



County of Santa Cruz
Dept. of Public Works



UNIVERSAL SERVICE ORDINANCE

Frequently Asked Questions

What does “Universal Service” mean?

- The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors recently expanded the “Universal Service Ordinance,” requiring all businesses and residents in the entire unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County to sign up for curbside recycling and trash collection.

When does the new ordinance take effect?

- January 1, 2022.

How do I sign up for service?

- Please call GreenWaste Recovery at (831) 426-2711.

What is unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County?

- The new ordinance requires all residents and business owners within the unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County to subscribe to service. This applies to all residents and businesses that are in the County of Santa Cruz but outside the incorporated limits of the cities of Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley and Watsonville.

Why is the County doing this?

- California State Senate Bill 1383 (SB1383: Short-Lived Climate Pollutants) legislation requires all County and City jurisdictions in California to have universal service for trash and recycling collection. In most California cities and counties, Universal Service has already been the standard. Businesses and residents are required to subscribe to recycling and waste service just as they are to water, sewer and power service. Residents and businesses see this as a useful tool in addressing the problems of illegal dumping and of those without service taking advantage of their neighbors or public refuse containers.

How much will it cost?

- Currently the lowest rate for weekly curbside service is \$22.22 per month. This includes collection of refuse, recycling and yard waste.

How does this compare to the cost of hauling it myself?

- The minimum charge for bringing your own trash to the landfill or transfer station is \$26. Curbside service is almost always less expensive, and certainly more convenient.

Can I keep hauling my own trash if I want to?

- Self-hauling is still an option, but you must submit an application and pay an annual fee. To apply, go to www.santacruzcountyrecycles.org, and click on "Universal Service." Print out the "Application for Account for Self-Haul Exception," fill it out and mail it in with your application fee.

Are there any other exceptions?

- Yes. If the property is undeveloped or vacant, or if there are special circumstances justifying an exception, you may be eligible. To apply, go to www.santacruzcountyrecycles.org, and click on "Universal Service." Print out the "Application for Exception to Universal Service Requirement," fill it out and mail it to address provided on form.

I live in a remote area of the County. Does this apply to me?

- Yes. It applies to entire unincorporated Santa Cruz County.

I don't think GreenWaste Recovery will service my location, due to a narrow road, steep driveway or other special conditions. What should I do?

- Please call GreenWaste Recovery at (831) 426-2711.

This is the first I've heard of this. Why wasn't there more outreach?

- The State conducted numerous public meetings in widespread locations to inform the public of SB1383 and gather feedback (check CalRecycle's web page at: <https://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/organics/slcp>). The County Board of Supervisors conducted a public hearing on the ordinance.

Where can I get more information?

- Check the web site at www.santacruzcountyrecycles.org, and click on "Universal Service," call GreenWaste Recovery at (831) 426-2711, or contact Santa Cruz County Recycling and Solid Waste Services at (831) 454-2160.