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Memorandum  
City Managers Office

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR  
AND CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Kerrie Romanow

**SUBJECT:** EARTH DAY-GREAT AMERICAN  
LITTER PICK UP DAY 2013

**DATE:** April 4, 2013

Approved

Date 4/4/13

### INFORMATION

Litter is a pollutant of local and global concern; more than an eyesore, litter easily reaches waterways where it is harming water quality, fish, and wildlife. San José's plastic bag ban, investment in storm drain trash collection devices, cleanups of creek hot spots, and our proposed phase-out of expanded polystyrene (EPS) serveware are among the steps that demonstrate our leadership in addressing the problem of litter.

Earth Day 2013 provides an opportunity to further spotlight litter and how our community can work together to make a difference. To enable a litter-focused Earth Day event in our City, we have collaborated with internal and external partners, and schools. This year, we are celebrating Earth Day by hosting our Annual Great America Litter Pick Up Day on **Saturday, April 20**.

Council Districts will hold their annual contest to see which district can attract the most volunteers to their respective litter pickup sites. City employees from all departments are being encouraged to also participate in the GALPU. The PRNS Anti-Graffiti and Litter Program is organizing the sites and litter pickup logistics, including providing volunteers with litter sticks, gloves, and trash bags. Volunteers are encouraged to bring their own pick-up stick and gloves.

Last year's efforts brought in more than 2,000 volunteers who picked up plastic bags, food wrappers, cigarette butts, cans, bottles, and cups that had been scattered along San José creeks, streets, parks and school yards. Volunteers collected a total of 1,226 bags of trash, which is a 13 percent increase in volunteers and a 7 percent increase in trash collected compared to 2011.

We appreciate your support in helping to encourage residents in your district to get involved this Earth Day and come out for a litter pickup event – and to make litter prevention and litter pick up a regular habit.

/s/

KERRIE ROMANOW

Director of Environmental Services

For more information, contact Ashwini Kantak, Assistant Director, at 408-535-2553.

Attachments: Earth Day-GALPU Newsletter Article.

**Celebrate Earth Day 2013 by Making the Earth a Little Cleaner**  
*C'mon out to a Great America Litter Pick Up Day Event Site*

Litter is a more than an eyesore – it's a pollutant that reaches our creeks and harms fish and wildlife. What starts as a tossed cigarette, candy wrapper, or beverage container can wind up as a "raft" of trash in our local creeks. From there, it washes to the Bay and to the ocean. Along the way, plastic and foam litter break into small but persistent pieces, never biodegrading.

The Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute has found that hundreds of miles from the ocean, trash is washed by rain into city storm drains and out into streams and rivers that lead to the ocean. From there, wind and currents carry trash far out to sea. Scientists estimate that around the world, up to one million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals and sea turtles die each year from eating plastic.

Litter is also costly. Cities around the Bay spend several million annually to clean up trash in creeks, parks, and streets. Furthermore, the State Department of Transportation estimates that it spends \$55 million annually to clean litter from our highways.

**Litter starts with people, and people can stop it! This Earth Day, bring family and friends to celebrate and clean up your piece of the planet at a Great America Litter Pick Up site near you!**

Councilmember \_\_\_\_\_ invites you to join up at \_\_\_\_\_. Registration at the event is from 8:00-8:30 a.m. and cleanup activities run from 8:30-11:30 a.m. Please join us for a celebration lunch from Noon to 1:00 p.m. at the event kick-off location at \_\_\_\_\_. Litter pickup sticks and gloves will be provided, but there is a limited quantity. Please do bring your own gloves and sticks if you have them!

Visit [www.sanjoseca.gov/stoplitter](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/stoplitter) or call 408-975-7233 for more information.

**Litter Prevention Tips**

- Never let litter fall from your car.
- Keep the lids tightly closed on your garbage and recycling bins.
- Always tarp a truck bed that contains any materials.
- When throwing an item in a public litter can, make sure it goes in. In San José, call 408 535-3500 if the can is overflowing.