

## **Marin Sets the Pace for State Recycling**

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Marin residents deserve to take pride in having one of the best levels of recycling in the state during 2000.

Recycling has been part of Marin's household habits for many years and the achievement of having diverted some 63 percent of the county's waste – some 817 million tons – from local landfills is impressive. That's a lot of newsprint, bottles, cans and cardboard that Marin residents sort, bundle, and leave at the curb for the recyclers. It is also a lot of "green waste", landscaping cuttings that would have been hauled to a dump but is now collected curbside and turned into earth-enriching compost.

For more than 20 years, recycling has been apart of the Marin consciousness and that 63 percent is a clear sign we know that with a little effort we are making a huge inroad at reducing the throw-away society. But it is also an example that lets us know we can do more and think twice before we just toss a box or a bottle in the trash instead of recycling.

Recycling our bottles, cans, cardboard, newspapers and wastepaper has become a habit for many Marin households. Many other counties are playing catch-up to Marin. Sonoma, for instance, diverted only 40 percent of its waste.

Our success has short-term and long-term effects. One is the establishment of a recycling ethic, which has taken hold in Marin. Another is the realization that Marin doesn't have much room for any new landfills and by recycling newspapers, cans, bottles, garden clippings and even computers, we are reducing the stream of waste headed into the dumps and extending their lifespan.

The state's waste-diversion goal for counties was 50 percent by 2000.

Marin through awareness and participation of local people and businesses, exceeded that target. Statewide, the diversion rate was only 42 percent. Marin's 63 percent is truly a mark to take pride in and work toward improving