



Youth participants in recent Rec and Parks camp programs enjoy using the new Compostable food service materials, which are environmentally friendly.



Rec and Parks staffer Roosevelt Edwards with two Compostable trash cans for recycling.

Teaching Kids to Renew

■ **Rec and Parks wins award for its Compostables program, which teaches children to recycle the paper goods they use in their Rec and Parks camping events.**



Photos by JuanCarlos Chan, Photographer, Rec and Parks

REC AND PARKS — The Department of Recreation and Parks received a 2007 Award of Excellence from the California Society of Recreation and Parks (CPRS) for its “Compostable” program at residential camps for children.

The Compostable program, winning in the Maintenance Management and Operations Category, began with a commitment to providing a cleaner environment and helping to raise ecological awareness. Both the Griffith Park Boys Camp and Camp Hollywood Girls Camp provided meals served on biodegradable paper products. All camp meals were served with biodegradable paper products, including plates, bowls and napkins. According to Jon Kirk Mukri, General Manager, Rec and Parks, “This initial effort at two City resident camps is in keeping with the Department’s mission of educating young people on the importance of being good stewards of the environment through conservation and the understanding of ecosystems and wildlife.”

Rec and Parks has made a pledge to environmental sustainability in its camping program by 1) using plant-based, biodegradable and compostable plates and utensils; 2) diverting biodegradable food waste into the Public Works/Sanitation’s food waste recycling program,

and 3) raising the ecological awareness and environmental stewardship of the staff and youth participating in the camp.

While the Department has made a commitment to using recyclable, biodegradable, and plant-derived, non-Styrofoam dining ware products since the 1990s, the Department’s current movement toward using more rapidly compostable dining ware and composting it while educating youth campers about environmental stewardship began in the last few years. The Compostables program gained momentum after Mukri learned about the Disney Corporation’s use of environmentally friendly paper products in food concessions at the Department’s X-Games. He was inspired by this and spearheaded the adoption of similar techniques by his Department. The Department’s boys and girls camps were chosen for a pilot program. After developing and refining the program concept, the Department’s Camping and Forestry Divisions launched the program in the Girls’ and Boys’ Camps in January 2007, beginning first with the use of biodegradable plates and the implementation of a food waste composting program in the camps through a cooperation with the City’s Bureau of Sanitation, followed by the introduction of hot and cold cups, and biodegradable utensils by the summer.

The plant-based biodegradable and compostable products that the campers are using include hot cups that have inner linings made from 100 percent corn instead of petroleum, and are made of chlorine-free paper from sustainably harvested trees. Other products being used are containers made of annually renewable plants such as sugar cane and reeds instead of polyfoam, clear corn-based cold cups, plates made of 100 percent reclaimed and compostable fibers, and utensils made from corn.

Waste in the food service and preparation areas of the camps is organized into three waste containers: a green bin for food waste and biodegradable products; a blue bin for plastic



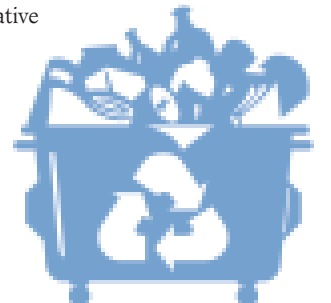
Teaching the camp youngsters about the importance of recycling their lunch paper products is Camp Counselor Coco.

bottles and aluminum; and a black bin for the remainder of the trash. The waste generated from a typical food service establishment is more than 76 percent organic and compostable; therefore, with proper staff and camper training, 70 to 75 percent of all waste should be deposited into the green bin. Acceptable items include fruits, vegetables, meats and bones, seafood, poultry, dairy products, bread and grains, coffee grounds, plant trimmings, soiled paper products, milk cartons, waxed cardboard, wooden crates, eggshells, compostable plant-based utensils, and more. This waste is composted through the City’s food recycling program with the assistance of an outside contractor that picks up the waste and transports it to a composting facility. In addition to waste collection, the contractor also provides training for Department staff, as well as, technical assis-

tance. Together, the two camps serve about 1,000 meals per day in the summertime.

The cost of collecting and processing the food waste from the Girls and Boys Camps is \$1,100 and \$250 per month, respectively, and is paid for by Public Works/Sanitation’s Restaurant Food Waste Recycling Program, designed to collect and recycle all organic waste from restaurants within Los Angeles.

Congratulations to Rec and Parks, and Public Works for the success of this innovative program.

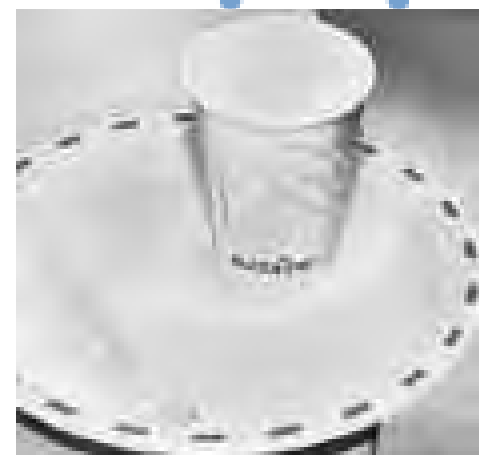


Compostable kitchen staff, from left: Adonna Jackson, Manny Zesati, Roosevelt Edwards and Roseta Everett.

Serve It Up

Youngsters in the Compostables program are using:

- Hot cups that have inner linings made from 100 percent corn instead of petroleum
- Hot cups made of chlorine-free paper from sustainably harvested trees
- Utensils made from corn
- Clear corn-based cold cups
- Containers made of annually renewable plants such as sugar cane and reeds instead of polyfoam
- Plates made of 100 percent reclaimed and compostable fibers



Some of the green-friendly paper products that are part of the Compostables program.