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<http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/ReduceWaste/Schools/>

School Waste Reduction

Whether you are a school district administrator concerned about increases in solid waste disposal costs, a recycling-conscious teacher or student, or a city/county recycling coordinator working with your local school district, setting up or improving an existing school waste reduction program can benefit everyone involved. Furthermore, in many cases, school recycling is now a state requirement.

- [California Law Regarding Mandatory Recycling](#)
- [Why is waste reduction planning essential for school districts?](#)
- [Starting a waste reduction program in your school district is easy!](#)
- [Need some help getting started?](#)
- [Publications](#)
- In coordination with the U.S. Department of Education, the California Department of Education (CDE) is implementing the [Green Ribbon Schools Award Program](#) to recognize schools that are exemplary in reducing environmental impact and costs; improving the health and wellness of students and staff; and providing effective environmental and sustainability education, which incorporates science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), civic skills and green career pathways. Applications must be completed online and are due no later than 5:00 pm PST on Tuesday, December 11, 2012. Based on the evaluation the CDE will select nominees to send to the U.S. Department of Education for consideration in being recognized as a Green Ribbon School.

EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

- [Zero-Waste Cafeteria](#)--Harding Elementary School in Santa Barbara County now composts or recycles all the waste it generates in the lunch program, including disposable plates and sporks made from vegetable-based materials. This is a perfect example of a zero-waste cafeteria in California!
- [Zero-Waste Policy](#)--Oak Hills Elementary School in Ventura County implemented a zero-waste policy, which decreased its waste by 90 percent. Additionally, Ventura County's Integrated Waste Management Division promotes zero-waste lunch by offering workshops at school sites to explain the cost benefits and provide training to successfully implement a zero-waste program.
- [Waste Free Lunches](#)--Information regarding how to implement or participate in a waste-free lunch program. This site includes sample letters to parents and teachers, information on conducting trash audits, examples of salvaged/recycled art projects, composting basics, where to purchase waste-free lunch kits, success stories from across North America, and links to other waste-free lunch sites.

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