

Bulky Item Pick-Up Program Keeps Blight Out of Streets and Alleys



There it sat—a rusted-out refrigerator with a broken chair thrown on top of it. Surrounding it were a worn out couch, a three-legged table and various other pieces of furniture. Strewn around the pile were scraps of paper, trash and a cardboard box or two. And there perched on top of the mountainous pile was an old TV with a blown-out tube and a sign reading “FREE.” The neighbors began to dread seeing the mess as they drove down the street to their homes. Just think, this could have all been avoided with a single phone call.



David Paladini
 Student Reporter

Recently, I learned about the Bulky Item Collection Program created by the City of Modesto Solid Waste Management Division to eliminate residential bulky waste and help alleviate blight around Modesto.

“Bulky Waste” is basically any large item that won’t fit into your large black garbage toter, such as broken or worn out furniture or appliances. Many times people just don’t know what to do with an old refrigerator or couch when they get a new one.

Prior to the program’s inception, Modesto considered and tossed around the idea of having a residential bulky item collection program for a number of years. It all started back in 1996, when the Modesto City Council began discussing the increasingly frightful, blightful

situation in the community. For several years, lack of information and varying cost estimates deterred the creation of a program to take care of the situation. However, in December of 1998, the citizens of Modesto began to actively share their concerns about the blight with the council and insisted that the city do something about controlling the mess. After several meetings, the City Council agreed to fund a bulky item pick-up program.

For the first couple of years, the city was sectioned into 25 quadrants. Twice a year, residents in each quadrant would have the opportunity to put their bulky items out in front of their homes. Because there are 52 weeks in a year, this gave the collection crews enough time for two weeks per section per year with two weeks off at Christmas. The program was funded by a 95¢ charge included on the monthly garbage bill.

Unfortunately, this strategy just made the neighborhoods look dumpier and unorganized. Looters and overzealous scavengers began to take advantage of the program, and people began adding to piles in other neighborhoods.

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Bulky Item Collection Policies/Procedures

—By Appointment Only—

- Free two times per year for City of Modesto residential garbage service customers only.
- All items should be placed out the evening before your scheduled appointment only.
- Acceptable Items: large household items, such as large appliances (ALL doors must be removed), toilets/sinks/tubs/hot tubs, mattresses, furniture, doors, ladders, exercise equipment, bicycles, patio furniture, BBQs (remove propane tank) or air conditioners.
- NO tires, auto parts, household garbage, hazardous waste/chemicals/toxic materials, plate glass, televisions, computer monitors, concrete, asphalt, construction/demolition debris/wood, items associated with businesses or dead animals.

Call your garbage company to schedule an appointment. For more information, contact the Solid Waste at 577-5494.

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Education Key to Water Conservation

The City of Modesto Water Conservation Office has developed a new series of presentations to teach water science and water conservation to community schools and civic organizations.

"The purpose of this community outreach program is to emphasize education rather than enforcement as the most effective means of promoting water conservation," said José Cavazos, Water Conservation Specialist.

This unique, new program also includes prizes to help motivate participants to learn.

Sponsors of the prizes include: McHenry Bowl, Modesto A's, Boomers, Brenden Theatres, Domino's Pizza and the City of Modesto Parks, Recreation and Neighborhoods Department.

To schedule a water conservation presentation for your school or community group, or to become a sponsor of the program, please contact José Cavazos or Sarah Smith at 342-4580.

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CITY OF MODESTO

Proper Pool Maintenance Crucial for Keeping Storm Drains Pollution Free

Proper pool maintenance is important for keeping your pool healthy and safe. In addition, in certain situations it may even be necessary to drain your pool for repairs or other maintenance tasks.

In order to keep our storm drains pollution free, please keep in mind the following rules in regards to residential pools:

- Always drain your residential pool into a sewer line. For convenience, you can use the sewer clean-out connection in your yard, which is generally located near a hose bib close to the house. You must never drain your
- All residential pool water discharged from a waste line must flow through a backwash separation tank or sediment trap before it discharges into the sewer line. The tanks or sediment traps prevent sediments from entering the sewer line [MMC 5-6.209(b)(8)]. It is very important to filter sand and dirt particles from the water because they do not dissolve and can clog

pool into the street or storm drain, even if the water is dechlorinated. Discharging swimming pool water into the street or storm drain is a citable offense [MMC 5-10.301(f)].

the sewer lines. Backwash separation tanks or sediment traps can be purchased at your local pool supply store.

Storm drains are designed to allow rainwater to flow directly into streams, rivers or our groundwater supply. Never allow any foreign materials to enter into our storm drains. If you see anyone draining their pool into a city storm drain, please call 577-6200.

If you have any questions about pool draining, please call the Storm Drain Administration Office at 577-6377. Thank you for helping protect our environment. You are the Pollution Solution!

Businesses Invited to Participate in Portraits of Success Program



The City of Modesto Community and Economic Development Department would like to

invite local area businesses to participate in the "Portraits of Success" program.

Businesses are invited to showcase their talents in one of the City of Modesto's secure display cases for a three-month period. Display cases are located at the Modesto Municipal Airport and the 2nd and 3rd floor lobbies of Tenth Street Place,

1010 Tenth Street, Modesto.

To qualify, businesses must have been in business at least five years, have five or more employees, possess a current City of Modesto business license, be based within Modesto City limits and not be a franchise.

To participate in this free program, contact Christina Davis at 571-5566.

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

DON'T DUCK RESPONSIBILITY - KEEP OUR WATER CLEAN!

PAID FOR BY THE CITY OF MODESTO AND A GRANT FROM THE CALIFORNIA INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT BOARD

FREE Backyard Composting Class

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



BACKYARD COMPOST BINS \$26.30^{EA}

To order, call Solid Waste at 577-5495.

Tuesday, September 16 and Tuesday, October 21 6:30-8:30 PM Modesto Junior College

Registration: 575-6063

Presented by the City of Modesto for City residents

Motorized Scooter Regulations Protect Riders and Right-of-Way

Motorized scooters are similar to unpowered scooters, but they are equipped with either a small two-cycle gasoline engine or an electric motor and a battery. In addition, motorized scooters also vary from unpowered scooters in how they are regulated by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

The following is a partial list of motorized scooter regulations. For a complete listing, visit the DMV website at: www.dmv.ca.gov.

Section 21235 of the California Vehicle Code states that when operating a motorized scooter the

following requirements apply:

- A motorized scooter must be equipped with a brake that will enable the operator to make a braked wheel skid on dry, level, clean pavement.
- A properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet is required when operating a motorized scooter.
- The operator of a motorized scooter must be at least 16 years old.
- Motorized scooters are not to be operated upon a sidewalk, except as may be necessary to enter or leave adjacent property.
- Motorized scooters

cannot be left lying on their side on any sidewalk, or parked on a sidewalk in any other position, so that there is not an adequate path for pedestrian traffic.

The DMV also notes that "Insurance policies may not provide coverage for accidents involving the use of scooters. To determine if coverage is provided, you should contact your insurance company or agent."

For questions regarding this or any other traffic-related issue, contact the Modesto Police Department Traffic Division at 572-9592.

Theft from Vehicles on the Rise

The Modesto Police Department would like to warn Modesto citizens that theft from vehicles has been on the rise for the past three months.

According to Officer Jim Munoz, "The focus here is on what's being taken—personal belongings left in

vehicles. We discourage leaving personal property in vehicles at any time. This prevents property loss, which could eventually lead to credit card theft, forgery and, most seriously, identity theft."

In the three-month period from March to May 2003, there were 700 thefts from

vehicles. In 35% of these thefts, purses, wallets, cash, credit cards and jewelry were stolen. In 23% of these cases, the victim had not locked or secured their vehicle.

Approximately 50% of the thefts occurred when vehicles were parked in front of or in the driveway of a residence.

Consumer Confidence Report 2003 Corrects Reported Barium Levels

Barium: Actual Results in ppm (MCL=1 ppm=1000ppb)			
Water System	Minimum	Maximum	Average
City of Modesto and Empire	ND	0.34	0.029
Salida	ND	0.11	0.037
Turlock	One analysis. Results=.07 ppm		
Waterford	ND	0.090	0.030

Recently, the City of Modesto published and distributed the Consumer Confidence Report for 2003. This document is the annual public notification of the condition of the drinking water in domestic water

systems owned and operated by the City of Modesto.

In the report, the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for Barium present was inadvertently reported in parts per billion (ppb) rather than parts per million (ppm),

which made it appear as if there was 1000 times more Barium present in the drinking water than there actually was.

The correct figures appear in the table left.

Copies of the Consumer Confidence Report for 2003 may be obtained at Tenth Street Place, 1010 Tenth Street; City Hall at the Mall or Stanislaus County Main Library, or by calling 342-2212. The report is also available on the City of Modesto website at: www.modestogov.com/omd.

Blue Bags Make Recycling Easy



The City of Modesto Solid Waste Office would like

to encourage residents to recycle with the Blue Bag program.

To do your part, simply toss all your glass, paper, cardboard, plastics (numbers 1-7), aluminum and metal containers into a blue bag and place the bags in your black garbage can. Before placing items in your blue bag, please lightly rinse containers and remove bottle lids—labels may be left on. Blue bags are free and available at the following locations:

- City Hall at the Mall
- Vintage Faire Mall
- Tenth Street Place
1010 Tenth Street,
Floors 2 & 4
- King-Kennedy
Memorial Center
601 N. Martin Luther
King Drive
- Senior Citizens
Center
211 Bodem Avenue
- New Deal Market
832 Oakdale Road
- Police Area
Command Centers
3705 Oakdale Road
1550 Yosemite Blvd.
409 Paradise Road

Residents can also use the blue grocery bags provided by Richland Market, Save Mart, New Deal, O'Brien's and Raley's.

To avoid confusion, please do not use blue bags for garbage or non-recyclable items.

For more details, call the Solid Waste Office at 577-5494.

Bulky Item Pick Up
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In addition, the blocking of the public right-of-way became a safety issue.

In 2000, city staff conducted a survey regarding the bulky item collection program. The results of the survey showed 70% of residents surveyed thought that an "on-call" program would be a better idea. The City Council agreed, and the system was changed effective January 2001.

Since that time, each household within the Modesto City limits is allowed two bulky item pick ups per year. There are no size limitations for the items that are picked up, but household garbage is not permitted.

So now when you get that new piece of furniture and have to get rid of the old one, all you have to do is call your local garbage company and simply tell them that you would like a bulky item pick-up appointment. The garbage hauler will schedule a date and time for your pick up, usually within a week or two from when you call. On the day before your appointment, you can set your bulky items out on the street in front of your property, making sure the items do not block the sidewalk.

There are many advantages under this new program. First, by going to an on-call system, the city was able to cut down the cost of

the program from 95¢ to only 50¢ per month, which is \$6 per year. If you were to get rid of your bulky items by taking them to the dump, you would likely spend a minimum of \$20 for just one trip. Which means, two trips to the dump per year could cost about \$40 per year compared to two bulky pick ups only costing \$6 per year. That's quite a savings!

Remember, you can put out as many bulky items as you want, but no trash. Bulky items are large, solid materials like furniture and appliances. In addition, unacceptable items also include auto parts, tires, hazardous waste, dead animals, plate glass, concrete, construction materials, televisions and computers. For details, contact your local garbage company or call the City Solid Waste Division at 577-5494.

In the few years that the new and improved Bulky Item Collection Program has been running, it has been a great success. In 2002, the three garbage companies serving Modesto picked up 14,819 tons of bulky items. So far in 2003, they have collected 8,705 tons—and we're only half way through the year!

So the next time you take a cooler off your roof, recarpet your living room or even buy a new refrigerator, don't just toss the old one in your alley. Call your local garbage company and take advantage of your Bulky Item Collection Program.

2003 Recycling Survey

City of Modesto residents: Please fill out and return the following questionnaire with your payment.

1. What types of items do you recycle?
 Aluminum Plastic Paper
 Glass Metals Cardboard
 Junk Mail Newspaper I don't recycle (skip to #5)
2. How do you recycle the items listed above?
 Drop off at a recycling center
 Put in Blue Bags
 Both of the above
 Other _____
3. What items do you put in the Blue Bags?
 Aluminum Plastic Paper
 Glass Metals Cardboard
 Junk Mail Newspaper
 Other _____
4. Do you use the blue "carry-out" bags from grocery stores for recycling?
 Yes
 No, I use them for _____
5. What do you do with your food scraps?
 Put them in the black can
 Recycle them in the green can
 Put them down the garbage disposal
 Put them into backyard compost pile
 Other _____
6. Rank your satisfaction level with your garbage company: (1-lowest to 5-highest) 1 2 3 4 5
7. How often have you used the Bulky Item Collection Program in the past year?
 1 time 2 times Never
 Didn't know about program
8. How do you change your vehicle's oil?
 Change it myself
 Take to a professional to be changed
 Other _____
9. Who is your garbage company?
 Waste Management (green/yellow truck)
 Gilton Solid Waste (blue/white truck)
 Bertolotti Disposal (orange truck)
 Don't know
10. Please contact me with more information on the City of Modesto garbage and recycling programs.
 Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: _____
11. Comments, questions or suggestions regarding your City of Modesto garbage services or recycling programs?



Available at these local nurseries:
Scenic Nursery
 1313 Scenic Drive
Westurf
 1612 Claus Road

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 FLATS - BAGS PER COUPON OFFER EXPIRES 9/15/2003