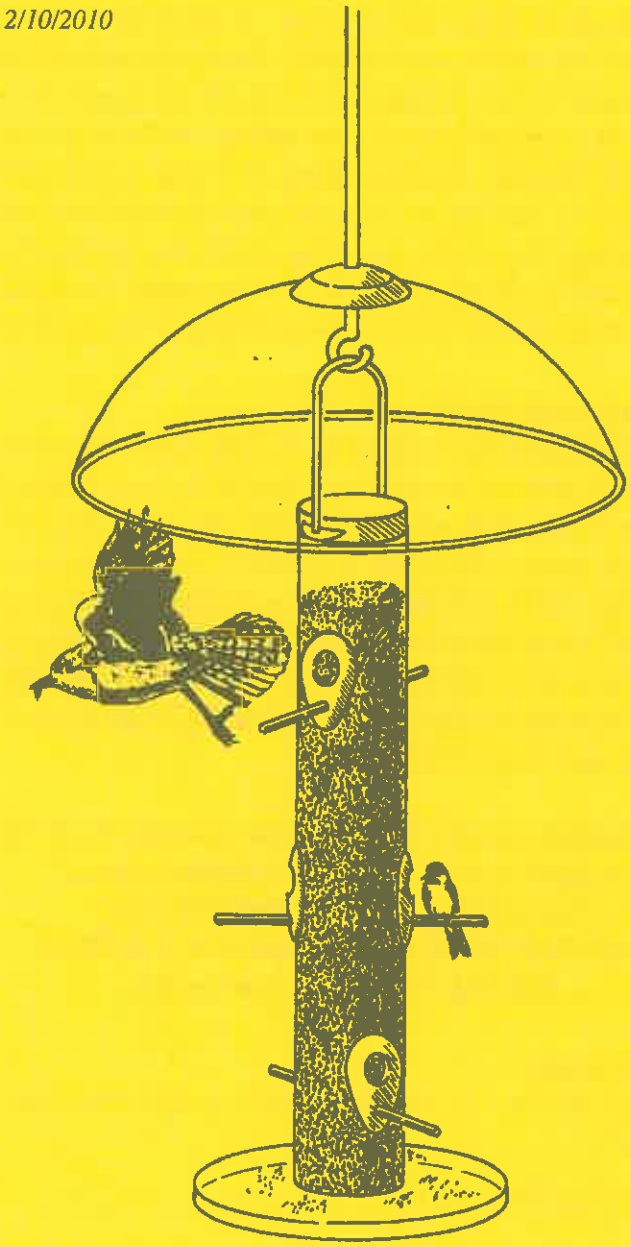
EC# 3 8·13·12

Revised 2/10/2010



© Steven D'Amato

Wild birds are essential to biodiversity - our planet's way of maintaining its own health. Like canaries in a coal mine, our declining bird populations are warning us that our environmental health is in jeopardy.

AUDUBON AT HOME: SCVAS' Bird Sanctuary Program

CREATING A BIRD FRIENDLY HABITAT IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

Nancy Hertert Memorial Native Plant Garden at McClellan Ranch Park in Cupertino

Every Backyard Is Important: Whether small or large, your yard, patio, balcony, or even rooftop area can play a crucial role in protecting native wildlife by contributing to a critical matrix of suitable habitats buffering and connecting developed spaces to natural areas.

Become Bird Sanctuary Certified!

- $20 application fee
- Applications available from SCVAS
- Beautiful Garden Plaques available with an additional $30 donation

Contact programs@scvas.org or 408-252-3740 for more information

Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society's

CREATING A BIRD FRIENDLY HABITAT IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

Why is Backyard Habitat important for the birds?

In recent years, researchers have noticed a significant decline in numbers of migratory song birds. The loss of habitat in breeding grounds, wintering areas and along migratory routes is devastating migrant as well as resident songbird populations.

Did you know that approximately 75% of the land in the United State is privately owned? Private landowners have a definite hand in the fate of migratory and resident songbirds. Since there are fewer large undisturbed forest tracts, smaller woodlots in individual yards become increasingly important to songbirds.

What do birds need?

Any size yard or balcony can make an impact on wildlife. The habitat you create needs three essential elements to make it enticing: food, shelter and water. There are many ways to provide all three. Remember that variety is the key to attracting birds to you yard. Whenever possible, offer the birds a choice of different types of plants, feeders and watering stations. A more varied habitat will attract more birds. Some birds prefer high tree canopies, other like smaller trees and shrubs, and the ground feeders prefer tall grasses or low shrubs to hide in. Creating an edge effect with trees, shrubs and grasses will also provide the birds with a safe route of travel to food and water sources.

When planning your habitat, think about your neighbors trees and plants as well as your own. Your neighbor's large evergreen on the edge of your property can work well with your dense shrubbery. The ideal we want to create is a larger connecting habitat for the birds! We recommend planting California native plants because they require less maintenance

the cats and safe feeding for the birds . If there are neighborhood cats that are not under your control, there are several ways of deterring them from catching your birds. If the feeder is hanging from a tree or shepherd's hook, try putting one or two concentric circles of the flexible, garden edging at 3 and 4 foot diameters under the feeder. The cat has to go up and over and that will give the birds enough time to fly to safety. If cats are hiding under the shrubbery, trim it up so the birds can see under. Put rose bush clippings or commercial "pigeon poker deterrent" under the shrubs.

Care of Injured Birds:

If a bird has suffered (and survives) an impact but does not fly off within one half hour, or if it has been caught by a cat and not killed, the bird needs medical attention. There are three local wildlife rehabilitation groups: PHS/SPCA Wildlife Care Network in Palo Alto (650/494-7283), Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley in San Jose (408/929-9453) and Wildlife Education and Rescue in Morgan Hill (408/779-9372). Place the bird in a ventilated box with a non-terry cloth towel in a warm, dark and quiet place. Do not feed or water. Transport as soon as possible.

For information about having your backyard or balcony declared a Bird Sanctuary, please contact:
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
22221 McClellan Road, Cupertino, CA 95014
408/252-3747 or www.scvas.org

Reference List:

Native Revival Nursery – *A Gardener's Guide to California Native Plants* (831/684-1811).

Stokes, Donald and Lillian, *The Bird Feeder Book.*

Johnson, Catherine J., McDiarmid, Susan, Turner, Edward R., *Welcoming Wildlife to the Garden: Creating Backyard & Balcony Habitats for Wildlife.*

Donnelly, David B., *Creating Your Backyard Bird Garden* - Birdwatchers Digest Backyard Booklet Series.

or a log pile is a great hiding place for birds as well. Quail use brush piles for hiding, feeding and nesting. Dead trees or snags attract insects for food and offer nest sites for cavity nesting birds like chickadees, bluebirds, titmice, nuthatches and woodpeckers.

In a small yard or balcony, providing a nest box for likely residents is the best idea. The hole size and the size of box dictates which birds are likely to occupy the box. A hole of 1" works for house wrens; an oval of 1" by 2" works for a Bewick's wren; 1-1/4" attracts chickadees, titmice and nuthatches; 1-1/2" is used by violet-green swallows, tree swallows and Nuttall's Woodpeckers; Western Bluebirds like a bit bigger hole of 1-9/16". Nesting shelves can be mounted up close to the eave to attract phoebes, robins, finches and doves. Important features of nest boxes include ventilation, drainage, and no perch. There are some nest boxes that can be used exclusively as roosting boxes for the winter or can be converted from winter roosting to summer nesting. Nesting material can also be helpful to nesting birds. Dryer lint, dog/cat hair and short pieces of string or yarn can be put in a mesh bag, plastic basket or suet cage and hung 4 feet off the ground. Commercial nesting material of sheep's wool and feathers is also available.

What are other considerations?

Window Strikes:

One of the hardest things to watch is a bird suffer and die after hitting a window. There are several ways to prevent this occurrence. Window feeders attract the birds to the feeder, not the window. Putting the feeders at least 10 feet away from the window gives birds maneuvering room. Using ultra-violet treated decals on the outside of windows advises birds of a barrier.

Free-roaming Cats:

Millions of songbirds are killed by outdoor cats every year. Millions of cats are killed by cars, other cats or other wildlife every year. Indoor cats live longer. Window feeders or feeders that can be viewed from inside can provide hours of entertainment for

and can provide food and shelter and can be more attractive to our native birds than exotics. (See the CAL-IPC's "Don't Plant a Pest" on invasive species to avoid and native alternatives).

How do you provide food?

Feeders:

There are many different types of feeders available through the SCVAS Nature Store and other birding supply stores. Different food served in different feeders attracts different birds. If you want to attract hummingbirds, goldfinches and woodpeckers, you will need to consider three different feeders with three different foods. Seed that is attractive to the birds – try to avoid mixes with Milo, wheat, oats or cracked corn (except for ground feeders who like cracked corn) – is available with shells or without. The shelled seed is comparable to "boneless chicken" in that there is no waste; you only pay for the meat. It is more expensive, but more economical because there is no debris and nothing will grow.

Choose 3 or more for a regular sized habitat, 2 for smaller.

- Tube (with perches along the tube) or Hopper Feeder (seed goes in top and comes out the bottom) with sunflower seed or mix containing sunflower (with shells or without). Attracts most songbirds.
- Nyjer (Thistle) Feeder, can be a sock or other feeder designed for nyjer. Attracts house finches, goldfinches, pine siskins.
- Platform or ground feeder, can be hanging, post mounted or on the ground. Serve millet based mix for doves, sparrows, towhees and juncos.
- Suet can be served in a hanging cage feeder or another feeder designed for suet. Suet is especially welcome during the winter, but blends are available for all year round feeding (look for "no-melt" mixes for summer feeding). Attracts finches, titmice, chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers and jays.
- Peanuts can attract chickadees, titmice, nuthatches, woodpeckers, jays and squirrels. There are mesh feeders designed for peanuts, both in-the-shell and out.

- Meal Worms can be used in the spring time to provide protein for the nestlings. Many birds only eat protein during certain times of the year. If you are in an area that supports Western Bluebird populations, meal worms are a good addition. Serve in a small, straight sided dish feeder.
- Nectar Feeders for hummingbirds can be out all year long. Orioles are in the lower elevations in the valley from March to September. A mixture of 1 part sugar to 4 parts water best matches the natural nectar of flowers. It is important to change the nectar once a week during the winter and every three days during the warmer weather. Due to the residuals of soap, hot water or, in the case of a severe mold problem, hot white vinegar do a better job of cleaning and will not harm the birds.
- Fruit Stations can be set up with oranges, apples and raisins for orioles, mockingbirds and robins.
- Window Feeders come in many styles: hummingbird, platform and hopper. These feeders are a great way to bring birds up close, especially if you are trying to interest children in the natural world. There is nothing like having breakfast with a chickadee or a hummingbird. Make sure that the window is easily accessible from the ground.

Remember to clean all seed feeders regularly. During the rainy months, that can be weekly, during the summer months, that can be once. To avoid mold in the rainy season, fill you feeder half as full, twice as often so the seed is fresher. If you ever see caked or smelly food, remove it at once and clean the feeder. If there is an accumulation of droppings, remove and clean the feeder. Cleaning is best done by taking the feeder apart and cleaning it with hot water, Simple Green, enzyme cleaner or a weak dilution of bleach. Rinse well and dry well (a hairdryer can speed things up) before refilling. Some birding supply stores provide a feeder cleaning service for their customers if you are unable to clean the feeders yourself.

Water:

All birds need clean water for drinking and bathing. A birdbath is one of the ways you can provide water for them. It can be as

simple as a plant saucer or a garbage can lid turned upside down with a few rocks in the center. There are several things to look for when selecting a birdbath. Depth is important. If the bath slopes, it should be no deeper than 3 inches in the center where flat rocks can be placed. If the bath is flat, it should be no deeper than 1-1/2". If the bath slopes, it is helpful if the texture is slightly rough to allow for better footing. Cleaning birdbaths is extremely important, especially in the summer when mosquito proliferation is an issue. There are algaecides and enzyme cleaners that can reduce the instance of green algae or orange sludge and the growth of mosquito larvae. If you have a large bathing bird population, changing the birdbath water on a daily basis is advisable to reduce the spread of any dropping borne disease. Changing the bath weekly in winter and twice a week in summer is the minimum of birdbath care.

Place the birdbath near (within 10 feet) a trimmed up shrub or some type of cover. Not so close that predators will be able to sneak up on the birds, but, close enough for birds to retreat when they have finished bathing. Birds will often spend a long time preening after a bath on a nearby branch. They cannot fly well with wet feathers and are vulnerable to predators.

The sound and sight of moving water is very attractive to birds. This can be achieved in various ways: by adding a dripper or mister to a birdbath from a hose bib; building a pond of any size with a waterfall or other flat bathing surface; or, by a re-circulating water feature in a birdbath or fountain.

Shelter:

Birds need shelter from the weather and from predators. They also need places to build their nests and raise their young, but not all birds use nest boxes. Plants and trees provide shelter as well as food.

Try to offer the birds some large trees like a conifer or evergreen which can protect them from hot sun, strong wind, or cold temperatures. Dense shrubs and vines offer excellent protection from predators and are often chosen as nesting sites. A brush pile

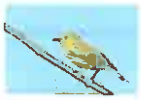
Audubon press 8.13.12
EC#3

Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society – Who we are

- Since 1926, our Mission is to **preserve**, to **enjoy**, to **restore** and to **foster public awareness** of **native birds and their ecosystems**, mainly in Santa Clara County.
- This translates into: **Conservation and Environmental Advocacy, Education and Public Outreach, and Bird Watching.**

Protect nesting birds and their habitat



- Tree trimming, vegetation management

(Implement Best Management Practices for Los Altos Public Works, educate public)

- Riparian ecosystems

(Protect setbacks that preserve habitat)

Audubon at Home Bird Sanctuary Program

- Food (bird friendly landscape gardening, bird feeders), Water, Shelter, Nesting sites

EC#3 Audubon PUSO 8·13·12

From: San Francisco Approve List (http://www.sfapproved.org/rodents)

DON'T TAKE THE BAIT!

The Environmental Protection Agency has determined that these products pose unreasonable health and safety risk to children, pets, and wildlife.

NO LOOSE PELLETS!

Products Subject to EPA Cancelation

D-CON CONCENTRATE KILLS RATS & MICE, D-CON READY MIXED KILLS RATS & MICE, D-CON MOUSE PRUFE KILLS MICE, D-CON PELLETS KILLS RATS & MICE, D-CON MOUSE PRUFE II, D-CON PELLETS GENERATION II, D-CON BAIT PELLETS II, D-CON READY MIXED GENERATION II, D-CON MOUSE-PRUFE III, D-CON BAIT PELLETS III, D-CON II READY MIX BAITBITS III, D-CON BAIT PACKS III, GENERATION MEAL BAIT PACKS, DIFETHIALONE BAIT STATION, DIFETHIALONE 6G PASTE PL PKS, RID-A-RAT RAT & MOUSE KILLER, HOT SHOT SUDDEN DEATH BRAND MOUSE KILLER, HOT SHOT SUDDEN DEATH BRAND RAT KILLER 1, HOT SHOT SUDDEN DEATH BRAND RAT & MOUSE KILLER, HOT SHOT SUDDEN DEATH BRAND MOUSE KILLER BAIT STATION

For more information please visit SFEnvironment.org/IPM or call (415) 355-3700.

SFEnvironment: Our house. Our city. Our planet. SFEnvironment is a department of the City and County of San Francisco.

What is the "Don't Take the Bait" campaign?

The San Francisco Department of the Environment is asking City retailers and consumers to avoid buying or selling certain kinds of common rat & mouse baits, which the US Environmental Protection Agency has determined pose an "unreasonable risk" to children, pets, and the environment.

What is the problem with these rat & mouse baits?

- The baits in question are high-volume products sold widely to consumers. When predators like hawks or owls eat a poisoned rat, the predator may be poisoned.
- They are also highly toxic to any mammals – including children and pets. The American Association of Poison Control Centers annually receives between 12,000 and 15,000 reports of children under the age of six being exposed to these types of products.
- The US EPA determined that these products pose an "unreasonable risk" in 2008, after years of evaluation and scientific review. Under federal law, pesticides that pose an "unreasonable risk" should not be legal for sale. At that time, US EPA gave manufacturers three years to remove them from the market. The deadline for removal was June 4, 2011.
- The baits' manufacturer has challenged the way the US EPA planned to cancel these products. The EPA must now follow a very lengthy procedure called a formal cancellation process. This could keep the products on the shelves for years.

Which manufacturers have not complied with the US EPA's safety requirements?

- Reckitt Benckiser Inc. (makers of D-Con, Fleeject, & Mimas brand products)
- Spectrum Group (makers of Hot Shot brand products)
- Liphatech Inc. (makers of Generation, Maki, & Rozol brand products)
-

What is City government doing about it?

- San Francisco's Department of the Environment has followed the issue closely for 8 years, submitting comment letters to the US EPA and other regulators. The City's Integrated Pest Management Program severely restricted the use of these active ingredients on City properties in 2007.
- The Department sent letters in September to 130 local retailers asking them to voluntarily stop selling the products. Cooperating businesses will be issued a thank-you letter or poster to acknowledge that they care about their customers' health.
- The Department is now beginning outreach directly to consumers urging them user safer methods of managing rodents, and not to purchase the "unreasonable risk" products.

What are other governments doing?

- So far, the Marin Municipal Water District, Contra Costa County, City of Santa Monica, and City of Boulder, CO are taking action on this issue. New York City has indicated they may conduct outreach on the products, and the states of Kansas and New York plan to discontinue the products this year.

What are local retailers doing about it?

- As of November 10, 87 retailers in San Francisco have pledged to discontinue the rat bait products in question. For an up-to-date list, see https://sfetoxicsreduction.wufoo.com/reports/sf-environment-recognizes-retail-leaders/

Are there safer, effective ways to control rats and mice?

Yes! Visit www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PDF/QT/qtrats.pdf for details.

- Seal holes inside and outside buildings to prevent entry by rats and mice.
- Keep areas clean and free of crumbs and water. Seal food in rodent-proof containers.
- Use snap-traps instead of baits whenever possible – a lot of them, set at night.
- In extreme cases, call a qualified professional. We recommend companies that are certified by EcoWise (www.ecowisecertified.org) or GreenShield (www.greenshieldcertified.org).
- There are also safer bait products available, listed on the EPA website at http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/mice-and-rats/rodent-bait-station.html

- If your property is in San Francisco, visit SF Dept. of Public Health or call 415-252-3805 to learn what you can do or report complaints of rodents or overgrown vegetation (which creates a habitat for rodents)

Does this remove an essential tool for public health?

No. This issue was considered by the EPA in its mitigation decision. Similar baits will still be available to professional pest control operators, who are better trained in using the products carefully.

Which products should be avoided?

EPA # 3282-3 D-CON CONCENTRATE KILLS RATS & MICE
EPA # 3282-4 D-CON READY MIXED KILLS RATS & MICE
EPA # 3282-9 D-CON MOUSE PRUFE KILLS MICE
EPA # 3282-15 D-CON PELLETS KILLS RATS & MICE
EPA # 3282-65 D-CON MOUSE PRUFE II
EPA # 3282-66 D-CON PELLETS GENERATION II
EPA # 3282-74 D-CON BAIT PELLETS II
EPA # 3282-81 D-CON READY MIXED GENERATION II
EPA # 3282-85 D-CON MOUSE-PRUFE III
EPA # 3282-86 D-CON BAIT PELLETS III
EPA # 3282-87 D-CON II READY MIX BAITBITS III
EPA # 3282-88 D-CON BAIT PACKS III
EPA # 7173-247 GENERATION MEAL BAIT PACKS
EPA # 7173-283 DIFETHIALONE BAIT STATION

How can I help?

- Vendors who would plan to discontinue the above products can get credit for their action by signing the pledge at: https://sfetoxicsreduction.wufoo.com/forms/publicity-to-protect-kidspets-from-rodent-baits/

Where can I get more information?

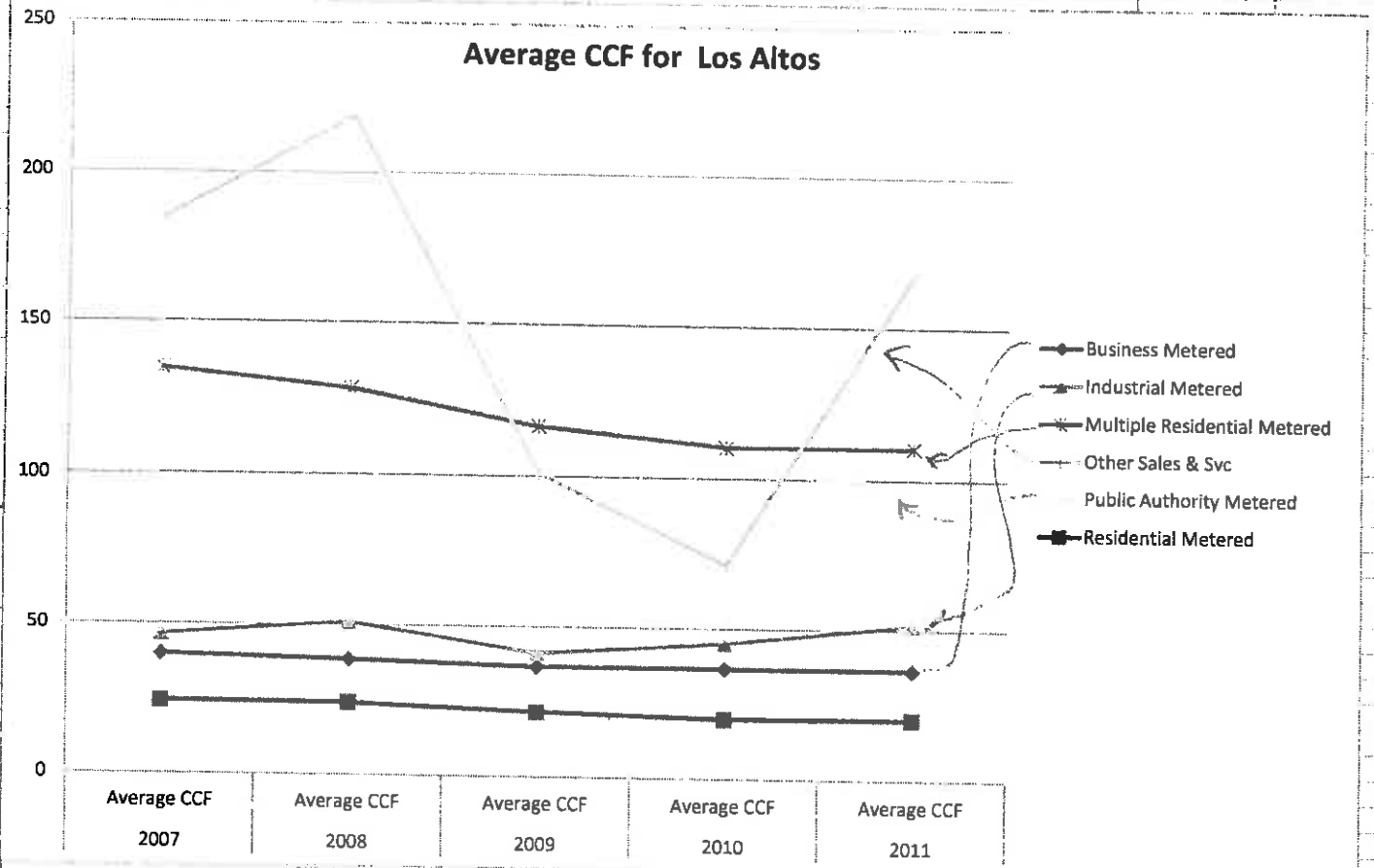
- The details on this whole issue can be found on the EPA's website at: http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/mice-and-rats/
- The Department of the Environment will post periodic updates on the campaign at www.sfenvironment.org/ipm
- Download San Francisco's "Don't Take the Bait" flyer
- For other questions, contact the Department at (415) 355-3700

EC # 5b Cal Water analysis 8.13.2012

Joe's Summary

	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		
	Average CCF	Total CCF	Average CCF	Total CCF	Average CCF	Total CCF	Average CCF	Total CCF	Average CCF	Total CCF	
Business Metered	40	207,076	38	194,765	37	185,502	37	182,610	37	182,616	7%
Industrial Metered	47	559	51	613	41	496	45	543	52	621	0%
Multiple Residential Metered	135	116,055	128	111,035	117	101,400	111	93,713	111	94,371	3%
Other Sales & Svc	185	6,480	219	4,826	101	3,341	72	1,864	169	3,714	0%
Public Authority Metered	132	145,086	126	152,598	112	129,314	105	115,489	96	114,062	4%
Residential Metered	24	2,780,204	24	2,745,130	22	2,465,464	20	2,281,628	20	2,304,889	85%
		3,255,460		3,208,967		2,885,517		2,675,847		2,700,273	

PER MONTH
225/YR/
HOUSEHOLD
2.7/HOUSEHOLD
= 82 CCF/CONNECT
61,355 CONNECTIONS



Note: "Other Sales & Svc" is mostly portable construction meters or temporary services

Questions from Joe and answers from Chris Wilson of CalWater

EC # 8 8.13.12

Businesses Trail Residents in Recycling, Composting

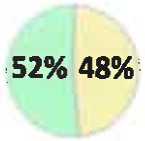
Los Altos businesses pay for waste collection service based on the level of garbage service they have, says Teresa Montgomery of Mission Trail. "Recyclables and organics collection for businesses is provided for no additional cost, and it usually decreases the bill for garbage service. So why not try it? There's nothing to lose – and lots to gain."

While there is opportunity for growth in all sectors, the largest opportunity is seen in the business sector – more than 60 percent of Los Altos businesses' waste still goes to the landfill.

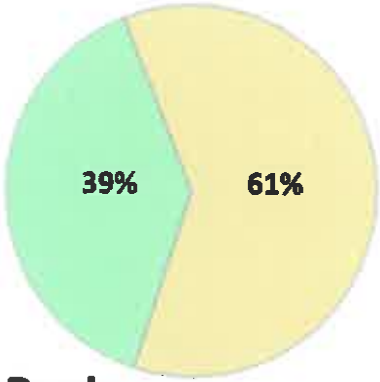
"We want to do our part for the community and the environment," says Larry Chu Jr., of Chef Chu's restaurant in Los Altos. "The new recycling and composting program saves us money. Since we began, we've cut the number of weekly garbage dumpsters we use in half!"

Estimated diversion percentages are shown by sector as of February 2012. Of the total waste stream, apartment complexes contribute 2 percent, businesses 23 percent, and single family houses 75 percent.

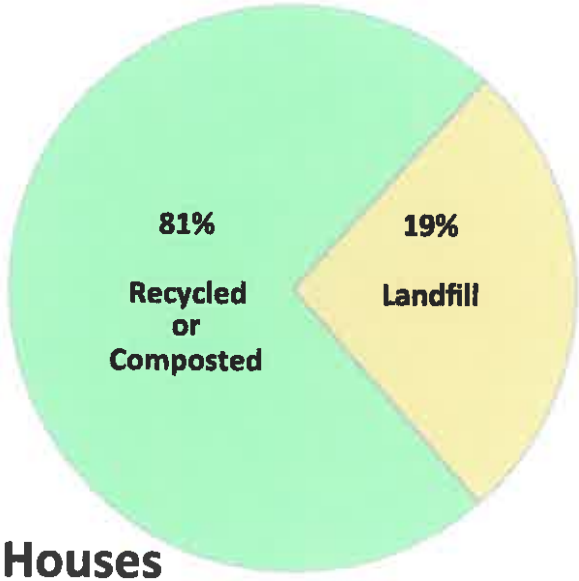
Information provided by Mission Trail.
Graphic by Champion Organic Communications © 2012



Apartments



Businesses



Houses