

# IMPROVING RECYCLING PERFORMANCE

through  
Recognition and Feedback

Jeff Becerra



# 1950'S – 60'S



# 1970'S





# 1990'S



# TODAY





# STILL ENORMOUSLY WASTEFUL



# ENTER BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE

- Infrastructure in place
- People using system, just not well enough
- Using learnings from behavioral economics and science to change that



# The Goal: a simple metric

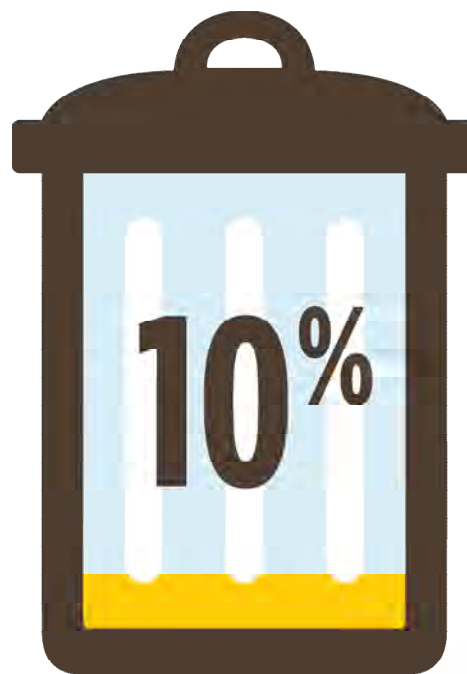
...



**Under 10  
by 2020**



**2008**



**2020**

# **Tapping Motivation: reward, recognition and more**

...

**READY \* SET  
RECYCLE**



READY\*SET  
RECYCLE

Play & Enter

Sorting Secrets

Recycling in Your City

About the Contest

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## SPEED SORTER

PROPERLY SORT AS MANY ITEMS  
AS YOU CAN BEFORE TIME RUNS OUT.

START >

your score

0

:30



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STOPWASTE.ORG  
Halving the Waste Stream for Alameda County

# School Challenges





# **GOLD CART AWARD**

FOR DOING AN OUTSTANDING JOB  
RECYCLING AND KEEPING VALUABLE  
RESOURCES OUT OF THE LANDFILL.

[ReadySetRecycle.org](http://ReadySetRecycle.org)





THE NEW CALIFORNIA  
**GOLD**



**Recycle food scraps in your green bin.**  
**Help create rich compost for our farms.**

**Social Norming: public  
pledges, selfies (or course!),  
even murals**

...







我 承諾

TURN SCRAPS  
INTO SOIL

**I PLEDGE**  
to recycle food scraps and  
food soiled paper in the green bin.

READY • SET  
RECYCLE  
ReadySetRecycle.org

I, \_\_\_\_\_  
pledge to recycle food scraps and  
food soiled paper in the green bin:

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY





# Data Collection: our smart meters

...





1



2



3



4

# Feedback: data presentation with a spin

...



Here's What  
Businesses  
Put in Garbage  
Containers



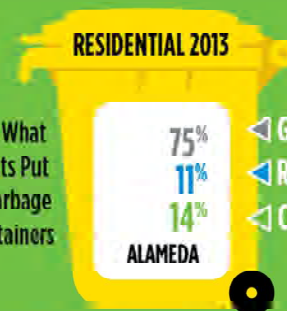
GARBAGE  
RECYCLABLES  
COMPOSTABLES

Help stop waste!  
Put these in the  
right containers.

Spin the wheel to find  
out how much good stuff  
we threw away in 2013.



Here's What  
Residents Put  
in Garbage  
Containers



GARBAGE  
RECYCLABLES  
COMPOSTABLES

Help stop waste!  
Put these in the  
right containers.

## HOW DO WE **MEASURE UP?**

To help communities in Alameda County achieve their recycling goals, StopWaste periodically takes a look at what's going into residential and commercial garbage containers. The yellow containers at left show the results for 2013.

### How Does the Wheel Work?

Spin the wheel and look at the upper container to see the 2013 results for common business types. For example, garbage containers from light manufacturing facilities contained an average of 77% garbage (by weight), 16% recyclables and 7% compostables. To see the 2013 residential results for your community, spin the wheel until your city or sanitary district shows up in the lower container.

### So How Are We Doing?

Let's face it—we're still burying too many valuable recyclable and compostable items in landfills. In 2008, garbage containers in Alameda County contained about 60% garbage and 40% recyclable and compostable items. Spin the wheel to see all the 2013 results. Please sort your garbage into the right containers and help achieve our countywide goal: By 2020, less than 10% of what's in garbage containers will be recyclable or compostable.

REMOVE THIS PIECE

SPIN THE WHEEL  
WHAT'S IN YOUR TRASH?

# Cognitive Dissonance: backed by data

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STOP WASTE

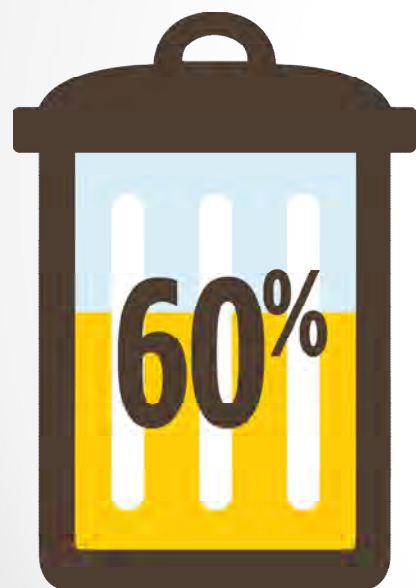
YOU'RE A  
*JUST OK*  
~~FANTASTIC~~  
RECYCLER

BE FANTASTIC, INSIDE

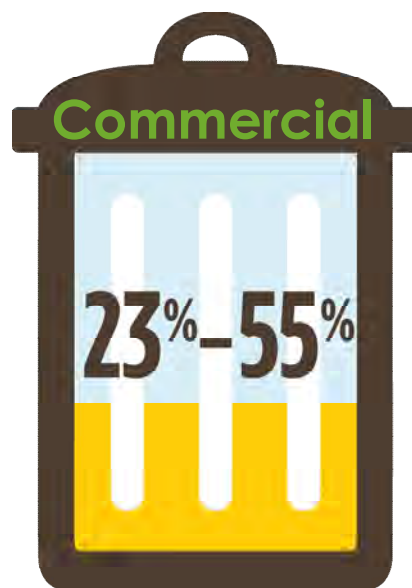
**Results:**  
**is it working?**

...

**Under 10  
by 2020**



**2008**

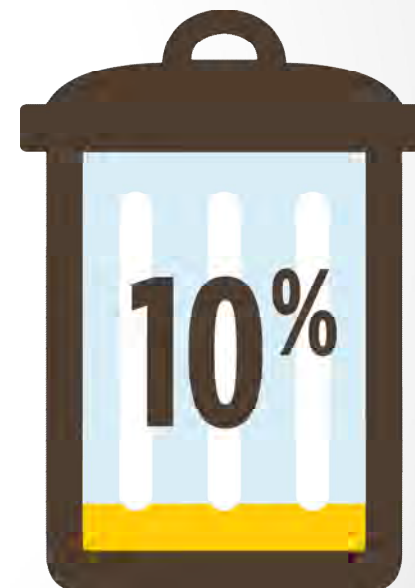


**Commercial**

**2013**



**Residential**



**2020**

# QUESTIONS?

[www.StopWaste.org](http://www.StopWaste.org)  
[www.ReadySetRecycle.org](http://www.ReadySetRecycle.org)  
[jbecerra@stopwaste.org](mailto:jbecerra@stopwaste.org)

Jeff Becerra

