

# 2024

San Luis Obispo County  
Integrated Waste Management Authority

# Year in Review



# Letter from our Executive Director

It was a very busy year at the IWMA. We started the year working on welcoming the County back: after a brief hiatus, the County rejoined the IWMA making the JPA whole again. We got to work with our member jurisdictions getting compliant with state mandates such as SB 1383, California's Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy. In response to SB 1383, our team works with member jurisdictions' business and residential communities to help them recover and divert organic waste from the landfills and help recover edible food for food insecure members of our community. Did you know that in 2024 we were able to place over 11,750 tons of compost back to agriculture and recover over 1.5 million pounds of edible food for redistribution to those in need? These are long range goals of California's quest for keeping organic waste out of our landfills.

Speaking of compost, the Kompogas Anaerobic Digestion Facility out at the Airport in San Luis Obispo celebrated its 5th anniversary in April. Seems like yesterday when it first opened, but this facility has been open and creating renewable power and compost from our organic waste for 5 years now. The very first of its kind in the U.S., this site is poised to continue to provide for this community's organics processing needs far into the future.

We hosted our 2nd Solid Waste Summit at the ROCK. We hosted about 85 individuals from both local government and the private sectors covering topics from SB 54 to Zero Emission Vehicle requirements.

These conversations help bring the challenges of the solid waste industry to the forefront so that we can plan accordingly for our member jurisdictions.

At our budget meeting in June, the IWMA Board once again voted to temporarily lower the rates that we charge the residents and businesses in San Luis Obispo County: from 4.4% to 3.0%. This is the second year in a row that the Board has been able to lower rates that we charge our member jurisdictions for our services. The IWMA has been able to consolidate programs and find additional efficiencies to help our member jurisdictions meet the ever-evolving state mandates for solid waste and recycling.

Your IWMA continues to provide many of its regular programs such as Household Hazardous Waste and Electronic disposal program for the business and residents of this community, school education and outreach for students K-12 and education and outreach to our business community to help compliance with the convoluted solid waste and recycling laws of the State of California.

Next year we are looking forward to managing how to navigate the most aggressive Extended Producer Responsibility law in the nation, SB 54, the Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act. This landmark packaging law requires the by 2032 we cut single use plastics by 25%, recycle 65% of single use plastics and ensure that 100% of single use plastics is recyclable. Sounds simple, doesn't it.

Thanks,

**Peter Cron**

Executive Director, IWMA

# We are the IWMA

We are your Integrated Waste Management Authority, or as we like to call ourselves, Integrated *Resource* Management Authority— because we think of waste as a resource that needs to be managed responsibly. In partnership with our 20 member jurisdictions comprising of the entirety of San Luis Obispo County, we work to meet California solid waste mandates surrounding recycling, organics and waste diversion.



## IWMA Member Jurisdictions

- Arroyo Grande
- Atascadero
- Avila Beach
- California Valley
- Cambria
- Cayucos
- County of San Luis Obispo
- Ground Squirrel Hollow
- Grover Beach
- Heritage Ranch
- Los Osos
- Morro Bay
- Nipomo
- Oceano
- Paso Robles
- Pismo Beach
- San Luis Obispo
- San Miguel
- San Simeon
- Templeton

## IWMA Staff

**Peter Cron**  
*Executive Director*

**Michael Williams**  
*Program Manager*

**Ashley Kuder**  
*Program Coordinator*

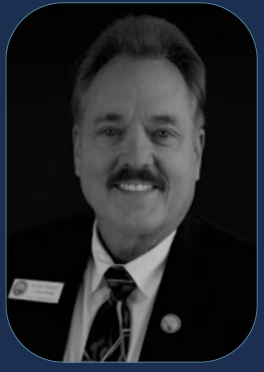
**Andrea Biniskiewicz**  
*Clerk of the Board*

**Jordan Lane**  
*Deputy Director*

**Sasha Del Giorgio**  
*Management Analyst*

**Amir Statham**  
*Administrative Analyst*

# 2024 Board of Directors



**Robert Robert, President**  
City of Grover Beach



**Jim Guthrie, Vice President**  
City of Arroyo Grande



**Jan Marx, Past President**  
City of San Luis Obispo



**Charles Bourbeau**  
City of Atascadero



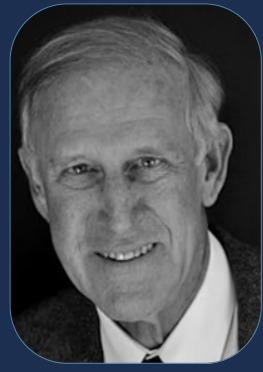
**John Hamon**  
City of Paso Robles



**Laurel Barton**  
City of Morro Bay



**Scott Newton**  
City of Pismo Beach



**Robert Enns**  
Special Districts



**Jimmy Paulding**  
County of San Luis Obispo

We are governed by a board of elected officials, with seven members representing each of the seven cities in the IWMA, one representative for the special districts, and one for the County of San Luis Obispo. The Board of Directors meets monthly to discuss and vote on the direction of the agency.

# New Year, New Space: We Are Moving!

At the time of publishing, the IWMA is currently in the process of moving our office to **555 Chorro Street, Unit D, San Luis Obispo, CA**. We look forward to the increased access this move will bring. Once the move is complete, our old office at 870 Osos St. will be placed on the market for sale. The new building was recently remodeled, and requires minimal improvements as our staff transitions to the new space. Our new office has more parking for employees and visitors, with close proximity to downtown and easy freeway access.

Our old 870 Osos St. building lacked the capacity to accommodate our full staff. Prior to this transition, half of staff worked at the 870 Osos site, and half worked out of a converted garage leased at 890 Osos St. Our staff looks forward to the increased efficiency that will come from consolidating to one building.

Our office move will not affect HHW sites, or any day-to-day operations of the agency.

Our agency has enjoyed our 20+ years at the historic 870 Osos site, and is excited to continue supporting our member jurisdictions from our new HQ. Please come visit us! Our new address is 555 Chorro St, Unit D, San Luis Obispo, CA.



# 2024 Solid Waste Summit

On Thursday, May 9th we hosted our annual Solid Waste Summit at Rod and Hammer Events Center in San Luis Obispo. 85 guests attended representing the solid waste industry, local government and external stakeholders. Together we talked about the challenges currently facing the solid waste industry, and how state regulations shape the work that we all do.



**Nate Lemieux** provided a tour of one of Waste Connections' newest garbage trucks.



**Linnea Skierski** gave us the latest and greatest on SB 54, which will establish an extended producer responsibility (EPR) program to reduce the waste generated by packaging and single-use foodware products in California.

## Featured Presentations

1. **Landfill Capacity and Off-Gassing**— *Jeff Clarin, Waste Connections*
2. **Education and Outreach**— *Mike di Milo, Science Discovery*
3. **SB 54**— *Linnea Skierski, The Recycling Partnership*
4. **Paso Robles Renewable Energy Park**— *Adam Spaulding, City of Paso Robles*
5. **Facility Managers Panel**— *Dannette Fieguth, Waste Connections; Isiah Gomer, Paso Robles Waste; Jeff Clarin, Waste Connections; Jim Wyse, Pacific Waste Services; Richard Rosa, Waste Management*

# Household Hazardous Waste Program

On behalf of our member jurisdictions, we manage the collection and responsible disposal of Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) in SLO County. HHW refers to waste that is considered dangerous or toxic to humans and the environment. This encompasses three categories of waste:

## Hazardous

includes items like aerosols, fire extinguishers, pesticides, and propane tanks.

## Universal

includes items like batteries, fluorescent tubes, gasoline, and used motor oil.

## Electronic

includes items like computers, phones, microwaves, and small appliances.

## Our Sites

- Cold Canyon Landfill
- Chicago Grade Landfill
- Heritage Ranch CSD
- Nipomo HHW Facility
- Morro Bay HHW Facility
- Paso Robles Landfill

We collected

# 1,287,782 lbs

of HHW at our sites in 2024.

## IWMA Fun Fact:



Of all the counties in California, SLO County has the most HHW collection sites per capita!

Drop-off is free for residents on designated days, but businesses must make an appointment. In 2024 we had **221 business appointments.**

# Household Hazardous Waste Program

| Material Type  | Pounds Received in 2024 |
|--|-------------------------|
| Flammable solids / liquids   | 60                      |
| Thermometers and other mercury containing devices                  | 100                     |
| Oxidizers  | 390                     |
| Antifreeze   | 1,200                   |
| Rechargeable batteries   | 2,129                   |
| 1 lb propane canisters   | 3,105                   |
| Used oil filters   | 4,500                   |
| Inorganic and organic acid   | 6,775                   |
| Compressed gas cylinders   | 9,565                   |
| Bulked flammable liquids (acetone, gasoline, solvents, etc.)       | 12,150                  |
| Home-generated pharmaceutical waste                                | 14,198                  |
| Inorganic and organic base   | 16,840                  |
| Aerosol cans   | 19,090                  |
| Lamps  | 20,837                  |
| Home-generated sharps waste  | 24,935                  |
| Poisons  | 42,890                  |
| Motor oil/oil products   | 59,120                  |
| Latex paint  | 114,678                 |
| Paint related material (paint thinners, glues and adhesives, etc.) | 131,100                 |
| Oil-based paints   | 178,550                 |
| Covered electronic devices (LCD displays, plasma TVs, etc.)        | 202,819                 |
| Other electronic devices (computers, calculators, radios, etc.)    | 418,251                 |



# Household Hazardous Waste Program

## *Retail Take Back*

Our Mandatory Retail Take Back (RTB) program was passed as an ordinance in 2008, to increase access to disposal of household batteries and other common HHW items. Under the program, any retailer in the county that sells covered materials must accept, collect and arrange for the disposal of those materials.

Today, we collect fluorescent bulbs, batteries and home-generated sharps from retailers. Retailers call our office when they have a full container, and we coordinate with an approved hauler to pick them up for proper disposal.

In 2024 we collected:

16,056

4-foot Fluorescent Tubes

1,324

8-foot Fluorescent Tubes

15,096

Compact Bulbs

86

35-Gallon Sharps Containers

1,277

4-Gallon Battery Buckets

Equivalent to about 70,000  
pounds of household batteries!

In 2024 we had

**541**

RTB pick-ups.

# Refillable Propane Cylinders

In partnership with the California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC), we participated in a statewide effort to promote reusable 1lb propane cylinders. Disposable propane cylinders, typically used for camping stoves and other outdoor recreation, are a major contaminant at the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and are very difficult to manage at the end of their life. We used grant funding provided by CalRecycle to run a county-wide campaign promoting the use of reusable propane cylinders instead.

Residents can now purchase and exchange refillable propane cylinders at 10 locations across the county.

## Retailers:

- Miner's Ace Hardware, locations countywide
- Mountain Air Sports, San Luis Obispo
- Delta RV, Paso Robles
- Outdoor Supply Hardware, Pismo Beach

We gave out **240** refillable propane cylinders

to SLO County residents in 2024. Recipients of the free cylinders signed a pledge, promising to stop buying the disposable alternative.



IWMA and CPSC staff hosted a table to hand out cylinders and talk about reusables at the Mountain Air in SLO.



# Senate Bill (SB) 1383

California state law, SB 1383, is one of the most comprehensive solid waste laws ever passed in the US. Crucially, it requires all residents and businesses in the state to comply by recycling their organic waste in the green bin. The IWMA is in charge of implementing SLO County's SB 1383 programs on a regional level.

Some of the things that we do on a day-to-day basis to keep in compliance with SB 1383 include:

1. Organic Waste Procurement
2. Edible Food Recovery
3. Inspections and Compliance Monitoring
4. Education and Outreach



In 2024, SLO County diverted **over 65,000 tons** of organic waste from the landfill.

## What is organic waste?

- **Food scraps**, raw or cooked, like meat bones, vegetable peels, and bread products
- **Food-soiled paper**, like coffee filters, newspaper, and paper towels
- **Yard waste**, like leaves, grass clippings, and branches/twigs

That's enough organic waste to fill about 122 Olympic swimming pools!



# Compost Rebate Program

SB 1383 mandates that cities and counties in California must annually procure a quantity of *recovered organic waste products*. All of our member jurisdictions were given a target, set by the state, that they were required to meet in 2024.

We meet these targets primarily with a rebate program: vineyards and farms across the county purchase compost, and are provided with a \$10 per ton rebate.

Our procurement target was **14,101 tons of organic waste** for 2024. In total we procured 11,790 tons of compost, which converts to **20,327 tons of organic waste, exceeding our target by 44%**.

**Recovered organic waste products** are materials made out of the waste that we put in our green bins. The food and yard waste disposed by SLO County can become compost, mulch, biofuel, and electricity!



In 2024, we applied  
**11,790 tons of compost**  
on local farms.

# Edible Food Recovery

SB 1383 mandates that commercial edible food generators (CEFGs) must donate all leftover edible food to a food recovery organization (FRO) instead of disposing of it in the landfill. We support our community partners in this effort by providing outreach to generators, connecting them with recovery organizations and monitoring their programs for compliance. Our responsibility lies in ensuring that all SB 1383 requirements are met by FROs and CEFGs.

|           | Edible Food Recovered, Tons | Number of Meals Saved* |
|-----------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| January   | 73.3                        | 122,208                |
| February  | 61.5                        | 102,443                |
| March     | 63.5                        | 105,838                |
| April     | 64.3                        | 107,224                |
| May       | 65.0                        | 108,278                |
| June      | 60.7                        | 101,178                |
| July      | 70.2                        | 117,001                |
| August    | 64.3                        | 107,135                |
| September | 70.0                        | 116,684                |
| October   | 74.6                        | 124,391                |
| November  | 71.2                        | 118,676                |
| December  | 70.8                        | 117,928                |

In 2024, we planned for the growth of our program, to ensure that our county-wide network will have the resources necessary to keep up with future food donations. We purchased scales to help donors keep track of the weight of donated food, and we went into contract with Carelt, a donation matching app that will serve as a resource for these networks.

# 1,348,943

meals\* were rescued by our partners in 2024

## Program at-a-glance

Grocery Stores 4

Supermarkets 40

Wholesale Food Distributors 9

Local Education Agencies 75

Large Venues 4

Health Facilities 3

Non-Local Entities 4

\*Meals saved taken from CalRecycle, USDA metric: 1.2 lbs per meal.

Thank you to our food recovery organizations, who work tirelessly to feed hungry people in SLO County: Cambria Vineyard Church, Joann Guttry, Paso Robles Loaves and Fishes, SLO Food Bank and partner agencies, and The Church of God and Prophecy.

# Digital Outreach

## Social Media

We have an active presence on Instagram and Facebook social media platforms. Combined these platforms garnered **161,799** impressions in 2024.

One of our reels on Instagram went viral, reaching **40,547** views and bringing in new audiences to our social media accounts.

## Newsletter

This year we started a quarterly newsletter and blog: the Sort Report. Cumulatively it arrived in **479 email inboxes**, with an average read rate of **72.5%**. Subscribe and read past entries at [www.IWMA.com/the-sort-report](http://www.IWMA.com/the-sort-report).

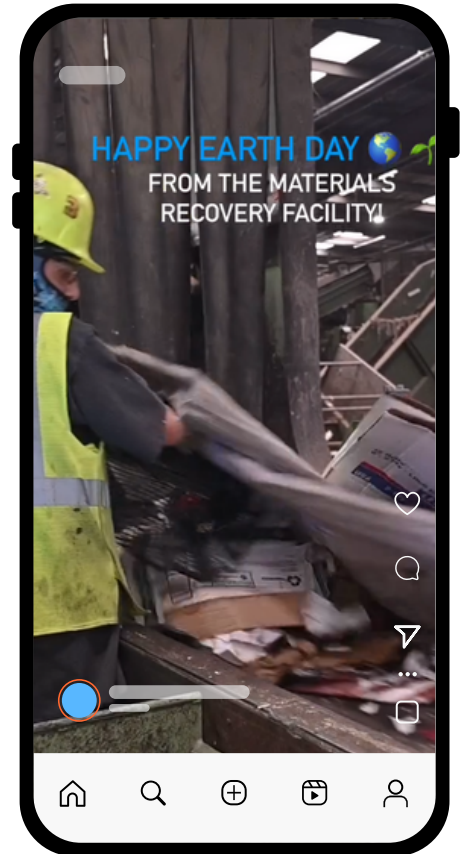
## Mapping

In 2024 we subscribed to ArcGIS, a tool for geospatial data analytics and mapping. We now host two interactive maps on our website, that were used by **324** website users in 2024.

## Website

Our website, [www.IWMA.com](http://www.IWMA.com), had **526,207 unique page views** in 2024. We made major improvements to our website this year, including the addition of new resources and the restructuring of most visited pages to increase access for the public. Our website continues to be a critical feature in the outreach we do.

Our reel that went **viral!** Social media audiences love to see behind-the-scenes at local facilities.



# School Programs

Our education team, Science Discovery, provides free classroom programs to grades K-12 throughout the county. Their programs teach recycling, vermicomposting, waste reduction and more in a positive and interactive environment. Programs are offered with an option for in-person or virtual, based on the needs of the classroom.

# 13,266

students were reached by our programs in 2024.

In 2024, we presented:

**502** Classroom Education Programs

**7** Waste Audits

**4** Food Waste Assemblies



During a waste audit, students analyze their school's waste to learn how to improve recycling and composting on campus!



# Public Outreach

Science Discovery also hosts public education programs! As part of our multi-pronged approach to SB 1383 outreach, educators visit apartment complexes, HOAs and community groups to give presentations on proper disposal habits.

## Cambria Bin Stickers Project

Funded by a state SB 1383 grant, our team went out to Cambria to re-sticker residential bins whose labels were worn out or outdated. They stickered bins at **2,448** residences in Cambria CSD.

In 2024 we hosted **10** public education programs, reaching approximately **193** residents.

We attended **14** fairs, expos and other community events in 2024, including:

- Earth Day at Cal Poly
- Cambria Earth Day
- South County Repair Cafes
- San Miguel Fall Clean-Up Day
- City of SLO Pumpkin Smash
- and more!



Thank you to our partners for welcoming us at your events! We love tabling at events and talking to our community members. In 2025, we hope to continue our presence at events like these, and add in visits to areas that we didn't visit as much last year, namely areas in North County.



# Public Outreach



# Commercial Compliance

Our Science Discovery commercial outreach team works one-on-one with businesses throughout SLO County, to make sure they are compliant with all state and regional solid waste laws.

In 2024, we got in touch with commercial businesses through:

Site Visits

978

Phone Calls

1,033

Emails

1,463

Under SB 1383, some businesses are eligible for a waiver that exempts them from the requirement to have organic waste service. Typically these conditions only apply to businesses that are not food-centric, like law offices, or businesses that compost on site, like wineries. In 2024 we issued **412 waivers** to businesses that proved their eligibility.

## De Minimis Waiver

When the applicant's total garbage service is greater than 2 cubic yards and they generate less than 20 gallons of organics per week, or less than 2 cubic yards and less than 10 gallons of organics.

## Physical Space Waiver

When the applicant's property lacks adequate space for an organics container.

Today, there are **1,306** businesses with an active De Minimis Waiver, and **17** businesses with an active Physical Space Waiver.

# Commercial Compliance

We provide free containers for indoor collection, to help businesses start or expand their recycling efforts! We only give out blue and green containers, not gray, and businesses must agree to use the containers provided in accordance with our guidelines.

In 2024 we gave out:

61 3-gallon Recycle

19 7-gallon Organics

17 7-gallon Recycle

6 13-gallon Organics

69 23-gallon (slim jim) Recycle

106 23-gallon (slim jim) Organics

10 32-gallon Recycle

## Food Scrap Pails

We also provide kitchen food scrap pails for free to all residents! These are very popular with our communities, and in 2024 we gave out **over 1,500**. Residents can pick one up at our office, their apartment property management office, or have one dropped off by their hauler.



# Residential Compliance

SB 1383 requires that we conduct route reviews: our way of understanding the waste and recycling habits of residents. During a route review our team goes out to a neighborhood and does “lid flips”, looking at the top layer of waste in each bin. We record any prohibited contaminants, and leave them a red, yellow or green tag to let them know how they’re doing. We also send a follow-up letter, that goes into more detail about proper disposal. In total in 2024, we conducted **48 route reviews**, and reviewed **2508 residents**.

We found...



*10% of organics bins had prohibited contaminants.*



*Just over 50% of recycle bins had prohibited contaminants.*



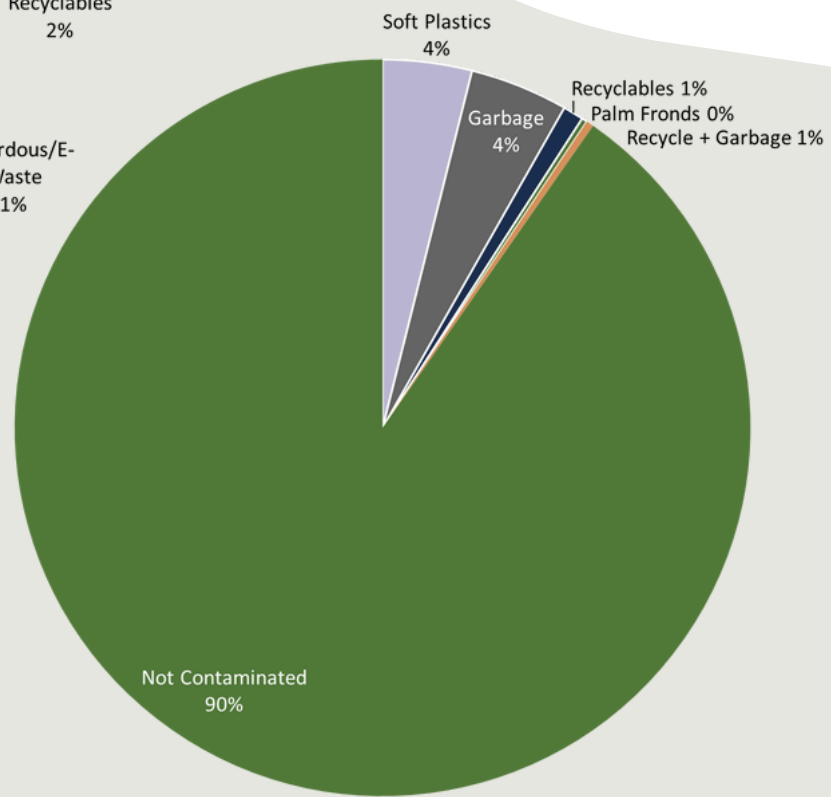
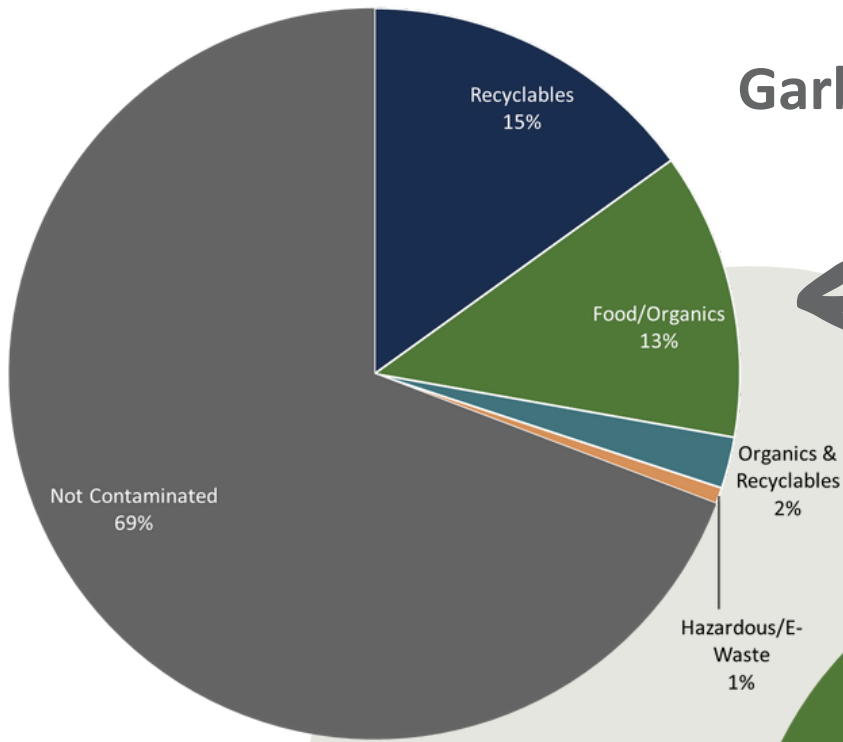
*Just over 30% of garbage bins had prohibited contaminants.*

## Contamination

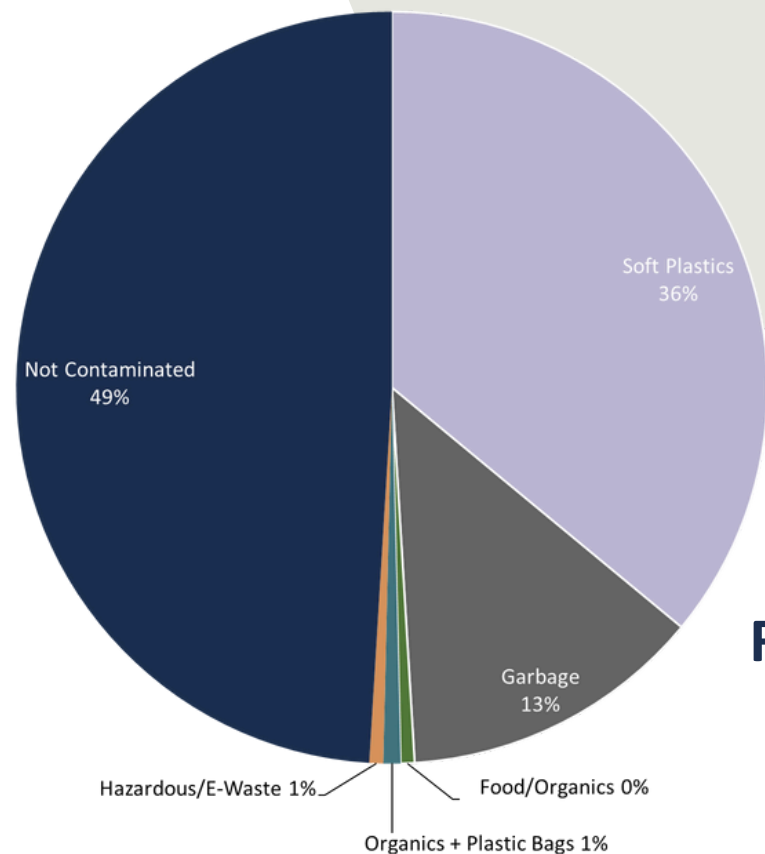
**Contamination** just refers to any items that don't belong in that bin. For instance, plastic bags are a common contaminant in the recycle stream. The presence of contaminants in our waste streams makes the recycling process less effective, and can create potentially dangerous situations at our local facilities.

# Residential Compliance

## Garbage Contamination



## Organics Contamination



## Recycle Contamination

# Thank you!

## Thank you to our:

- Residents of SLO County
- Commercial businesses in SLO County
- Food recovery organizations
- Hauling companies
- Solid waste facilities
- Member jurisdictions
- Science Discovery team
- Hazardous waste contractors
- IWMA Board of Directors
- IWMA legal counsel
- IWMA staff members



For helping us reduce, reuse and recycle in SLO County! Each and every one of our stakeholders is an important part of our approach to managing waste responsibly, and all that we achieved in 2024 would not have been possible without your support.

