

HOW CAN WE VOLUNTEER FOR THE PLANET IN CASTRO VALLEY?

Green Hearts Volunteer Guide 2019 – 2024



CASTRO VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT



CVSAN WAS FOUNDED IN 1939

Castro Valley Sanitary District (CVSan), located in Castro Valley, CA, was formed July 25, 1939 as a public agency and provides for the collection of wastewater and oversees the collection, and proper handling of solid waste from homes and businesses located in its 10-square mile service area. CVSan is a special district organized under the Health and Safety Code of the State of California.

CVSAN MANAGES WASTEWATER

CVSan is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the sanitary sewer collection system to convey wastewater to the treatment plant. The District has a 25% ownership of the Castro Valley/Oro Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant.

CVSAN MANAGES ZERO WASTE

The District manages the administration of a refuse collection franchise to ensure the proper collection, processing, diversion and disposal of CVSan's organics, recycling, and garbage. The District also oversees implementation and administration of State and local mandated recycling programs. Lastly, the CVSan Board of Directors adopted a goal of zero waste (90%+ diversion away from the landfill) by 2029 guiding the Zero Waste Department's work for years to come.

CVSAN MISSION STATEMENT

The following is CVSan's Mission Statement as well as select Vision Statements relating to Zero Waste. In addition to internal strategic plans, these statements, guide our work. "We protect public health and the environment by providing wastewater and solid waste services."

CVSAN HAS A BRAND AND REPUTATION

CVSan has established a well-respected brand and reputation as a service provider, educator, and important part of the Castro Valley community. With that, it is important that everyone representing CVSan, including volunteers, conducts themselves in a polite, respectful, and safe manner. Two of the most important components that make CVSan who we are, include high-quality customer service and safety.



CUSTOMER SERVICE

In the CVSsan 2014-2019 Strategic Plan, our guiding document for the entire District, priority #1 is to “Provide Exceptional Customer Service.” How we prioritize customer service is with our Wonderful Outstanding Works (WOW) customer service program. Through this program, we achieve a comprehensive approach to strengthening and recognizing excellent customer service. CVSsan does this through many tactics, some of which include: assess customer satisfaction, maintain customer service guidelines and etiquette, provide and enhance public communication and access, public outreach; tours, 4R’s Field Trips, Lear4n workshops, community events, and more. Green Hearts are expected to maintain a high level of friendly customer service when interacting with the community on behalf of CVSsan.

CVSAN HAS A ZERO WASTE PLAN

CVSan has long practiced and promoted the 4Rs (Reduce – Reuse – Recycle – Rot) to reduce waste and conserve resources and adopted a Zero Waste Strategic Plan.

Zero Waste means designing and managing products and processes to avoid and eliminate the volume and toxicity of waste and materials, conserve and recover all resources, and not burn or bury them. CVSsan residents have been selecting their paths to Zero Waste by practicing the 4Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rot). If given the choice, the best option is to prevent or reduce the amount of waste that is generated in the first place. The next best option is to reuse items.

CVSan’s Zero Waste Strategic Plan is a living document which highlights some of CVSsan’s significant achievements and partnerships with the Castro Valley community, reductions of material to landfill, and award-winning recycling and organics diversion programs and outreach. The document is our guide as we progress towards the CVSsan-adopted goal of zero waste by 2029.

ZERO WASTE BY 2029



WHY THE CVSAN GREEN HEARTS TEAM?

The CVSan Green Hearts Team, founded in the Summer of 2013, is for members of the Castro Valley community who are looking for a great way to give back to the environment and Castro Valley. Under the direction of the Zero Waste Department, Green Hearts Team volunteers will wear their hearts on their sleeve with the goal to help others compost, recycle, reduce waste, and beautify Castro Valley all year round.

Green Hearts can be a customized program to what you want to do to give back to the environment and Castro Valley. Projects are flexible, fun, and rewarding. Also, everyone is welcome to be a part of CVSan Green Hearts and you'll receive a free team t-shirt and recognition for your volunteer effort.



GREEN HEARTS TEAM GOALS (ENCOURAGED BUT NOT REQUIRED)

1. Understand CVSan's Zero Waste Operations.
2. Educate Castro Valley on CVSan Zero Waste Programs.
3. Educate residents, businesses, and visitors about how and where to reduce, reuse, recycle, and rot.
 - a. Inform on CVSan Recycles Day.
 - b. Educate Castro Valley on CVSan's Zero Waste Strategic Plan.
4. Build community and reach out to surrounding neighborhoods and groups to be a resource for them.
5. Create and foster neighborhood projects supporting the CVSan mission.
6. Relay community concerns to CVSan.
7. Help expand and promote the Green Hearts Program to higher levels to create Zero Waste culture change in Castro Valley.
8. Practice CVSan's "WOW" high-quality and responsive customer service ethic.
9. "Safety is no accident" is more than just a saying, it's a way of serving the community. For more, please refer to page 7.



SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

We want Green Hearts to be customized to what you want to do to give back to the environment and Castro Valley so projects are flexible. If you don't see a project you like below, suggest one to us and we may be able to help! And, everyone will receive a colorful, fun, and official team t-shirt (shown in the image at right).



Food Scrap Pail Assembly – Every year CVSan donates thousands of small food scrap pails to residents of our district to help them participate in food scrap recycling in their organics carts. We always have a need for volunteers to help us assemble these handy pails.



Gleaning – During Zero Waste Week, CVSan organizes a tree fruit gleaning event to save extra oranges, lemons and grapefruits for those in need.



Group / School Projects – Does your neighborhood, multi-family complex, group, or school, need a cleanup or beautification? CVSan Green Hearts can help and CVSan may even be able to donate mulch and compost! Just organize a group and contact us to see how we can help.



Photography and Social Media Outreach – Getting the word out on CVSan programs and projects is very important to serving the community. While we have our website, and many print outreach materials, we need your help in reaching the community digitally.



Social Media Outreach can consist of simple cut and paste messages that we provide you or you can put your own spin on it. For program promotional purposes, we also need volunteers to take photos of volunteers in action.



Station Monitoring – In addition to helping people sort their materials, monitoring recycling and composting (organics stations at events can be a great way to educate the community about sorting their materials and reducing waste.

FOOD SCRAP PAIL ASSEMBLY

Since 2001 CVSan has been providing a food scrap recycling program for the organics cart. We regularly donate small food scrap pails for members of the community to use in their homes to store food scraps before they go to the green cart outside. These pails have proven to be a great way to increase participation in the food scrap program while reducing waste in Castro Valley. Volunteers come in to CVSan offices each year to help assemble the handle, lid and filter for these helpful pails. Since we give these out on a regular basis, volunteer opportunities for pail assembly are flexible and available often.



GLEANNING TO SAVE FOOD FOR THOSE IN NEED

Also known as harvesting the extra fruit and vegetables we grow, gleaning has been around for centuries and is a fun way to save food and provide for those in need. CVSan has organized gleaning events for past Zero Waste Week events and our volunteers have saved hundreds to thousands of pounds in less than two hours time.

Gleaning is liability free and local pantries will take the produce you harvest as is in boxes or bags. For more information on gleaning, visit: www.endfoodwaste.org/go-gleaning-.html. And for more information on donating your gleaned produce, please visit www.AmpleHarvest.org. If you would like CVSan to donate fruit tree pickers for your gleaning effort, we do that too. Please visit www.cvsan.org/drform to fill out a donation request.



PHOTOGRAPHY AND SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH

Did you know that CVSan is on Facebook, Pinterest and Twitter? We always have a need for the community to post interesting things about our work or their work to reduce waste (and tag us when you do!). We even have projects from time to time that need the assistance of community photographers and social media wizards to help us on outreach to the community.



GROUP / NEIGHBORHOOD / SCHOOL PROJECTS

Since 1999, CVSan has been coordinating April Earth Day events for Castro Valley. While Earth Day is every day at CVSan, our “Earth Day Clean-Up and Recycles Day” event brings our community together each year through organized projects, breakfast, tools, mulch, compost, and other materials for 500 to 1,000 volunteers. Many Castro Valley schools and their families, parents, students, and school staff chip in to beautify their campuses, and community members enhance our beautiful parks.

Make Earth Day any day and organize a group, neighborhood or school project to beautify Castro Valley. And when you plan, let us know since we can donate materials and supplies to help make it happen.



STATION MONITORING AT EVENTS

Whether it's recycling stations, vendors, or volunteers, It makes a big difference in how successful recycling and organics is at events. Station monitoring, which is the most popular Green Hearts task, is also an important public education point for CVSan because you can answer all sorts of questions on what goes where and why. Read on for more.

- **Stations** – Plan for “stations” or different containers located together (think the buddy system for containers). Stations (shown below on the left) increase proper collection of materials. **A container that stands alone turns into a garbage bin, no matter how it's labeled.** A simple diagram (like the one shown below on the right) to locate stations in advance, is essential. Place stations in high traffic and eating areas
- **Monitoring** – Staff or volunteers can easily be trained to monitor recycling and waste reduction stations and assist event attendees. **Monitors can significantly increase correct sorting.**
- **Badges or Cards** that include “where does this go” information can be helpful for staff and monitors to have on hand at your event.
- **For more printable materials, including a Station Monitor Training guide, visit www.cvsan.org/GreenHearts.**



OTHER PROJECTS YOU ARE INTERESTED IN

If none of the projects above interest you but there's something else related to waste reduction that you have in mind, email us at contact@cvsan.org and we may be able to help.



COMMITMENT TO GREEN HEARTS CODE OF ETHICS

If you volunteer to be a part of the CVSan Green Hearts Team, we would like you to follow a certain way of doing things or “Code of Ethics” to keep up with the good CVSan name and high-quality service in the community. The following sections explain this in more detail.



Behavior – CVSan’s Mission Statement is “We protect public health and the environment by providing wastewater and solid waste services.” Please refer to page 3 of this guide for more on customer service expectations.



Timeliness – When you sign up to be a volunteer, please know that timeliness is important for CVSan projects and events. If you cannot make it, please call or email us well in advance to cancel.



Service – Responsiveness to questions or requests and emphasizing the positive is important. When you are volunteering be sure to be courteous to people you interact with.



Forms – Turn in volunteer forms (signed by you or a parent if you are a minor) in advance of the event/project you are volunteering for. Please turn these forms in at least three business days prior to the volunteer assignment.



Complaints and Emergencies – Please refer the complaints to CVSan Offices at 510-537-0757 or contact@cvsan.org. If you do have an emergency while volunteering for Green Hearts, please call 911.



Safety – At CVSan, safety is very important to us in serving the community. Please read the following pages to learn what safety means for volunteers.

SAFETY

Safety is very important to CVSsan and we take pride in the fact that we have gone years at a time without a lost time accident. We say **“Safety is no accident”** because, with careful attention to safety instructions and details, serving the community and being safe at the same time is not a coincidence. In the CVSsan Strategic Plan, one of the key guiding documents for our work, one of the main priorities includes items to guide a safe and healthy workplace.

In order to protect the public health, environment, yourself, and the community, safety must come first. The following items are the main components of volunteer safety including recommended personal protective equipment and tips on volunteer work. **Please remember the items below whenever you are volunteering for CVSsan projects or events.**



Personal Protective Equipment – With each volunteer assignment, there will be specific recommended Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).



Potential Hazards – Depending on the season and type of work, you might see a description like the following “The potential hazards of this work are: getting cold from standing outside in the evening for 2-3 hours or risk sunburn or dehydration from standing in the sun for 3-4 hours.”



Instructions – Please follow the PPE instructions included on the volunteer form which may include, but is not limited to the following: long sleeve shirt, jacket, hat/beanie, sunscreen, sunglasses, and water/water bottle.



SAFETY CONTINUED

Work With Caution and Take Your Time

While volunteering, each task will be different so it is important that you understand the volunteer work needed. It is also important to take time to read the volunteer form for all instructions and safety information and to take time while completing the volunteer work.

On your volunteer form, you will see the following “Work Description” disclaimer that you will be required to read and sign to acknowledge: “I understand the potential hazards of this work as they have been explained to me and am unaware of any existing medical conditions which may be adversely affected by this work.” Please make sure you read these sections each time you volunteer as items may have changed. If something isn’t clear or you do not know how to do something, please ask.

Make sure you know who your contact is for the day of the event. Please ask questions regarding your safety whenever needed. If you see something unsafe, please report it to CVS staff and volunteer coordinators / event contacts.






CASTRO VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT

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FOR HELPFUL INFORMATION & TIPS:

Like Castro Valley Sanitary

District on: 

Follow @CVSan on: 

And go to www.cvsan.org/GreenHearts

Share your Green Hearts experience on 