

November 20, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Holiday Meal Planning to Reduce Food Waste and Clogged Pipes

SAN DIEGO COUNTY – Thanksgiving dinner is one of our most looked forward to meals, so why are you throwing away almost half of it? While that seems outrageous, in the U.S., 40% of the food supply is wasted. That's approximately 133 billion pounds of food being thrown away annually. Meanwhile, 42 million Americans struggle to avoid hunger daily.

On average, San Diegans throw away 5.5 pounds of trash a day, the most per capita compared to all other major urban counties in the state! Fifteen percent of that is food waste, adding up to almost 500,000 pounds each year.

Food that ends up in landfills means wasted money, labor, transportation, water and land resources. Worse, as it breaks down in landfills it produces methane, a gas that is 25 times more harmful to our health and environment than carbon dioxide.

Fortunately, San Diego residents can take small steps to make a big difference, starting this holiday season. By following the tips below from the County of San Diego, residents can save money and help the environment while enjoying their holiday meals.

REDUCING WASTE AT HOME - In a season when we give thanks for what we have and consider giving to those in need, reducing food waste feels even more important. Buying and preparing the right amount can save money and time. Planning ahead to use leftovers in new dishes and setting aside containers for guests to take home leftovers can help make sure the food that is prepared is eaten. Small steps like placing leftovers and perishable items in the front of the refrigerator will also ensure that food gets eaten before it's condemned to the landfill.

Visit www.WasteFreeSD.org for more tips, including how to keep fruits and vegetables fresh longer.

KEEPING FATS, OILS AND GREASES OUT OF THE DRAIN - Another important way to protect our environment (and plumbing) is to take care with the oils used for cooking during the holidays. Fats, oils, and greases have harmful effects on our environment when not disposed of properly. In recent years, deep fried turkeys have become an increasingly popular holiday tradition. Frying a turkey uses up to three **gallons** of cooking oil. If discarded in kitchen sinks or other drains, this oil may block pipes and cause sewage overflow in homes, streets, lawns, and our ocean, not to mention severely damage home plumbing systems!

Contrary to popular belief, mixing oil with soap is not an effective method for preventing sewage backup. Instead, San Diegans should accumulate their oils in a secure container and recycle them at a collection facility. Save oil containers and caps/lids for use after cooking. Once used cooking oil has cooled, pour into empty oil container and cap it. Do not mix chemicals in the used oil and label container “used cooking oil” to avoid confusion. To find the closest drop off location, unincorporated County residents are encouraged to visit the County’s Recycling and Household Hazardous Waste database, www.WasteFreeSD.org, or call 1-877-R-1-EARTH (1-877-713-2784).

LEARNING MORE ABOUT REDUCING WASTE - Residents wanting to learn more about how to reduce waste, can attend I Love A Clean San Diego’s free, family-friendly community workshops focused on zero waste principles and practices. An upcoming Zero Waste Workshop, titled “Zero Waste 101”, will be held at the Salt Creek Gardens on Saturday, December 2nd, from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm. Attendees can enjoy hands-on activities, informational lessons, and raffles.

For more information, residents can visit <http://www.ilacsd.org/education/programs>.

About I Love A Clean San Diego (ILACSD) *As San Diego’s most influential advocate for sustainability, I Love A Clean San Diego (ILACSD) is an environmental catalyst, awakening passion and inspiring action, empowering everyone to improve the health and beauty of our local environment. For over sixty years, we’ve brought the best in all of us together for a lasting, positive impact on our region. We are passion in action. For more information, to volunteer or donate, visit www.cleansd.org or call (619) 291-0103. Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).*

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