



**For Immediate Release
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Keep California Beautiful and Partners Launch Statewide Plans for Great American Cleanup™

Activities focus on electronic waste collection

SACRAMENTO, CA – Government, non-profit and private organizations are celebrating Earth Day today by hosting a variety of beautification projects and recycling efforts across the Golden State. Representatives gathered in Sacramento to announce their organizations' plans for the state as part of the 5th Annual Great American Cleanup™ campaign. As with past years, groups will be out in full force collecting litter and recycling aluminum, glass, plastic, paper and other materials, but this year, the primary focus is on electronic waste collection.

Led by Keep California Beautiful (KCB), McDonald's, California Electronic Asset Recovery (CEAR) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) the Great American Cleanup™ campaign in California will offer residents a chance to dispose of their electronic waste more easily throughout Sacramento and parts of the Bay Area. CEAR will provide the receptacles and McDonald's will provide the locations—13 in all. An additional collection site will be at the Capitol.

"Californians like their electronics, but it comes with a cost," said KCB Executive Director Christine Flowers. "We need to use less, reuse more and recycle these items, as well as other materials, responsibly."

CEAR and McDonald's cite a commitment to California as being the prime motivator in their involvement in the clean up.

"Electronics recycling is our business but California is our home," said Kristin DiLallo Sherrill, director of marketing and new business for CEAR. "We live here; we work here. We want to do our part to make sure California is clean & sustainable."

"As members of our local communities, McDonald's franchisees throughout California are proud to partner with Keep California Beautiful for the Great American Cleanup as part of our ongoing commitment

to environmental stewardship” said Jason Goldblatt, KCB board member and McDonald’s franchise owner. McDonald’s also handed out leaflets to customers prior to today’s clean up to educate them about litter, recycling and the e-waste collection.

In addition to being a visual blight in our communities, litter is a significant financial problem in our state. Caltrans spends an estimated \$50 million a year on litter abatement and trash collection programs.

“Caltrans is committed to a clean and litter-free California, but we can’t do it alone. Everyone should think about what happens when they toss trash out of their vehicles onto our highways,” said Caltrans Director Cindy McKim. “Litter costs taxpayers millions of dollars each year to clean up—money that could be better spent on transportation projects.”

Litter on our streets and highways can be dangerous and deadly, which is why California Highway Patrol is emphasizing enforcement of litter laws today.

“We take this issue seriously,” said CHP Valley Division Chief Steve Lerwill. “We want to remind drivers that debris is dangerous, and if you’re caught littering or your load isn’t properly covered and secured, you could face a stiff fine.”

While recycling collection and legal enforcement are important, agency leaders hope the messages resonate long after the event.

“Earth Day is an opportunity for each of us to celebrate California’s natural beauty,” said Mark Leary, acting director of CalRecycle. “Today we pledge to make our state a cleaner place to live, not just on April 22, but every single day.”

Representatives from the private sector said they also are serious about trash, especially when so much of it can be reused or can become different products.

“Many plastics are readily recyclable. Simply put, plastics are a valuable resource. Too valuable to waste,” said Sherri McCarthy, manager, State Affairs, Western Region for the American Chemistry Council, a trade association that includes many of the nation’s leading plastics makers. “These items don’t belong in landfills or discarded in our waterways. They belong in the recycle bin.”

Also during the Sacramento event, art work from the “Junk and Gunk” art contest was highlighted. Local students used materials collected during “Creek Week,” which is a week dedicated to cleaning up the area’s waterways, to create the art. Likewise, Bakersfield students were also honored for their unique artwork created from recycled and reused materials for the 2011 Green Arts Competition for the Greater Bakersfield Green Expo.

And finally, event organizers awarded the “**Waste Not, Want Not**” trophy to the students from Arvin Union School District and Santa Barbara Home Based Partnership for respectively winning their division of the Waste Minimization competition during the 2010 California K-12 Schools Recycling Challenge, a competition and benchmarking tool for K-12 school recycling programs to promote waste reduction activities to their school communities.

“These students designed and created extraordinary works of art from very ordinary materials, proving the value of recycling and reusing,” said Leonard Robinson, acting director of the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. “I appreciate the efforts of all the students who competed in both art competitions and the recycling challenge, but the real winner was our environment.”

Other event partners included the Department of General Services and California Environmental Protection Agency. In addition to activities in Sacramento, KCB board member organizations and California Keep America Beautiful Local Affiliates hosted events throughout the state, as well as participated in the LA Live Earth Day Fair in Los Angeles to celebrate the earth while educating fair goers about environmental sustainability and living green.

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