Recycling pushed in apartment complexes

Good news for apartment residents and managers: You can recycle, too!

Multi-family buildings face more challenges in implementing a recycling program than single-family homes. For example, apartment houses are considered commercial real estate and are not automatically equipped with recycling bins. While many residents in these complexes want to "do the right thing," it's up to the property management to make it possible.

ALAN STYLES
Recycling

Now there's help. The multi-family housing recycling program was originally developed by a regional partnership made up of 12 local agencies

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and waste haulers from Monterey and Santa Cruz counties led by Ecology Action, under a grant from the California Department of Conservation. Since the halt in the state's grant funding, the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority (SVSWA) and its waste haulers in Salinas Valley and South Monterey County are implementing this exciting program that opens recycling opportunities to residents of apartment complexes, condominiums and townhouse communities.

The program addresses the needs of two key groups, property managers and residents, giving them the guidance and information necessary to establish and sustain multifamily recycling programs.

For property owners and managers, the program helps with evaluating current systems and recommending adaptation of waste infrastructure to accommodate recycling bins and "how-to" directional signage for residents. Members of the Multi-family Recycling Team will visit your property and map out a plan to help you start enjoying the many benefits of a recycling program, including:

► Saving money: Reduce your garbage collection to reduce service rates.

► Making your building more attractive to tenants: Most tenants want to recycle. A good recycling program can be a selling point for your facility.

► Helping your community: Recycling conserves landfill space and saves natural resources. It can also bring new jobs to the community.

For residents, the program takes living-space limitations into consideration. It also guides property managers toward implementation of a program suitable for their residents.

SVSWA's Multi-family Recycling Team has already conducted waste assessments for 50 apartment complexes in its service area, which is the first step toward developing a recycling plan for each of them. Twenty-five programs have been implemented and are experiencing immediate success in waste reduction and recycling valuable resources.

TO GET INVOLVED

To request a waste assessment and start a recycling program in your multi-family complex, call Estela or Jenny at 831 -775-3000.

► *Alan Styles is recycling coordinator for the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority. His column appears the third Saturday of the month in Central Coast Living. Contact him at alanst@svswa.org.*