

# A Greener El Cerrito

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

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## Composting Required Starting January 2022

Senate Bill 1383 (SB 1383) was enacted in 2016 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with the disposal of organic waste in landfills. In recent years, the City has been actively implementing similar legislation, including Assembly Bill (AB) 1826, which requires businesses to subscribe to green waste collection services, and more recently AB 827, which requires businesses to provide customers with recycling and composting container options, when consuming items on the premises. SB 1383 requirements expand upon those mandates, will cover all forms of organic waste within the entire waste stream, and will cover almost all residents and businesses, including single-family homes. The law becomes effective January 1, 2022 and will phase in various enforcement deadlines as the requirements progress. Ultimately, it will mandate that almost all accounts subscribe to recycling and green waste collection services, that customers properly sort their materials, that edible food is recovered from certain grocery stores statewide, and more.



For the City of El Cerrito, the new law means that City Staff is working on drafting an enforceable ordinance, as required, for City Council consideration later this year, that will enable the City to implement the monitoring and enforcement programs required under the law. In addition, the City is beginning other planning to ensure compliance with regulations relating to the procurement of compost and mulch, and to ensure that all recycling containers will transition from Gray to Blue by 2036, for example, as mandated under the law. City staff engaged R3 Consulting Group to provide an overview of the City's current compliance status and is working with them currently to develop a pathway towards compliance with SB 1383. City Staff are also coordinating with the regional solid waste agency, RecycleMore, on its concurrent planning efforts for SB 1383 implementation, including by serving on a task force to develop a "model ordinance" for the West Contra Costa County service area.

To meet the January 1, 2022 target, City Staff will be working intensively over the coming months, to begin implementing various programs prior to 2022. A major component of that effort will be educating residents and businesses about the new requirements and about how to properly dispose of their recyclables and green waste. For more information on SB 1383 and the City's current waste diversion efforts, please contact the City's Operations + Environmental Services Manager, Will Provost, at [wprovost@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:wprovost@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us).

## El Cerrito Ranks 2nd in Contra Costa County Climate Report Card

A new report and Climate Report Card, released by Contra Costa Climate Leaders, tracks the progress of Contra Costa County communities and the steps they've taken to address climate change. The Report Cards are a reminder for community leaders and residents of the hard work we're collectively doing to address climate change, while also encouraging residents and communities to do more. The City of El Cerrito ranked 2nd on the Report Card, with the highest share of participation in the MCE Deep Green program which provides 100% renewable energy. El Cerrito also received recognition as a jurisdiction that has already declared a Climate Emergency. Learn more about the new Report Card and the City of El Cerrito's progress at: <https://cccclimateleaders.org/report-card/>.

## San Pablo Avenue Green Spine Project



The San Pablo Avenue Green Stormwater Spine Project began construction in 2020 and is anticipated to be completed this spring. The project has been led by San Francisco Estuary Partnership (SFEP), a program of the Association of Bay Area

Governments (ABAG), in collaboration with several cities along San Pablo Avenue including El Cerrito, Oakland, Emeryville, and Berkeley, and has been several years in the making. SFEP applied for several state funding sources to make the project happen.

The project portion in El Cerrito is located along the east side of the 10500 block of San Pablo Avenue, fronting the Moeser Square Shopping Center. The improvements include installation of a protected bicycle lane against the existing curb consisting of concrete paving and green pavement markings, installation of stormwater capture cells outside of the bicycle lane (also known as “rain gardens”), installation of bay-friendly landscaping, and new signage. The construction of these improvements meets the City’s multi-modal mobility, economic development and urban greening goals and implements a pilot section of the adopted San Pablo Avenue Complete Streets Plan. For additional information, please contact City Staff at [abernardes@ci.elcerrito.ca.us](mailto:abernardes@ci.elcerrito.ca.us).

## Permit Required for Pruning Public Trees

The City of El Cerrito is committed to maintaining, sustaining, and improving its urban forest, in part by educating the public about trees and how Public Trees are maintained. Public Trees are trees that are located in any area owned or controlled by the City, including parks, open space, easements, public streets, public rights-of-way, City owned property, and Planting Strips. In order to support the long-term health of these trees, no resident, business owner, or contractor is allowed to perform work on or remove Public Trees without a Permit. This ensures they are maintained in a way that meets the City’s tree care maintenance standards and supports their long-term health.

In addition, a business or person that performs tree work or hires contractors to perform work on Public Trees is liable for damages associated with the work. When Public Trees are removed without a Permit, a tree replacement mitigation fee, per tree, will be applied. Depending on the circumstances, the City may also seek damages for up to twice the cost of replacement for trees that have been damaged or removed without approval. These penalties and the mitigation fee provide funding for the City to add new trees in nearby locations if necessary.

To find out more, please contact the City’s Environmental Programs Manager, Stephen Prée, by email at [spre@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:spre@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us) or at (510) 559-7685.

## Environmental Activities Calendar

**Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour:** Registration for the free, virtual Seventeenth Annual Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour, which will take place on Sundays April 25 and May 2, 16, and 23, 2021 from 10:00 to 3:00, is now open. View the schedule of events and register at [bringingbackthenatives.net](http://bringingbackthenatives.net).

**El Cerrito Hillside Festival:** The El Cerrito Trail Trekkers are coordinating the 8th Annual Hillside Festival taking place in May 2021. The event will be different this year, with a mix of live and pre-recorded online “hikes” plus self-guided events for families and friends. Visit [ectrailtrekkers.org](http://ectrailtrekkers.org) to view the final schedule with dates in May.

**Bike to Wherever Day:** Bike to Wherever Day is May 21, 2021 and is a time for bicyclists of all ages and walks of life to take to the streets to show support for two-wheeled transportation. Visit [bikeeastbay.org/events/bike-wherever-day-2021](http://bikeeastbay.org/events/bike-wherever-day-2021) to get a map of energizer stations, a digital goody bag, and potential self-guided rides to celebrate.

**East Bay Green Home Tour - June 6 & 13:** Learn what neighbors are doing with their homes to combat climate change, improve air quality, generate clean energy, and move towards a safer, healthier, greener future. Each tour segment consists of a 10-minute video tour followed by a live Q&A with the homeowner or tenant. Find more at [eastbaygreenhome.com](http://eastbaygreenhome.com).

**Baxter Creek Gateway Park Volunteer Work Days - June 6, July 11, August 1:** Help remove litter and invasive plants from this jewel on the Ohlone Greenway. Work days will take place from 10 am—12 pm on the first Sunday of each month, except during major holiday weekends, in which case we will meet the following Sunday. During the Pandemic, RSVP is required to (510) 215-4350 or [green@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:green@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us).

**Recycling Center Hours:** The Recycling Center is open from 8:30am - 4pm Tuesday - Friday, and 9am - 4:45pm Saturdays. Face masks are required. The Exchange Zone, Office, and Public Restrooms remain closed to the public. The Styrofoam collection program has been suspended at this time. For more info visit [el-cerrito.org/RecyclingCenter](http://el-cerrito.org/RecyclingCenter).

**Household Hazardous Waste Collection:** The Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection program at the El Cerrito Recycling + Environmental Resource Center occurs every Tuesday from 9am to 4pm, closed for lunch from 12pm to 12:30pm. Proof of residency is required. For more info visit [el-cerrito.org/RecyclingCenter](http://el-cerrito.org/RecyclingCenter).