

Case Study

MT. MIGUEL COVENANT VILLAGE



MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
250 Independent Living Units
88 Bed Skilled Nursing Facility
48 Bed Assisted Living Facility

Located at the edge of Sweetwater reservoir in Spring Valley with a scenic view of the mountains, Mt. Miguel Covenant Village offers seniors independent living and on-site continuing care.

Mt. Miguel's staff and residents needed assistance in complying with the upcoming State recycling mandates under AB 341, and sought out partnerships with their waste and recycling hauler and the County of San Diego.

The residents formed a Recycling Committee to guide the expansion of the recycling program to include residential living spaces, common areas, and staff work spaces.

The goal of the partnership with the County was to help navigate concerns about expanding recycling efforts. Mt. Miguel also wanted to develop an enduring recycling program supported by all residents and staff.



Recycling Practices Prior to Intervention

- ➔ Insufficient recycling in independent living quarters for residents
- ➔ No office recycling with the exception of cardboard

Although a program was already in place, Mt. Miguel's staff and residents felt that recycling efforts could be enhanced to better comply with upcoming State recycling mandates.

Recommendations Implemented

- ➔ Improved access to recycling in residential, common areas, and staff areas through additional conveniently-located bins
- ➔ Recycling education for residents and staff

The County of San Diego's recycling assistance program provided Mt. Miguel the opportunity to build upon its existing recycling program. A variety of recycling containers were provided by the County for use in office, kitchen, and common areas. These changes were accompanied by education and awareness-raising efforts, such as town-hall style "recycling fairs" as well as resident and staff trainings.



In addition to regularly updating signage pertaining to recycling, Mt. Miguel's resident-led Recycling Committee provides new residents a welcome package that includes a recycling tote bag as well as information on the recycling program. The Committee has begun looking at other ways to increase their sustainability efforts, such as recommending phasing out the use of non-recyclable to-go containers in the dining halls.

Challenge	Practice Implemented
Inconsistent recycling behavior of residents in the independent living quarters	Collaboration with resident-led Recycling Committee on education and awareness efforts, including “recycling fairs” and distribution of recycling tote bags
Limited or no recycling in kitchen and office areas (with the exception of cardboard) due to competing staff duties and the perception that recycling is time consuming	Strategic placement of additional recycling containers coupled with regular check-ins and training from County consultants
Increase in the use and expense of plastic liners from additional recycling bins	Reuse of liners by custodial staff

The Bottom Line

- ➔ Increased recycling by 10 percent in the first year
- ➔ Current recycling rate is 50 percent



“We needed guidance to ensure our recycling program was in compliance with the State’s recycling mandates. Our partnership with the County of San Diego allowed us to strengthen our existing recycling efforts and created greater awareness to reduce waste. Our culinary staff and resident-led Recycling Committee worked together to conserve and minimize waste. We now offer alternative recyclable take out food containers through our dining program and continue investigating ways to expand our waste reduction efforts.”

Richard Miller
Executive Director, Mount Miguel Covenant Village

The County of San Diego conducts free on-site visits to help multifamily complexes comply with the State’s mandatory recycling and organics recycling requirements. Contact County staff or your solid waste hauler to request assistance. Email: Recycle@sdcounty.ca.gov or visit: www.R1earth.org



The County also maintains a recycling database available online and toll-free hotline. Visit www.WasteFreeSD.org or call 1-877-R-1-EARTH (1-877-713-2784)