cerrito”.

Find the guide online at: <https://www.el-cerrito.org/CommercialBrochure>.

It’s a comprehensive, up-to-date guide to: what is and isn’t accepted in your curbside recycling, green waste, and garbage carts, what is and isn’t accepted at the Recycling + Environmental Resource Center at 7501 Schmidt Lane, services available to El Cerrito businesses, and other local resources for disposing of garbage and green waste. The brochure provides graphics and information that outline the following recent changes and highlights:

### Green Waste & Food Scraps

Place all food scraps and food soiled paper products in the green waste container. This includes any food, plants, food soiled paper bags, pizza boxes, paper cups, and similar items. “Bioplastics”, including plastic-like items that may be “biodegradable”, are **NOT** currently accepted in the City’s green waste program.

### Recycling

Place paper, metal, glass, and plastic containers in the recycling container. Containers must be **Empty, Clean, and Dry**. (*Plastic film/bags, small plastic items less than 2"x2", and utensils are not accepted.*)

### Garbage

Please place other items, including plastic film, animal waste, diapers, ceramics/plate glass, and PVC pipe in the garbage container. The following items are **NOT ALLOWED** in any curbside container: Batteries, Electronics, Fluorescent bulbs, Household Hazardous Waste, Medicines, and Medical Sharps.



For more information on recycling, green waste, and garbage services in El Cerrito, go to [www.el-cerrito.org/CurbsideProgram](http://www.el-cerrito.org/CurbsideProgram) or call the City’s Recycling Center at 510-215-4350.

## Mandatory Recycling and Green Waste Collection

Over the past decade, the State of California has passed multiple pieces of legislation requiring most businesses, institutions, and multi-family complexes to provide recycling and organics (green waste and food scraps) collection services.

### Legislation includes:

- **AB 341 (effective 2012):** Mandatory recycling services for businesses and multi-family units generating 4 or more cubic yards (CY) of garbage per week;
- **AB 1826 (effective 2018):** Mandatory green waste composting for specified multi-family complexes and commercial accounts;
- **AB 827 (effective 2020):** Requires accounts subject to mandatory recycling and organics requirements to provide indoor recycling and organics receptacles for customers;
- **SB 1383 (effective 2022):** Mandatory recycling, green waste and food scraps collection services for all commercial and residential properties and required edible food recovery for businesses (e.g. grocery stores) meeting specific thresholds.

In addition, the City of El Cerrito has several ordinances that help control certain types of problematic waste. These include:

- **El Cerrito Plastic Bag Ordinance (ECMC 2013-03):** Bans El Cerrito retail and other applicable businesses from providing single-use plastic bags;
- **El Cerrito Foodware Ordinance (ECMC 2013-04):** Bans El Cerrito food service businesses from providing prepared food in EPS foam foodware and instead requires the use of foodware containers that are re-useable or either compostable or recyclable through the City’s programs.

**Learn more by calling the City at 510-215-4350.**