

Moving Toward Zero Waste One Facility at a Time

County of Alameda

Project

As Compost and Recycling Associate at Alameda County, I help oversee the waste and recycling program for 61 County-owned facilities, making their operations more sustainable. My duties include managing the day-to-day operations, designing training and outreach materials, and advancing projects to reduce the county's upstream waste.

Data Gathering

- Interviewed 10 janitorial supervisors and stakeholders representing 16 County facilities to understand opportunities to improve the recycling and composting programs at their sites.
- Conducted site visits and walkthroughs of 23 County-owned facilities to identify opportunities for infrastructure updates and training.



Employee Outreach

- Updated recycling training presentation with information on new waste legislation and facility-specific items. Revised approach to increase interactive participation.
- Updated indoor container labels to aid waste sorting and to comply with state-mandated SB 1383 outreach requirements.



Results

Waste Assessment Report

- Prepared a 10-page report on findings and recommendations from interviews and site visits. Recommendations included targeted trainings, infrastructure updates, and expansion of composting.

Recycling Training

- Trained approximately 55 County employees on waste sorting.

Compost & Recycling Roll-outs



BEFORE



AFTER

Next Steps in May and June

- Prepare for fall pilot of equipment reuse program to ensure successful launch.
- Create interactive recycling training videos to increase the reach and efficiency of training.
- Lead five more live recycling trainings to educate employees on waste sorting.
- Conduct five more facility walkthroughs to identify additional opportunities for outreach.
- Apply new indoor container labels in 12 County buildings with new signage.



Sam Talarigo, 2021-2022 Climate Corps Fellow

Sam graduated from San Francisco State University with a B.S. in Environmental Science. After falling in love with the zero-waste field during his undergraduate studies, Sam joined Alameda County to work on waste reduction in local government. Inspired by his experience at the County, he will pursue a career in the waste management/zero waste field to continue to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by diverting waste from the landfill.

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