



Rate Year One 2015 (RY1) FAQs

When are rate increases effective?

March 1, 2015

Residents are billed quarterly as follows:

Feb, May, August, Nov – Danville, Walnut Creek

March, June, Sept, Dec – County, Lafayette, Orinda, Moraga

How much did rates increase?

See attached Rate Year 1 Rates for rates by location and service level.

The percentages below reflect the average percentage increases of all container sizes; actual percentages vary by container size.

Danville:	Residential 4.5%	Commercial 4.5%
Lafayette:	Residential 9.0%	Commercial 9.0%
Moraga:	Residential 9.9%	Commercial 8.0%
Orinda:	Residential 7.5%	Commercial 7.5%
Walnut Creek:	Residential 9.0%	Commercial 17.4%
County:	Residential 4.0%	Commercial 4.0%

Is there a discount for seniors or low-income residents?

No, there is one standard rate for all residents in the RecycleSmart service area. However, seniors and low-income residents can reduce costs by switching to a smaller size garbage cart.

Disabled residents can apply for 'on-property' service at **no additional cost**.

Why did rates increase?

1. Entered into new Franchise Agreement with Republic Services (March 1, 2015):
 - New and improved services
 - New trucks
 - New residential and commercial carts/bins
2. The majority of solid waste costs are fixed. Residents are frequently reducing their can size and businesses are downsizing, or reducing the frequency of their service, leaving a smaller base to cover these costs,
3. A third party auditor performs an exhaustive analysis of any request for increase of rates to ensure that the costs are appropriate,

4. Inquiries regarding increases in vehicle impact – Garbage trucks provide a continuous wear and tear on the streets and roads, and each community handles this wear and tear in a different way. Contact your City/Town for more information.

Rates include:

- Weekly garbage collection,
- Weekly recycling collection of mixed recyclables (#1-#7),
- Weekly organics collection with food scraps,
- Free on-call pickups for yard waste and recycling (4 combined per rate year),
- Free on-call pickup of landfill materials (garbage/junk) (free once every 12 months),
- 2 scheduled Reuse and Clean-up Days per year where usable items are collected by charities. The unusable items are hauled off for disposal,
- Commercial Food Recycling Project,
- Free on-call used motor oil collection at curb,
- Free battery and cell phone collection at curb, and,
- Home composting, schools program, public outreach, and other programs in support of recycling and diverting waste from the landfill.

How can I lower my bill?

By switching to a smaller garbage cart. For example, **residents** using a standard 32-gallon cart can switch to a 20-gallon cart, and residents using a 64-gallon cart can switch to a 32-gallon cart. **Commercial** accounts can switch to a smaller service cart/dumpster *and* change the frequency of collection.

By composting at home and certifying for a home compost discount with RecycleSmart and Republic Services. Residents can go to www.RecycleSmart.org or call (925) 906-1801 x306. Discount is \$1.50/month (\$18/year).

How do rates today compare with rates over 15 years ago?

Current rates, after over fifteen years, are just starting to surpass rates from 1994 (Walnut Creek still has a lower rate). In 1996, the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) was formed, and addressed the then rapidly increasing garbage rates. Due to steps taken by the JPA, reduced service rates were implemented, lowering subscriber costs substantially. There have been slight increases each year since 1996. The rates below are for “Basic Service”: One 32-gallon garbage cart plus recycling and organics, collected weekly.

Member Agency	1994	1996 JPA Formed	RY3 2007	RY4 2008	RY5 2009	RY6 2010	RY7 2011	RY8 2012	RY9 2013	RY10 2014	RY1 2015
Danville	\$21.75	\$ 17.40	\$ 16.35	\$16.35	\$17.00	\$17.85	\$19.81	\$21.81	\$23.81	\$24.71	\$25.81
Lafayette	\$26.69	\$ 21.35	\$ 19.59	\$19.83	\$21.62	\$23.57	\$24.98	\$26.48	\$26.74	\$27.70	\$30.20
Moraga	\$22.94	\$ 18.35	\$ 19.03	\$19.98	\$20.82	\$21.65	\$23.60	\$23.84	\$24.46	\$26.66	\$29.30
Orinda	\$25.63	\$ 20.50	\$ 22.00	\$25.23	\$27.35	\$28.01	\$30.75	\$31.60	\$32.52	\$33.10	\$35.75
Walnut Creek	\$22.31	\$ 17.85	\$ 13.37	\$15.00	\$15.90	\$17.00	\$17.80	\$18.80	\$19.29	\$19.79	\$21.57
County	\$21.75	\$ 17.40	\$ 16.35	\$17.49	\$18.32	\$18.87	\$19.81	\$21.00	\$21.55	\$22.20	\$23.09

Why is my garbage rate different from other neighboring RecycleSmart communities?

Different communities have different service needs because of difficulties related to terrain, different fee structures, and different residential/commercial mixes.

Is garbage service mandatory?

It is mandatory to have garbage service for occupied property within the unincorporated areas of Contra Costa County. Residents in those areas may, however, apply for an exemption by contacting the County's Environmental Health Division of the Health Services Department at (925) 646-5225. If exempt, garbage must be removed from property a minimum of once per week.

Garbage service for residents living in all other jurisdictions is not mandatory, however, those residents not subscribing to services must arrange for removal of garbage from property a minimum of once per week.

Residents may not use other service providers to haul garbage, recycling or organics. Those materials fall under Exclusive Franchise Agreements held by Republic Services and Mt. Diablo Recycling.

RecycleSmart (Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority)

Who is RecycleSmart?

A government agency – a Joint Powers Authority of six Member Agencies: (1) Danville, (2) Lafayette, (3) Moraga, (4) Orinda, (5) Walnut Creek, and (6) the County.

RecycleSmart does not directly collect recyclables, organics, or landfill materials. Those services are provided by Republic Services under a Franchise Agreement.

Contact Republic Services at (925) 685-4711.

Who decides to raise rates?

The RecycleSmart Board of Directors, after careful consideration of costs and expenses identified by an extensive yearly analysis performed by a third party. The Board is comprised of two representatives from each of the six Member Agencies (City/Town Council Members or County Supervisors). The Board voted on the new rates at their January 29, 2015 Board Meeting (an open public meeting).

Where can I get more information?

www.RecycleSmart.org

(925) 906-1801

Who can I write a letter to?

RecycleSmart

Attn: Rates

1850 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 320

Walnut Creek, CA 94596