

Movers receive an alternative to the dumpster

Apartment move-out recycling program lasts until Sept. 1

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There may be more room for actual garbage in apartment dumpsters this week. In order to save more reusable items, the Davis Public Works Department is expanding its move-out week waste reduction program. The program, which runs until Sept. 1, is a collaborative project between Public Works and apartment managers to facilitate the reuse of unwanted items.

The program was created 11 years ago to recycle items that typically would be trashed on move-out day. Public works employees set up donation stations with bins for clothing and sections for larger items set apart by caution tape.

Any unwanted but reusable household items - including clothing - can be dropped off in the donation section any time before the Sept. 1.

This year is the program's biggest.

"The program has grown larger over the years," Gilbert said. "In 2006 there were 19 apartment properties that participated in the move-out program, in 2007, there were 34 and this year there are 45."

Some of the apartment complexes have two sites set up on their property, making a total of 67 donation sites set up throughout Davis, Gilbert said.

City staff invite local nonprofits to collect items from the site at no cost. Residents and staff from the apartments are also encouraged to take any donated items they would like. At the end of the week, volunteers collect all donated clothing and distribute it to select nonprofits, according to the written statement from the city.

"Some apartments are setting out boxes to collect nonperishable food for donation from their residents," said program manager Jennifer Gilbert. The donated food will be picked up by Davis Community Meals.

The sites, however, are only for tenant use. Due to dumping regulations, members of the general public are not allowed to donate using these sites.

Materials left at the donation site are the responsibility of the apartment complex at the end of the program. If non-tenants flood the sites with unwanted donations, a complex may be forced to pay to have the items taken away.

"This is extremely unfair and is in fact considered illegal dumping," Gilbert said.

For those who want to donate but do not live in a complex with a site, Gilbert suggests visiting davisrecycling.org for a list of places to take items.

"We don't want to see good, usable items going to waste," Gilbert said.

Among those invited to participate this year are Yolo Crisis Nursery, Davis Community Church, Yolo Hospice Thrift Shop, Yolo County SPCA Thrift Store, Yolo Community Care Continuum Inc., Yolo Family Resource Center Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Center, Progress Ranch, and All Things Right & Relevant.

All Things Right & Relevant is a consignment store, paired with the thrift store R&R, both of which employ mental health patients and raise funds for 10 local mental health

agencies. The store has never participated in the move-out recycling program, but is going to try this year, said store manager Judy deCesare.

"We don't have a truck for the store," deCesare said. "But we're certainly going to try. We'd love to be able to participate if we do find a truck."

Renee Trevino, owner of independent thrift store Hidden Treasures, is excited for the program this year, saying that she has had great luck in the past.

"We've done it for two years now, as long as we've been open," Trevino said. "There's a lot of good stuff out there, tons of good stuff!"

Though there is no posted list of donation sites, word of mouth does a good job of letting people in on the city's program.

While the city aims to keep reusable materials out of the dumpsters, not everything is even allowed in trash dumpsters.

Items that are banned from the trash include batteries, fluorescent lamps, electronics, items containing mercury (which include cards that play a song when you open them, or shoes circa the early '90s that light up when you walk), building materials, paints, chemicals, and some automobile materials, according to the California Integrated Waste Management Board.

For more information on recycling these items, visit davisrecycling.org.

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