

I remember when the most important tool in the picnic basket was the bottle and can opener. Glass soda and beer bottle caps had to be pried off and a small triangular hole was punched into the top of metal beer cans to get to the beverage.

Then came the pull tab that easily opened beverage cans. In the 1960s, we would collect these and make them into chains. More recently the tabs have been designed to stay attached to the can after opening.

Which brings me to Assembly Bill (AB) 925 sponsored by Lori Saldana (San Diego). AB 925 requires bottle caps be attached to the container and be recyclable. The rationale is that since more than half of all single use beverages in plastic containers are consumed outside of the home, these bottle caps become part of the litter and waste stream. Beach cleanups find that bottle caps rate high on the list of littered items.

AB 925 proposes to address this problem by requiring that the bottle caps remain connected to the bottle, thereby significantly reducing the waste, litter, and threat to wildlife posed by discarded bottle caps. If the bill passes, bottle designers have until 2012 to come up with their new affixed caps.

On the subject of a global diet, British researchers have stirred up a controversy with findings that point to overweight people contributing to global warming.

Phil Edwards and Ian Roberts of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine point to food production being a major contributor to global warming. They say that our changing diets (fast food) and less physical activity have resulted in a nation in which 40 percent are obese compared to only 3.5 percent that would be expected in a normal population.

Overweight people can be responsible for the emission of an additional ton of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide. This was calculated by the volume of food eaten and the additional fuel needed to carry them in cars and other vehicles.

If you have a couple of minutes, google "ten odd eco ideas" for the Time

Magazine list of really odd items including reusable toilet wipes and the tempuramobile.

Keep Curbside Clean

Lisa LeFebvre, Vallejo Garbage Service Recycling Manager, has asked us to help get the word out about placing the correct recyclables in our blue curbside recycling totes.

Everything that you place in your recycling tote is taken back to Vallejo Garbage and dumped onto a conveyor belt. It is then hand sorted into bins of cardboard, office paper, newspaper, steel cans, aluminum cans, and plastic bottles (each by its own type). When nonrecyclables are mixed in, it takes longer for this material to go through the line.

Our mantra this week is "No Plastic Bags." One big reason is that loose plastic bags fly and catch in the gears of the machinery causing malfunctions. Filled plastic bags have to be manually opened and inspected and, you guessed it, most are filled with trash.

Take those plastic grocery bags back to the grocery store and keep plastic bags out of your recycling tote.

Lisa also requested that you put shredded paper into brown paper bags. Monthly confidential paper shredding will resume at VALCORE on August 15 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

VALCORE Recycling Board Secretary Jane Bogner's "A Sorted Affair" is published every other week in the Times-Herald. For recycling information call VALCORE Recycling at 645-8258 or visit www.VALCORErecycling.org.

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