

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION

The mission of Eldorado/285 Recyclers is to encourage all residents of Eldorado and the Hwy. 285 corridor to reduce the amount of material they send to the landfill by practicing the "5 R's:"

- (1) Refusing to buy unneeded items,*
- (2) Reducing unnecessary packaging,*
- (3) Repairing whatever they can to extend its life,*
- (4) Reusing other people's unwanted "stuff" in place of buying new. And*
- (5) Recycling or composting remaining materials whenever possible.*

YEARLY HIGHLIGHTS

- We passed the **150** mark for installing backyard worm compost systems.
- We conducted two classes for Eldorado classes and Lectures on plastic pollution to help residents understand the problem that the overabundance of plastic manufacturing and its uses have created, and what individuals can do to alleviate the problem.
- **ZERO WASTE EVENTS:** We were successful in encouraging three major Eldorado organizations to host their social activities as "zero waste events." A zero waste event is one in which all items that would otherwise be thrown away as waste are reused. That is, food is collected and used for composting and other materials are recycled. In 2018, the fourth of July pancake breakfast, the August ice cream social and the fall barbecue were all conducted as zero waste events. The diversion from the landfill from zero waste events is important; these three Eldorado events attracted over 1,700 attendees.

Through our efforts, the May Garden Fair hosted by the Santa Fe Master Gardeners also operated as a zero waste event and this event alone generated 15 pounds of cardboard, 360 gallons of recycling items, and 50 gallons of compost. Other events occurring in the 285 corridor were also run as zero waste events. The Eldorado Arts and Craft Association Fall Fling and Studio Tour Reception were additions to our zero waste efforts.

We now have a guide on our website that tells others hosting social events how to plan for and successfully conduct a zero waste event.

ADMINISTRATION

- In 2018 Sue Daniel and Sue Garfitt served as Co-Chairs, Sheila Sullivan as Treasurer, and Joe Durlak as Secretary. In 2019 our monthly meetings will continue to be held in the conference room of the ECIA building. All interested persons are welcome to attend. We meet on the second Tuesday of every month, 4-6 PM.

- Our website eldorado/285recycles.org continued to attract attention from others. The total number of hits to our website during 2018 was 240,000.

We recognize the importance of reaching out beyond the Eldorado/285 area so we work with Santa Fe City and County agencies and staff to improve their practices and educational efforts to encourage all residents in the county to

practice the 5 R's.

PROGRAMS

● **ADVOCACY:** Throughout 2018 we continued to be the leading advocates for recycling in the Santa Fe area. Our members participated in the meetings of Eldorado Community Improvement Association (ECIA) Board; the Board of County Commissioners; the City Council, its Public Utilities Committee and its Sustainability Commission, and the Santa Fe Solid Waste Management Agency (SWMA), which oversees the landfill and the Buckman Road Recycling and Transfer Station (BuRRT). .

● **COMPOSTING:** Our “compost pile in every backyard” program in 2018 installed 18 new “straw bale worm-composting systems” in Eldorado and along the Hwy. 285 corridor bringing our total number of installed systems to 158. For this program we purchase straw bales, deliver them to the recipient, setup the system, seed it with worms, and train the new composters on how to maintain their new system. The cost for these systems to residents is nominal and yields substantial returns. We estimate that **each** backyard compost system diverts over 500 pounds of waste from the landfill **every year**, and the compost is then used for gardening and other landscaping tasks at no cost to the resident.

● **RECYCLING:** In 2018 we continued to collect “hard-to-recycle” items at the La Tienda mall. The items included: cast-off athletic shoes, #5 plastics, plastic writing instruments, bottle corks, rubber bands, dental care items, personal care and beauty items, string lights, and cold weather clothing (hats, scarves, gloves). We also collected recyclables at our local senior center and from several Santa Fe dental offices.

● **ZERO WASTE:** In addition to the several zero waste events noted above new programs were initiated with the Eldorado Arts and Crafts Association so that two additional events, the Fall Fling and the Studio Tour Reception operated as zero-waste events.

● **EDUCATION and OUTREACH:** We placed recycling information at the Vista Grande Library, the Senior Center, the Eldorado Convenience Center, La Tienda, and on the ECIA website for residents. We publish information on recycling and on our work in Vistas, La Tienda Weekly newsletter, and NextDoor Eldorado. In 2018 we also established our Eco Dog program in which we post periodic messages and answer questions about recycling on NextDoor.

● **COMMUNITY:** Spring and fall we participate in the county's "Adopt-A-Road" Program, and have adopted the heavily used section of Avenida Vista Grande, as our project. Twice yearly we walked on Vista Grande from Hwy.285 to Avenida Torreon, and collected all the trash along the roadside.

We have persuaded the ECIA to place recycling bins in its building and at its Dog Park and to install a water system in its meeting room (instead of using

plastic water bottles) for the use of Board members and others using the facility.

● **FUNDRAISING:** Because we are a not-for-profit volunteer organization, we rely on the unpaid work of our volunteers, on money earned at a flea market with sale items donated by our members, and from our sponsorship and operation of Eldorado's Fourth of July Pancake Breakfast in collaboration with La Tienda's La Plancha Cafe.

PLANS FOR 2019

In general, we will continue our main activities that we have summarized above and will look for additional opportunities to encourage the "5 R's."

● **COMPOSTING:** Continued emphasis will be placed on backyard composting, the most effective and best energy-saving way of diverting fully 30% of our household trash from the landfill.

● **ZERO WASTE:** We will continue to help Eldorado organizations make their pancake breakfast, ice cream social, and annual BBQ zero waste events and we collaborate with other event sponsors to make their events zero waste as well. Per our input, ECIA now has a policy that all those hosting events using Eldorado facilities must recycle.

● **SUPPORT and EDUCATION:** We will work to make the City and County recycling activities successful and help in implementing the recycling required by the existing ordinance at all County convenience centers.