



## Recycling Contamination Troubles Fort Bragg

### *Waste Management Begins Charging for Contamination*

**FORT BRAGG, Calif. - March XX, 2019** - The presence of trash in recycling and organics containers in Fort Bragg continues to hamper the area's ability to recycle materials properly, driving up costs and turning otherwise recyclable material into trash.

To turn the tide, Waste Management will begin using automation to identify contamination and charge customers who continue to place trash in their recycling or organics containers.

Charges are being assessed to ensure those who are recycling right do not carry the burden for those who are not. Customers who continue to contaminate their recycling or organics containers by placing trash in them can ruin an entire load of recyclables making it more expensive to process or worse, turning it into trash. Contamination can also lead to safety hazards such as truck fires.

Waste Management is now using technology to spot contamination. A camera in the hopper of its trucks films containers as they are emptied to identify non-recyclables and hazardous materials. Contamination includes materials such as bagged recyclables, food, plastic bags and wraps, propane tanks, hoses, bowling balls, and other items that do not belong in recycling. These items are safety hazards and can ruin an entire load of recycling or worse cause safety hazards such as truck fires.

Residential customers who contaminate a recycling or organics cart will be charged \$XX.XX per cart. Commercial customers, including multi-family properties, who contaminate a recycling or organics bin will be charged \$XX per bin.

"We want to keep recycling sustainable in Fort Bragg," said Alex Oseguera, Market Area General Manager for Waste Management Northern California-Nevada. "We need to take action to ensure we can continue to recycle. Our efforts through California are teaching us that we need to have consistent monitoring on all our routes."

Customers are also being reminded to keep the lid closed on their carts and bins. Overloaded containers contribute to litter in our community, allow water to damage otherwise good recyclables and pose a safety hazard. Truck fires are caused when flammable materials fall from overloaded containers on to hot equipment. Charges for having overloaded containers could be instituted later this year.

"Our goal is to keep costs down, the environment clean and the community safe," Oseguera said. "We feel this program will help achieve those goals."

## **ABOUT WASTE MANAGEMENT**

Waste Management is a community-based provider of environmental solutions. As the leading provider for commercial and residential curbside collection for recycling, green waste and disposal, Waste Management delivers local solutions with the knowledge and resources of being the nation's largest recycler. For more than XX years, Waste Management has helped keep Fort Bragg clean and green with a local workforce of XX employees who service more than XX,000 customers. To learn more information about Waste Management in Fort Bragg visit [wm.com/fortbragg](http://wm.com/fortbragg).

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