

Green Waste of Tehama

presents

Education Plan

2025

Tehama County

10/15/24



Education Program 2025

This Education Program is intended to be the roadmap we follow to increase diversion each year. This program will be adjusted each year based on the needs the current year presents.

Our past recycling rate percentages are as follows:

Year	Residential	Commercial
2021	26.28%	11.65%
2022	26.39%	10.68%
2023	27.58%	9.32%
2024 (Estimated)	28.01%	11.20%

Annual expectation of outreach education expense for 2025 = \$26,045 (\$24,805 x 5% (CPI))

Introduction

2024 presented us with an opportunity to embrace change and gain experience in developing new systems to be more effective.

Our goal for last year was to shift our focus to digital interaction, without erasing our more traditional outreach avenues. The evidence is clear; to effectively communicate with our digital customers, we must be more active with internet outreach. The digital campaign from 2024 has provided a roadmap for how our other outreach efforts can be connected and developed into a consistent message. Without a realistic definition of the “why” behind recycling, it will become even more difficult to get the community to make the required effort. If we join the social media wave, we have an opportunity to normalize the idea of recycling.

Yet, changing the perception of recycling alone is not enough. We need to continue our efforts to “make recycling easy.” We had many conversations with our customers in 2024 and we learned that we can better serve them by changing our process slightly to be more accommodating. To this end, we are refining our current commercial cart system and offering more customer-friendly assistance to support the recycling systems that are already in place.

We have introduced a new mascot, “Rebel the Recycling Raccoon.” This character presents us with the opportunity to engage with the younger demographic while opening dialogues with our customers. It has been our observation that some of the most effective educational conversations take place while a child is occupied with a fun activity or a fluffy mascot. We specifically chose to have Rebel presented through the lens of recycling. We see it as another piece of the story that we are trying to write. It is a highly interactive vision of how we can come together as a community to build a more sustainable future.

Commercial Outreach

❖ Commercial Diversion

➤ *Direct Diversion*

- This education program has committed to a minimum threshold of 20 “diversions” each year. For this purpose, “diversions” are defined as direct contact with a business that leads to an alteration of its recycling services. An ideal diversion results in a customer permanently decreasing their trash volume in favor of recycling.

➤ *SBA Rebrand*

- This is a shared goal with the Tehama County Solid Waste Management Agency’s (TCSWMA) Smart Business Alliance (SBA). After discussion with TCSWMA, we propose to “rebrand” the SBA into a collaborative program between TCSWMA and Green Waste of Tehama (GWT). Joining forces allows the message to become clear for the customer, and for diversion goals to be pursued together.

➤ *Technical Assistance*

- As requested by the customer, an additional component of the new program would be Technical Assistance (TA). This process allows the recycling employee to devote more time to maximizing current recycling systems. Components of the TA may include the following:
 - ◆ Complete Bin waste audit
 - ◆ In-person meeting with site manager or “champion”
 - ◆ Site walkthrough and assessment
 - ◆ Recommended action and offered support (recycling containers, signage, etc.)
 - ◆ Follow-up waste audit
 - ◆ Social media support for participating businesses

❖ Big Generator Relationships

- Large generators continue to be a challenge. GWT has tried broad and focused engagement strategies, resulting in little change. The consistent takeaway is that success is predicated on good relationships. In 2025, we will revisit the top five generators in the county and identify “champions” within each organization. Once identified, these individuals will be a direct connection to the business and will simplify communication. We feel these “in-house” personnel will help achieve sustainable change where other efforts have been unsuccessful.
- Roll-off bins have been identified as an area where more active diversion can occur. Last year taught us that large-volume trash projects can lead to large amounts of diversion. This will require GWT to adjust the dumping process to account for common diversion commodities such as construction and demolition (C&D) materials.

❖ Commercial Direct Contact

- Green Waste will design and e-mail four digital “flyers” to each commercial account. These will be topical to current sustainability efforts and will include “best-practice” tips, aimed at improving the recycling process. The frequency of these publications is intended to be useful without overburdening the customer with information.

❖ Commercial Mailer

- Mailers are sent out twice a year to give more in-depth recycling information. Our contract requires us to “print and mail” these mailers twice a year, so we will continue to do so until we

can shift to a digital format. We will continue to collaborate with TCSWMA on the flyer content. These publications will also be delivered digitally.

Residential Education

❖ Waste Audits

➤ *In-Cab*

- This project is a continuation of a collaboration that was developed in 2024. The audit is conducted from a side-load truck, driven by Green Waste's recycling coordinator. Carts that contain inappropriate items are marked with a cart tag explaining the concern. After a month, the process is repeated on the same route to compare communication progress. TCSWMA's analyst then processes the data.
- GWT commits to four in-cab audits and will schedule them quarterly to maintain a consistent presence in the community.

➤ *On-Foot*

- In addition to "in-cab" audits we propose to conduct recycling audits on foot. We feel that without the truck we are more approachable to customers and will be more available for constructive conversations. GWT will commit to two on-foot audits in 2025.

❖ Recycle Billing Inserts

- GWT will design and e-mail short-form digital "flyers" to each residential account that has "opted-in" to digital communication. These customers have either consented to communication on their online accounts or signed up through our "digital newsletter opt-in" in 2024. E-mails will be sent as common issues arise. They will be relevant to current sustainability efforts and will include "best-practice" tips, aimed at improving the recycling process. The frequency of these publications is intended to be useful without overburdening the customer with information.

❖ Digital Campaign Continued

- Last year demonstrated a social media approach is our best opportunity to reach the community on a personal level. Research suggests that consistent content is the most effective method for growing a social media presence. Therefore in 2025, we will focus on sustained interaction with our customers through social media. This means consistent activity on the platforms we are developing a presence within. We will commit to two informational "posts" a month (24 for the year), with the understanding that much of the interaction will be in shorter formats, such as comments and messaging.
 - We would like to incorporate a "Q&A" component into the platform. This would allow customer questions to be answered in a live format. This provides the community with a more interactive experience and makes recycling more accessible.

❖ School Presentations

- The most significant impact we can have on sustainability efforts comes from educating the next generation. This reality increases the importance of the school presentation collaborations between GWT and TCSWMA. This 90-minute presentation combines classroom education,

interactive games, and hands-on opportunities. These presentations traditionally focus on recycling practices and landfill operation. In 2025, we would like to expand the content of these presentations to offer a selection of topics for educators to choose from.

❖ Residential Mailer

- Mailers are sent out twice a year to give more in-depth recycling information. Our contract requires us to “print and mail” these mailers twice a year. We will continue to print and mail until we can shift to a digital format, however, these publications will also be delivered digitally to those who have” opted in”. Our collaboration with TCSWMA will continue as we develop each newsletter.