



Environmental Protection Department

Our Mission is to protect, monitor, restore, and regulate Morongo's natural resources, honoring and protecting all life, land, and traditions and enhancing tribal sovereignty. We will promote environmental awareness and environmentally considerate actions by exemplifying environmental stewards, fostering collaborative relationships, expanding education and outreach activities, and continuing to enrich and develop our programs.

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Christmas Recycling

Written by: Jon Castillo, Environmental Technician



Christmas brings us many reasons each year to go GREEN. It's estimated that between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, more than 1 million tons of additional wastes are generated each week, nationwide. We can help reduce these wastes by remembering the 3 R's – **REDUCE REUSE RECYCLE**.

Reduce - Reducing materials helps to conserve resources and prevent landfilled trash. Email Christmas cards this year instead of mailing paper cards (this will also save the cost of postage stamps). Take your own shopping bags when shopping for gifts. Carpool with your family and friends to all holiday events. Reduce battery use by using rechargeable batteries; they last longer. Buy gifts that can be recycled after the life of the gift has expired, making less waste in the landfill. Buying gift cards also reduces the amount of wrapping paper and will save you shopping time.

Reuse - Reusing materials saves money, energy and natural resources. Reuse Christmas ornaments, lights, boxes, decorations and even that Christmas sweater. Reuse newspaper or paper bags for gift wrapping (this also helps reduce buying gift wrap). Make your own gift tags by reusing old Christmas cards or other materials. If you are not going to use your old decorations, give them to your local Goodwill, Salvation Army, or to any store that will take in donations. Your donation can be a tax write off and you will help others reuse your old decorations. This is also a great time to go through drawers, taking out summer clothing and making room for winter clothing. Worn out and unwanted clothing and textiles can be donated in the USAgain collection containers located at Public Works and the Community Center.

Recycle - Recycling is the process of collecting and processing materials that would otherwise be thrown away as trash and turning them into new products. Recycling can benefit your community and the environment by reducing the amount of waste sent to landfills, conserving natural resources such as trees and water, and saving energy and preventing pollution by reducing the need to collect new raw materials. Yes RECYCLE that Christmas tree. Morongo's Environmental Dept. will be picking up trees again this year and will mulch the trees to reduce the amount of space in our roll offs and landfills (see page 8 for details). Place all paper, plastic, glass, and cardboard products in the blue recycle containers. If you do not have a Morongo recycle cart, call Public Works to have one or two delivered to your home. Have a separate container in your house to collect recyclables when having guest over for the Holidays. Take all e-waste products that no longer work to the Public Works roll-off area where there is an e-waste cage to recycle all your e-waste. E-waste can be Christmas lights that no longer work, batteries, TVs, computers, and old toys that needed batteries.



We can all do our part to have a sustainable and happy holiday season by reducing, reusing, and recycling to prevent waste!



Thank you for recycling this newsletter when finished!



Fall Seasonal Photo Contest Winner

Written by: Jessica Southard, Environmental Administrative Assistant

Check out these amazing images from the Morongo Reservation and surrounding area.



The Morongo Environmental Protection Department would like to congratulate

Mark Pullen, Morongo TANF

for winning 1st place in the Summer Seasonal Photo Contest with the photo titled

“Autumn Splendor!”

The winner received a \$50.00 gift card to a local business. 3 photos were submitted.

Photographers remained anonymous and all employees who had access to a computer were allowed to vote for their favorite photo.

***Winter
Entries are
Due
March 1st***

Congratulations to
***Kristie Cullens,
Morongo Travel Center***
who submitted the
Runner-Up photo
“Sunset at Hadleys”.



Submit your photos for a chance to win a gift card to a local retailer!

Submissions need to be original photographs taken between December 1 and February 29, 2016 within the Reservation or the surrounding San Geronio Pass and can be anything related to the environment. Tribal members, descendants, community members, and employees are all welcome to participate!

To submit your photo for the photo contest, upload your pictures at: www.morongonation.org/content/environmental-seasonal-photo-contest Or email photos and a description to: environmental_department@morongo-nsn.gov

If you need assistance uploading your photo or you have any questions about the photo contest, please contact the Environmental Department at 951-755-5128.

How to Recycle Right!

Written by: Dana Morey, Environmental Supervisor

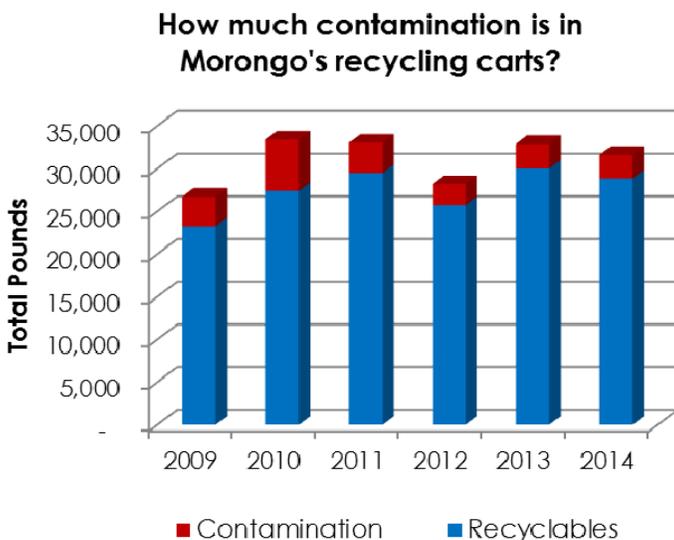
Participating in a recycling program has many benefits for the Tribe and for the environment including saving money, saving trees, and reducing greenhouse gases! Commingled recyclables collected in the blue recycle carts are emptied by Morongo Public Works and delivered to a Materials Recovery Facility in Riverside, California. There the recyclables are hand sorted into paper, cardboard, plastics, and metals. Based on the amount and quality of materials collected, the Tribe receives a rebate! Alternatively, when materials are placed in the trash bin they are delivered to the landfill where the Tribe is charged over \$36 per ton of materials. Besides saving money, recycling saves energy which in turn reduces the amount of greenhouse gas emissions from power plants. Recycling also helps conserve our natural resources. For example, recycling one ton of paper helps to save 17 trees!

Single-stream recycling programs allow all recyclable materials to be collected in the same container and are a convenient and easy way to increase recycling. Unfortunately, there is also increased contamination in single-stream recycling carts which may spoil the whole recycling load. Contamination can include non-recyclable items, dirty diapers, food, dirty containers, green waste, and liquids and it only takes one container with food or liquid to ruin 1,000 pounds of recyclables! Contamination in the recycle bin costs everyone money and reduces the likelihood that the materials will be recycled. Materials are hand sorted and increased contamination increases the processing costs. Also, when trash is placed in the recycling bin, the Tribe has to pay disposal fees for these which decreases the overall rebate received. On average, 11% of the curbside recyclable materials collected (by weight) are actually contamination and are not recyclable. The graph below shows the amount of contamination and recyclables in the recycling carts, by year.

The solution to the contamination problem is easy – Let’s get back to the basics of good recycling and recycle right! Recycling right can make a big difference in the success of Morongo’s recycling program!

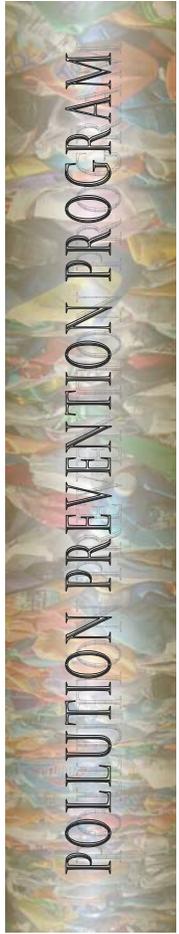


Commingled recyclables are both sorted by machinery and by hand. Contamination can make this a very dirty job!



Recycle Right!

- Recycle all bottles, cans, paper, plastic food containers, and cardboard
- Make sure recyclables are clean and dry
 - Wash, rinse, or scrape food containers to remove food residue
 - Pour out liquids
 - Keep recycle bin lids closed, if possible
- If the material has food residue which cannot be removed, such as greasy pizza boxes, please throw these items in the trash.



El Niño and the Drought

Written by: Kimberly Miller, Environmental Specialist

California is in a statewide drought

California has been affected by drought for the past 4 years. Trees have been dying, streams are drying up more often, and restrictions have been put in place on wasting water in most areas.

A strong El Niño

El Niño is characterized by unusually warm temperatures in the Pacific Ocean. This can cause changes in weather around the globe, including more rainfall in parts of the United States. Not all El Niño years bring more rain to California, but the strength of El Niño has increased enough that most forecasters believe there will be more rain than a



typical winter in at least Southern California. El Niño can cause more frequent storms. This means we can have a lot of rain occurring when the ground is already soaked. This causes flash flooding with fast water coming off of impervious surfaces or saturated ground and rushing through drainages.

Not likely the end of the drought

As a state, California would need multiple years of above average rainfall to get back to normal. Even if this winter is twice as wet as average, there will still be a deficit from the past 4 years. Additionally, it isn't only the amount of rain that matters. The best scenario would be to have several cold storms build up snow pack in the mountains (the natural way water is stored for use in the dry months) and have well-spaced, gentle rains that allow the soil and aquifers to absorb the water. Intense storms that come close together usually end up running off to the Salton Sea in Morongo's watershed or the ocean for most of California.

Prepare for flooding but continue to conserve

Because El Niño won't solve all of our water problems and might cause some of its own, you should:

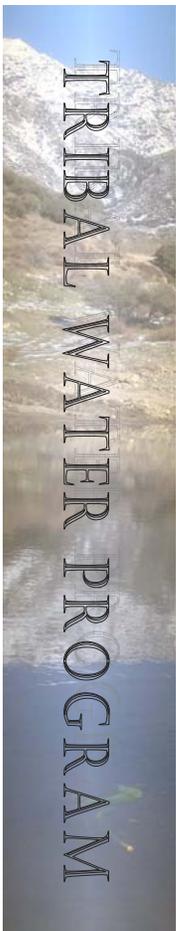
- Stay safe! According to the National Weather Service, 6 inches of fast moving water can knock over an adult. A small car can get carried away by 1 foot of rushing water and 2 feet can move most vehicles.
- Prepare around your home to prevent erosion. Limit areas of bare soil by planting native plants or adding rocks/mulch, eliminate steep slopes, direct natural flow paths to vegetated areas, clear drainages and reduce impervious surfaces to allow water to soak into the ground.
- Make sure chemicals kept outside are stored properly and clean up any leaks or spills on the ground. A bag of fertilizer could get swept away and add excess nutrients to the stream it ends up in.
- Take advantage of any rainfall by capturing it and using it for watering plants during dry weather.
- Adjust your sprinklers to suit the weather. Plants usually need less water in the winter. Also, don't water within 48 hours of measurable rainfall. Take advantage of the rain delay function on automatic timers or enjoy a break from manually turning them on.
- Continue all the water saving habits you've adopted inside and outside of your home.

Interested in more information?

Drought - <http://www.water.ca.gov/waterconditions/waterconditions.cfm>,

<http://www.kpbs.org/drought-tracker/>, or <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Home.aspx>

El Niño - <http://www.elnino.noaa.gov/> or <http://rcflood.org/ElNino/>



Efficient Ways to Warm Your Home This Winter

Written by: Pamela Atcitty, Environmental Specialist

It happens every year. Temperatures drop and utility bills go up. For some homeowners, heating their home is simple. They turn up the dial on their thermostat and write a bigger check to their supplier. But keeping warm in the winter can be challenging for others, especially if their heating method is expensive. With winter fast approaching, many are thinking about ways to not only keep the house warm, but to also save a few dollars while doing so. Homeowners are regularly being advised to overhaul their inefficient heating system with costly repairs such as new insulation or windows. The projected cost for heating a typical home today is over \$2,200. But apart from those often expensive tactics, what can be done cheaply and quickly to keep your house warm? Utilizing these tips below will not only save money, but will make sure you're warm and comfortable all winter long.

1. **Install a programmable thermostat.** This will keep your bill low, and your efficiency high. It will also save you time by eliminating the need to manually fiddle with your thermostat every time you leave the house or come back home.
2. **Let the sunlight in during the day.** Once the sun is up, you want to capture as much of that free heat as possible. Even on cold days, the sun is still warm. So before you leave the house for the day, open up those curtains and let the light shine in. If there are certain parts of the house that don't get sunlight, no need to open those curtains. Just do so where it streams in for a good part of the day.
3. **Keep curtains closed at night.** Once the sun goes down, keep all that heat from leaving through the windows by closing the window covers. If you're in a cold home or geographic area, consider getting insulated curtains for winter use. They'll prevent some of the warmth in your home from escaping. You can even put up temporary curtains (or even sheets, rugs, etc.) over doors to the outside, even if just at night while you're sleeping.



4. **Stop heat loss through the chimney.** It's now fairly common to have fireplaces that are merely decorative. When not in use, you should consider a chimney balloon. This is an inflatable, plastic pillow that stops drafts and heat loss through your chimney stack.

5. **Seal leaks.** Windows and doors are usually the prime suspect for heat loss. Using a simple draft stoppers at the bottom of doors or windows, eliminates heat loss through the gaps. Also caulking wiring holes, plumbing vents and around windows can help prevent loss of heat.



6. **Cover bare floors.** Rugs and carpet can help mitigate heat loss and have the added bonus of keeping your feet warm. Carpet and rugs do a better job of trapping heat than wood or tile floors.
7. **Rotate your ceiling fan.** Many fans have a "winter" setting, which reverses the fan so that it moves clockwise; pushing the heat back down into your room.
8. **Clear vents.** Make sure vents are not blocked by furniture or fixtures.
9. **Close doors to unused rooms.** Close doors and the vents to rooms that are not frequently being used in your home. This lowers the square footage and will warm your home quicker and cheaper.
10. **Utilize space heaters** (with caution). Space heaters are excellent tools for keeping individual rooms warm. The danger is that they are a high-risk fire hazard.



Volunteers Needed to Count Bald Eagles

Written by: James Payne, Environmental Director



Are you looking for a chance to get outside and be both in and part of nature? Here is an opportunity to assist the U.S. Forest Service by surveying for Bald Eagles! The San Bernardino mountains support the largest wintering bald eagle population in southern California. Eagles typically begin arriving in the area in late November and continue to stay in the area until early April. Numbers using the Big Bear Basin have fluctuated over the past 22 years, from lows of 10-12 to highs of 35-40.

The U.S. Forest Service has organized monthly winter counts since 1978. Observers are stationed around the mountain lakes for a simultaneous 1-hour census/mapping effort once a month December through March. Through this method, the Forest Service has gained information about high-use foraging, perching, and day resting areas, fluctuations of numbers, and changes in use areas depending on weather, ice, and lake level conditions. Concurrent censuses are conducted at Big Bear Lake, Lake Arrowhead/Lake Gregory, Silverwood Lake, Lake Perris, and Lake Hemet.

This winter's bald eagle counts will be conducted on Saturdays; December 12, January 9, February 13, and March 12. Mark your calendars now, volunteers will be needed for each census. Volunteers need not have experience and do not need to sign up ahead of time -- just show up at the designated time, bring binoculars, a watch and dress warmly.

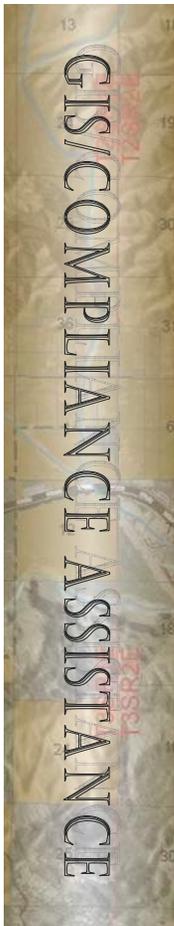
Specific information here:

- Big Bear Lake area volunteers will meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Forest Service's Big Bear Discovery Center on North Shore Drive for orientation. Contact Robin Eliason (reliason@fs.fed.us or 909-382-2832) for more information. Please call 909-382-2832 for cancellation due to winter weather conditions – an outgoing message will be left by 6:30 am on the morning of the count if it has to be cancelled. Contact the Discovery Center (909-382-2790) for information about Eagle Celebrations. There will also be a free slideshow about bald eagles at 11:00 after the counts.



- Lake Arrowhead/Lake Gregory volunteers will meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Skyforest Ranger Station for orientation. Contact Robin Eliason (reliason@fs.fed.us or 909-382-2832) for more information. Please call 909-382-2832 for cancellation due to winter weather conditions – an outgoing message will be left by 6:30 am on the morning of the count if it has to be cancelled.
- Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area volunteers should plan to meet at the Visitor Center at 8:00 a.m. for orientation. Contact Kathy Williams or Mark Wright for more information about volunteering or taking an eagle tour (760-389-2303 between 8:00 and 4:00; or email: khwilliams@parks.ca.gov).
- Lake Hemet volunteers should plan on meeting at the Lake Hemet Grocery Store at 8:30 a.m. for orientation. Contact Ann Bowers (annbowers@fs.fed.us or 909-382-2935) for more information.
- Lake Perris State Recreation Area volunteers should plan to meet at the Lake Perris Regional Indian Museum at 8:00 for orientation. Contact the office for more information at 951-940-5600.

Volunteer information provided by **U.S. Forest Service, San Bernardino National Forest**



Morongo Travel Center is Saving Water & Money

Written by: Jessica Southard, Administrative Assistant

The Morongo Travel Center is taking the initiative to install waterless urinals to save water. They have completed one on the inside restroom and will be installing 3 more in the outside restrooms. These SLOAN WES-4000 Waterfree Urinals preserve our natural resources and save on costs. According to Byron Melius with Facilities Maintenance, they estimate that they will save 40,000 gallons per year each or 160,000 gallons per year total.

You'll find waterless urinals in crowded public restrooms. Building owners saw that by using dry urinals, they'd save money on water and sewer charges for thousands of flushes. They're installed in the New York Mets Citi Field Stadium and the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago. Waterless urinals are also popping up in states that suffer droughts. Arizona made waterless urinals mandatory in its state buildings in 2005.

Considering one for your home? A family with four males, each flushing the 1.5-gallon toilet three times a day will save 6,552 gallons of water a year by installing and using a waterless urinal.

<http://science.howstuffworks.com/environmental/green-tech/sustainable/waterless-toilet4.htm>



Indigenous People's Day

Written by: Jessica Southard, Administrative Assistant

The Environmental Protection Department was honored to participate in the Indigenous People's Day event hosted by Cultural Heritage. We invited The Wildhaven Ranch to bring their animals in order to help us educate the residents and neighboring tribes of Morongo's indigenous animals and the important role they play. Wildhaven brought an American Kestrel and a Red-Tailed Hawk, and Mr. Gilbert Flores brought a desert tortoise, rosy boa, gopher snake and king snake. Visitors got to learn about the animals and some even got a hands-on education.



Christmas Tree!

Don't Trash it! Recycle it!



Place your live tree near your trash bin before 8:00AM

Monday, January 4

or

Monday, January 11



Please Remove:

Lights

Tinsel

Decorations

Ornaments

If you need a pickup any other day, please call 951-755-5128.

Save The Date...

Friday, April 22nd
at Morongo Admin.
12700 Pumarra Rd.

Earth Day 2016

Free event! Local
Environmental Entities,
Games, Activities,
Lunch, Raffle Prizes &
Much More

If you would like to receive electronic versions of the Morongo Environmental Protection Department's Quarterly Newsletter and information on other Environmental Events, sign up at www.morongonation.org/content/environmental-newsletter-email-signup or email epd@morongo-nsn.gov and request to be added to the list! Prefer a copy mailed to you, no problem! You can sign up at www.morongonation.org/content/newsletter or email us at epd@morongo-nsn.gov

**MORONGO
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12700 Pumarra Road
Banning, CA 92220
951-755-5128



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