

# March 2025 Newsletter

## ECO-LOGIC

The Official Newsletter of the Tri-City Ecology Center

Volume 55 #3



ECO-LOGIC

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## Get Ready for TCEC Earth Day Booth and Celebration!!

Please all come to the Fremont Down Town Event center on April 19th between 10 and 2pm, It's the Fremont Earth Day event, it will be a busy bustling event with plenty of booths, information and chances to connect with other environmental organizations. We will have our wetland backdrop and animal masks and ears for selfie photos that was so popular last year. Lots of info about the Wetland development project in Newark and more.

If anyone wants to help out with the booth let me know.

Caroline Harris Chair TCEC cell 415 377 9200



Wetlands selfie background to be featured for Earth Day April 19<sup>th</sup>.

## Join us for a special TCEC sponsored tour of the Fremont Recycling and Transfer Station!

The group will meet at administrative office of the transfer station – reached by making a left when entering the station and going past the hazardous waste drop-off location. See below for more information. Guaranteed to be a fun and enlightening event!

**FREMONT RECYCLING AND  
TRANSFER STATION TOUR**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2025  
10:30 AM - 12:30 PM  
41149 BOYCE ROAD, FREMONT**

Learn how recyclables  
are sorted, cleaned,  
and prepared for  
reuse!

RSVP: Caroline Harris  
@ (415) 377-9200

 

### Camping ban update

By Steve Skala

There have been a few more developments regarding the Fremont Homeless Response, otherwise known as the camping ban. First, Council on March 4<sup>th</sup> voted to request that the City Manager remove the “aiding and abetting” language and the ban of camping on private property for more than 72 hours from the ordinance. The vote was 6-1 in favor.

Councilmember Campbell proposed to reduce the penalty for infractions of any portion of the ordinance from a misdemeanor to a civil infraction. That proposal was rejected (no one else seconded the motion) and she voted against the passing proposal in protest. It is worth noting that the Mayor asked for a poll of who wanted to change the penalty from a

misdemeanor and Councilmembers Campbell, Keng and Kimberlin voted to do that and the others (Shao, Lu, Zhang, Salwan) said they wanted to maintain the criminalization provision of the ordinance. The justification mayor Salwan gave for maintaining the criminalization is to provide the police with more “tools” to achieve compliance with not camping. The revised camping ban ordinance is expected to come back to Council March 18<sup>th</sup>.

The next update is that an outside group, The California Homeless Union, filed a lawsuit in Federal Court seeking to nullify the ban on grounds that it will create “what will otherwise be a completely preventable humanitarian crisis in the city of Fremont.” A key part of the lawsuit is that disabled people will be impacted by being forced to vacate their shelter when they have no place to go. The judge asked the City to place a hold on enacting the ban pending the outcome of the revised camping ban and also deferred considering the lawsuit until the revised ban is enacted. Stay tuned, I can guarantee there will be more updates in subsequent months.

What does the camping ban mean? A nice article by Calmatters, <https://calmatters.org/housing/homelessness/2025/02/california-homeless-encampment-sweeps/> says that the effect of camping bans is that unhoused people simply pack up their belongings and move around during the day so they are not “camping” for more than 24 hours. As many have said, the number of unhoused has not changed because of camping bans. However, the ability to provide assistance has become much harder since case workers now have a hard time keeping in touch the clients and other groups (many faith based) providing basic provisions like food and clothing.

A question should be asked if the Fremont community can ever come together. There are very clear coalitions for and against the camping ban. Times will get harder in Fremont. Tax revenue is already down. School attendance is down and that will result in disruption from teacher layoffs and school closures. A divided community that can’t come together on the unhoused will be challenged to come together to solve other problems.

## Ridwell-Leading Edge Recycling:

By Juliette Johnson



We have been members of Ridwell for about a month and so far we are liking it. Ridwell is a subscription recycling service that aims to make recycling more convenient and accessible for households. They pick up items that are not typically accepted in curbside recycling, such as multi-layer plastic, plastic film, batteries, rewearable clothes and recyclable thread.

Ridwell provides an app for scheduling pickups and a metal bin and reusable labeled canvas bags. For an extra charge we can add styrofoam to a pickup. The styrofoam is placed in a larger bag and placed next to our bin.

We have found it to be a convenient way to keep items out of the landfill. We have diverted 14 pounds from the landfill after only 2 pickups.

We like Ridwell's transparency and auditing of where the recycling goes. They publish where it all goes here <https://www.ridwell.com/transparency>

In the Bay Area Ridwell has diverted ~ 1.7 million pounds of waste from landfill. Here is a further breakdown for the Bay Area:

- **Plastic Film** 92.5% diverted. Trex turns the plastic film into new decking material.
- **Multi-Layer Plastic** 93.05% diverted. Merlin, First Star, Hydroblox and ByFusion recycle multi-layer plastic into building and drainage materials.
- **Styrofoam: 71.9%** diverted. National Recycling Corporation changes it into things like picture frames.
- **Batteries:** 100% diverted. Cal2Recycle recovers material to create new batteries.
- **Threads:** 100% diverted. Goodwill of San Francisco Bay recycles or reuses everything.

- **Light Bulbs:** 100% diverted. Clean Earth recycles these.

It's really nice to have an option to recycle multi layer plastic! We have not been able to recycle this in the past. We can drop off plastic film at our local Safeway, but we find it convenient to have this picked up by Ridwell along with our other items.

We have also helped our neighbors recycle light bulbs and it was rewarding to help our local community recycle.



Every two weeks, they also have a special featured category. For the last pick up our featured category was #5 plastic prescription bottles. Our upcoming featured categories are silverware and kitchen utensils, books, rigid plastic rings and non-perishable food. We like that we receive texts and emails to remind us to opt into a pickup. It does take some time to separate the items into bags (see photo) and to follow the Ridwell instructions.

If it fits into your budget and you are keen on diverting items from the landfill, Ridwell might be a good fit.

<https://www.ridwell.com/>



Editor's note. KQED ran a news article on Ridwell.

<https://www.kqed.org/news/12027788/this-startup-promises-to-recycle-the-junk-your-curb-side-service-wont-take> Interesting that the article states that Ridwell pays some end users to take items that have a low value. This means that the monthly fee paid to Ridwell provides a means to recycle items that otherwise won't be recycled. Multi-layer plastic is likely one of the items Ridwell pays someone to reuse since no one else takes it. Note that the Ridwell processing center in the Bay Area is in San Leandro. TCEC will see if a tour can be arranged.

## **Bird Boxes to save local bird populations**

By Caroline Harris

You may have seen the recent article in the TCV about a youth group launching the bird box project. [Read full article here](#)

TCEC is very happy to announce that we have given the young ladies a sizable eco grant to fund their upcoming workshops. The 4 workshops will take 30 students through the environmental issues that make this project important, the design and how to build the physical bird boxes, the software for the remote camera and data recording programs, and finally the data retrieval and analysis.

This eco grant application hits all the key points we are looking for, such as being beneficial to the environment, being local, youth leadership, educational, a well thought out project. Hopefully, this results with more birds in our parks will be appreciated by everyone in the community.

Good luck and thank you to this dedicated team.

## Start biking as spring approaches

By Steve Skala

Most know of Bike Fremont since they share many common goals with TCEC. Starting this year, Bike Fremont is reaching out to community members to promote cycling. One of the ways to do that is arranging bike rides around the Tri-City area. Last month, Bike Fremont sponsored a ride through Quarry Lakes and down the Alameda Creek Trail. Not only did we visit the sustainable gardens and exotic fruit orchard at Quarry Lakes but also reviewed the rail history of Niles Junction.

Bike Fremont would like to know how we can engage with TCEC members to help them bike more. Whether it is biking on our lovely trails or making trips around town, Bike Fremont can help. Please feedback your interests to [info@bikefremont.org](mailto:info@bikefremont.org). Please feel free to send an email if you've considered biking someplace but are not sure how to go or would like help. Bike Fremont also hosts bike fixit days in both the Irvington and Newark farmers' markets periodically and will welcome any help from TCEC members. Repair experience is not needed. One can fix flats (we'll show you how if needed) and help is always needed managing the flow of bicycles into the repair area and back to their owners. The best way to be informed of bike fixit events is to follow the Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/BikewaysFremont/>



Feb. 22 was a wonderful day as a group with Bike Fremont approaches the location of the former railroad tower at the Western Pacific/Southern Pacific diamond of Niles Junction.



# Columbia Sportswear Employee Store Access - Tri-City Ecology Center

Columbia Employee Shop Union City has invited TCEC members a chance to shop their outdoor wear at an exclusive by invitation only visit to the store **at Union Landing until March 30<sup>th</sup>** See flyer

Simply show the invitation on your smartphone (or printed out) at the front desk and then again at the cashier. Note that you may bring up to 4 guests with you.



EXCLUSIVELY FOR:

## Tri-City Ecology Center

ENTIRE STORE 40% OFF FULL RETAIL PRICING

### VALID DATES

02/10/2025 - 03/30/2025

VALID FOR YOU + 4 GUESTS

### WHAT TO BRING

THIS INVITATION  
PHOTO ID

### EMPLOYEE STORE LOCATIONS & HOURS

#### Richmond, CA

1414 Harbour Way South, STE 1010 Richmond, CA 94804  
MON - FRI: 11A - 8P  
SAT - SUN: 10A - 8P

#### Union City, CA

32111 Union Landing Blvd Union City, CA 94587  
SUN - THURS: 10A - 8P  
FRI - SAT: 10A - 9P

### YEAR-ROUND ACCESS

TUESDAYS: SENIORS (65+)

EVERY DAY: MILITARY & FIRST RESPONDERS



Questions? Please email: [ucemployeestore@columbia.com](mailto:ucemployeestore@columbia.com)

Valid for you and up to 4 guests for multiple visits during your invite period. Columbia reserves the right to modify or cancel this offer at any time. Please present this original invitation to the register for entry and again at checkout. This invitation is non-transferable. You must be present during shopping. The products purchased are intended solely for the buyer's own personal use, including gifts to others. Resale of products is strictly prohibited. Columbia Sportswear limits the number of items purchased to no more than 10 of the same style. For team and company purchases, please speak to a member of our store management team. Offer may not be combined with any other offer or discount. Valid from dates listed above. ©2025 Columbia Brands USA, LLC.

## Upcoming Events

March 19 – Fremont Mobility Commission Meeting. 7 PM Niles Conference Room, Development Services Building. Main agenda item is expected to be the Active Transit Plan and will be the only time to provide feedback to the Commission and Staff.

March 25 – TCEC sponsored tour of the Fremont Transfer Station 10:30 AM 41149 Boyce. See flyer in this newsletter.

March 30 – Bike Fixit. 9AM to 12 PM. Irvington Farmers' Mkt. Watch <https://www.facebook.com/BikewaysFremont/> for more information to either sign up to fix your bicycle or to volunteer to help. See article on Bike Fremont in this newsletter.

April 6 – Fremont & Newark [Compost Giveaway](#) 8 AM to 12 PM, Fremont Transfer Station 41149 Boyce. Two free bags of compost are available to residents of Fremont and Newark. You must have a Republic Services garbage bill – be sure to bring it. Note that a large line tends to form. Check the link for details.

April 19 – Earth Day! City of Fremont annual Earth Day celebration 10 AM to 2 PM Downtown Event Center. Tons of events and booths. Free secure document disposal and more. See additional information on TCEC's booth in this newsletter.

## The Grey Water Project's 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Earth Day Art Competition

### THE GREY WATER PROJECT'S 6TH ANNUAL **EARTH DAY ART COMPETITION**

Theme: Water in a Warming World

Who can Participate: Students K-12 from around the world

**Deadline: April 25th, 2025, 11 :59 PM PST**

**Prices/Recognition:** Cash prizes for Winning Entries

Teachers participating with their students will be featured

All Entries will be displayed in virtual and in person by The Grey Water Project.

Find out More and Register Now !

[www.thegreywaterproject.org/art-competition-2025](http://www.thegreywaterproject.org/art-competition-2025)

## **General Announcements**

### **TCEC Election Results**

Thanks to all the voting members who have returned their ballots. I am pleased to announce all four officers have been returned to office.

Chair - Caroline Harris  
Vice Chair - Liz Ames  
Treasurer - Beth Rasler  
Secretary - Janis Stob

And the motion set to the members to amend the bylaws was approved by 96% of the votes, resounding support from the membership, thank you all very much. The 2025 bylaws will be posted on our website. As a reminder the big change was to move the officers election to every two years instead of annually, other changes were to bring the bylaws in line with current practices, like meeting on Zoom and renaming the Communication Committee to Technical and Media Committee to cover electronic communication and bill payments. We also changed the requirement of having two signatures on checks only if the amount exceeds \$500. We added a section for Affiliate Partners to cover our Urban Forest Friends (UFF), Washington High School Ecology Club and California Orchard Restoration Experiment (CORE).

Thanks again to all the voting members for your continuing support of the TCEC Board

Caroline Harris

### **Union City Free Compost Program**

Similar to the Fremont free compost give-away, but Union city is always open. Just bring a shovel and a bag. This is all self-serve, so anyone can come. See links.

<https://www.unioncity.org/777/Free-Compost>

<https://youtu.be/UMUaYTpMJHE>

### **Take advantage of the Inflation Reduction Act Now**

Act before it's too late. It may already be too late. The rebate portion of the Inflation Reduction Act available to low-income residents is on hold due to executive actions from

the new regime. Check <https://techcleanca.com/incentives/heehrarebates/> for any updates.

Tax rebates are different since they are administered through your taxes and only Congress can remove them. Latest news is that Congress won't pass a reconciliation bill until later in the year, so you may have time. So take advantage of the Inflation Reduction tax credit while you still can. Install a heat pump water heater if your water heater is more than 10 years old. Go the <https://www.switchison.org/ca> or <https://incentives.avaenergy.org> to look for credits and other rebates that can be used to reduce fossil fuel consumption. You may reach out to Steve Skala at [steve.skala302@gmail.com](mailto:steve.skala302@gmail.com) for any questions on electrification.

### **UFF report**

By Bee Newell

On February 22nd Urban Forest Friends planted 17 trees at Cabrillo Elementary School. The city of Fremont planted another approximately 70 trees in Cabrillo Park that is juxtaposed to the Cabrillo Elementary School.

On March 8th Urban Forest friends planted 20 trees at Mayhew's landing Park in Newark with the help of Newark staff and Puente volunteers.

At both plantings Urban Forest Friends' volunteers had help from high school volunteers (American and Washington) and Scout volunteers (Troops 156 and 112.)

### **TRI CITY ECOLOGY BOARD**

Chair	Caroline Harris	 415 377 9200.
Vice Chair	Elizabeth Ames	
Secretary	Janis Stob	
Treasurer	Beth Rasler	
Publicity	Dan O'Donnell	
Membership	Gail Blalock	
Media	Steve Evans	
At-Large	Lynn Miller, Patricia Schaffarczyk	
Newsletter	Rich Godfrey (Editor), Hiran Rajagopalan (Asst. Editor)	
Ex-Chair	Gus Morrison	

## WANT TO JOIN TCEC?



If you want to become a member please click [HERE](#) to fill out this form and mail a check to 3375 Country Drive, Fremont, CA 94536. To learn more about TCEC please visit our website at <https://tricityecology.org/>. The Board meets on the first Thursday of each month on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84244552454?pwd=ekNQbnZQVkJ5WUxKazlsQitrSUVvQT09>

Meeting ID: 842 4455 2454 Passcode: 407039

We'll love to hear from you. If you have any suggestions or want to contact us, please use [THIS](#) form.

## Compostables Order Form

<b>Tri City Ecology Center</b>		<b>date</b>
<b>Compostables Order Form</b>		
*Compostables offered to TCEC members only. *Make checks payable to Tri City Ecology Center.		
<i>No change available. Please sub mit exact donation total</i>		
<b>Phone or email orders:</b>		<b>Pick up location :</b>
Bill Palleschi		3375 Country Drive
<a href="mailto:bpall@comcast.net">bpall@comcast.net</a>		Fremont CA 94536
(510) 396-6694		Phone: (510) 793-6222
Name :		
Street Address :		
City, ZIP :		
Phone Number and email :		
<b>X</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b># Packages</b>
	7" plate 50 per pack	UNIT DONATION
	10" plate 50 per pack	\$3.20
	11.5 oz bowl 50 per pack	\$5.16
	forks 50 per pack	\$2.95
	tea spoons 50 per pack	\$1.60
	knives 50 per pack	\$1.60
	6 oz cold cup 50 per pack	\$2.05
	9 oz cold cup 50 per pack <i>discontinued</i>	\$3.84
	10 oz cold cup 50 per pack	\$6.25
	16 oz cold cup 50 per pack	\$5.98
	8 oz hot cup 50 per pack	\$3.45
	3 gallon kitchen pail bag 17 "x 17" 50 per roll	\$2.85
	13 gallon tall kitchen bag 23" x 29" 20 per roll	\$3.15
	straws (100) <i>discontinued</i>	\$1.45
	<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>\$</b>

Order Form Update June 28, 2024

Orders may be picked up at 3375 Country Drive, Fremont on Thursdays between 11 AM – 2 PM or by special arrangement. When purchasing, please fill out an order form and pay by cash or check. Sorry, we don't have change. This benefit is for TCEC members only. Questions? Please call Dee Minter at 510 940 6272 or email her at [m](mailto:m) and please cc. Caroline Harris at [info@tricityecology.org](mailto:info@tricityecology.org).