



City of Modesto

# CITY PRIDE

October 2002

City Wide

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<http://www.modestogov.com>

This information brought to you by the Modesto City Council.

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## Know where the green grass goes

Attention Modesto Residents -- your help is still needed to ensure proper use of the green yardwaste container so that the City of Modesto may continue to produce high quality compost.

Please place ONLY grass, shrub clippings, leaves, brush, and tree clippings in the green can. Food waste, such as vegetable left-overs, table scraps, meat bones and fish, egg shells, solid dairy products (cottage cheese, yogurt, cheese, etc.) coffee grounds, and bread. Food scraps can be wrapped in paper bags or newspaper. You can also include paper napkins, paper towels, paper plates, coffee filters and tea bags.

Please make sure there are NO papers, cans, household trash, liquids, food containers or packaging, foil, glass, plastics, oil containers, diapers, animal feces, or other waste mixed in with the yard waste. All recyclables should be put in blue bags and placed in your black can along with your garbage.

The city receives more than 30 thousand tons of green waste per year at the composting facility. That's about 150-200 tons per day. The green waste comes

from the residential recycling program, large clippings from monthly street collection, and the city's Community Forestry and Parks divisions.

Only organic material, water and sunshine make the compost. The compost process, which includes grinding, turning, watering, monitoring, settling, testing and screening, takes about five months. One ton of organic matter yields about one yard of compost.

Mo-Gro Magic, the trade name of the city's co-

available for purchase at Scenic and Westurf nurseries.

It also can be purchased at the co-composting facility, 7007 Jennings Road, loaded in an open bed pickup or trailer. Hours are Monday through Friday 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. The cost is \$10.75 per yard plus tax.

Compost has many beneficial applications. It can be used to amend soil for lawns, gardens, ornamental plants, trees and potted plants. A yard of compost can cover up to 300



**Remember to place grass and other yard clippings in your green yardwaste container.**

square feet, one inch thick. See your local nurseries for ways to use compost to beautify your yard or for more information call the City at 538-2557.

## Schedule your 'bulky item' collection

All City of Modesto two-toter residents are allowed to make two phone calls per calendar year to their garbage company to schedule a bulky item pickup appointment.

Once the garbage company has scheduled the appointment, residents may place the items out for collection in the street in front of their home, the night before the appointment. The garbage company will then pick up the items the day of the appointment between the collection hours of 6am-6pm.

If a bulky item pile is in front of a home for more than two days, please call the City's Solid Waste Division at 577-5494. If the Solid Waste Division investigates a pile and can find no responsible party, it will be referred to the City's Neighborhood Preservation Unit (NPU) and treated as illegal dumping.

Piles in front of vacant lots, apartment complexes, businesses, or alleyways need to be called directly in to NPU at 577-5250. These locations do not qualify for bulky item collection.



David Paladini

## THROUGH THE EYES OF OUR STUDENT REPORTER

# City steps up to 'bat'-tle insect infestation

Silent wings flapping in the night, faint clicking, and small screeches. This is the sound of bats. It's a noise the City of Modesto's Water Quality Control Facility personnel are anxious to hear.

Why would they want bats flying around? Think about it. Water attracts bugs, particularly mosquitoes. The wastewater plant has billions of gallons of water, and so, billions of insects. Not only are there mosquitoes, which are bad enough, but there are also spiders and other insects thickly covering machinery and water purification towers.

Bats eat bugs -- up to 1200 insects in an hour. In one night, a bat will eat up to three times its body weight in bugs. To put the bat's appetite in perspective, let's compare it to the appetite of a human.

A bat rate of 1200 insects per hour is like you eating 80 pizzas in an hour. The only difference is the taste. "I'd like extra mosquitoes on that pie, please."

And the bats eat that much in spite of them being, well, blind as a bat. A bat's eyesight is so poor it is basically blind. It's amazing how they pull it off! They use a location system called echolocation to find prey. It's similar to the process used by dolphins. The bat sends a radar out in front of itself. The radar signal bounces back to the bat when the sig-

nal comes in contact with anything. Anything at all, even something as small as a little mosquito.

To investigate the bat solution, I toured the water facility, with city employees

Plant was originally proposed by Robert Howard, Water Quality Control Superintendent for the City of Modesto. Mr. Howard has put lots of research and time into this program.



Aaron Trout and Judy Rinkus as my "personal guides." Judy told me that she didn't like bats at all when she first started studying them and their habits. But she has become somewhat fond of them now that she knows more about them.

The idea to bring bats to the Water Quality Control

Until recently, the facility had two of the three vital elements for bat support: a large food source (okay, lots of bugs) and plentiful water. What it didn't have was a roosting place for the bats. So, no place to sleep meant no bats to control the insect population.

A lot of thought and a little money changed all that. By

early September, the city erected three bat houses and a local Eagle Scout Troop plans to build and erect six more.

Bat houses sit up on steel poles at least 12 feet high, facing south. They are 12 feet high because bats need to be able to fall out of the box, have time to go into a glide, and then lift into flight.

Each bat house is 16 inches high, eight inches wide, and four inches thick. Would you believe that 500 bats can fit in it?! It's true!

Many people have unfounded fear of bats. As scary as they might look and seem, bats really don't go around looking for people to harm or kill. In fact, they actually are rather shy. Normally when people think of bats they think of blood-sucking vampire bats. There are only one or two kinds of bats that suck blood and they don't live around here so you don't have to be afraid of our local bats.

So, I guess you might say that the City of Modesto has "stepped up to bat" with a challenging and interesting way of fixing the problem of insect infestation at the Water Quality Control Facility. It's an environmentally-safe, all natural program. The bats may prevent the city from needing to resort to using bio-chemicals insecticides or other hazardous pest extermination tools.

*David Paladini is a Modesto resident and a monthly student contributor to City Pride-City Wide.*

# Community



Mark your calendars --

## Great 'Modesto' Cleanup, Nov. 2

Mark your calendars now for the second Great American Cleanup event, Saturday, November 2.

Modesto's citizen-based anti-litter team designated the last Saturday in April and the first Saturday in November as annual Great American Cleanup days.

Volunteers contribute two to four hours to help remove litter on more than 58 miles of roadsides and trails.

"We are looking for service clubs, church groups, Boy and Girl Scout troops, high schoolers needing community service hours, and volunteers at-large," said Chris Murphy, campaign co-chair. "Littering is a problem in Modesto and we need everyone to support cleanup and prevention."

The city offers a new roadside adoption program, similar to the Caltrans Adopt A Highway Program.



Now that Highway 99's litter removal schedule is 24 times per year, the focus is on cleaning the other major roadway areas in our city.

The first community-wide litter removal day last April, netted 900 bags of roadside garbage.

Volunteers interested in participating in the November 2 event or the new Adopt A Roadway program, can contact the City's Operations & Maintenance Department at [pcowles@modestogov.com](mailto:pcowles@modestogov.com) or call 342-2279.

## Americans join together to recycle

Join the City of Modesto and Office Depot in celebrating America Recycles Day, Saturday, November 16.

The national event promotes the importance of recycling and is a reminder that recycled products are all around us in our daily lives.

Drop by the America Recycles Day booth inside Office Depot, 2020 West Briggsmore Avenue, Modesto, on Saturday, November 16, from 9a.m. to 2p.m. Learn about Modesto's many recycling programs and how to "close the loop" on recycling by purchasing products made from recycled materials.

Be sure to check out the large display of environmentally-friendly products available at Office Depot and

don't forget to enter the drawings for some great prizes! See you there.



## Move those toters

Just a friendly reminder that it is illegal to place garbage cans on the sidewalk blocking public access. Doing so could result in violation fines up to \$100.00.

Where alleys do not exist, garbage cans may only be placed in the street against the curb or on the driveway apron next to the curb.

If you have questions about placement of garbage cans, call the City's Solid Waste Management Office at 577-5494.

## Holiday garbage collection days

Garbage collections will be pushed back one day due to the Thanksgiving holiday in November. All Thursday and Friday garbage collection routes will be served one day late.



Additionally, the Christmas and New Year's holiday will be effected. During each holiday week, the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday routes will run one day late.

For more information, call the City's Solid Waste Division at 577-5494.

## DID YOU KNOW...

...Recycled newspaper can be de-inked and made into newspaper again? It's also used in home insulation materials, animal bedding, compost material and fuel.

...Plastics account for eight percent of landfill waste by weight, but 20 percent by volume?

...You could run a television for nearly three hours from



the energy saved by recycling just one aluminum can?

...Most bottles and jars contain at least 25 percent recycled glass? Glass never wears out - it can be recycled forever, and the same goes for motor oil.

...Automobile tires can be on the road again when they are recycled into rubberized asphalt?

So, what did YOU recycle today?



Buy one regular priced flat of flowers and get one bag of Mo-Gro Magic FREE or Buy 2 bags at regular price and receive third bag FREE

MUST PRESENT COUPON AT TIME OF PURCHASE  
LIMIT 2 FLAT - BAGS PER COUPON  
OFFER EXPIRES 11/15/2002

Available at these local nurseries:

**Scenic Nursery**  
1313 Scenic Drive

**Westurf**  
1612 Claus Road



## GOT TIRES?



### FREE TIRE COLLECTION EVENT

For City of Modesto residents only.  
No businesses or dealers allowed.  
Proof of residency required.

Saturday, November 2, 2002  
Modesto High School Parking Lot  
8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

OR until two collection trailers are filled.  
NO EXCEPTIONS.

Eight (8) tires per coupon -- no size limit  
One (1) coupon per household.  
Tires with or without rims OK

**Eight tires per vehicle**

*Limits will be strictly enforced.*  
**NO tires will be accepted without this coupon.**

Questions?

Call the City of Modesto Solid Waste Office at  
577-5494

Funded by the California Integrated Waste Management Board

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OR CALL US AT (209) 577-5463

## Only Rain Down the Drain!

**YOU** are the Pollution Solution!



*NEVER pour  
Used Oil, Paint,  
Gasoline or Chemicals  
down storm drains!*

Report Pollution call 577-6200

Recycle Used Oil & filters call 577-5493



Paid for by the City of Modesto and a grant from the  
California Integrated Waste Management Board

## FREE BACKYARD COMPOSTING CLASSES

The City of Modesto is offering free backyard  
composting classes to Modesto residents.

**Wednesday Classes**

Oct. 30

Modesto Junior College • 6:30-8:30 p.m.

To register call 575-6063

**BACKYARD  
COMPOST BINS**  
\$26.30 each plus tax  
To order call the Solid  
Waste Office at 577-5495.

