

Redwood Surgery Center Wins StopWaste Award



Redwood Surgery Center received a 2018 StopWaste Business Efficiency Award on June 27, 2018. From left to right: Jessica Nusse, Solid Waste Specialist, Castro Valley Sanitary District; Juanita Munoz, Administrative Assistant, Redwood Surgery Center; Dr. Douglas Abeles, General Partner/Medical Director, Redwood Surgery Center; Liz deOcampo, Office Manager, Redwood Surgery Center; David Sadoff, Castro Valley Sanitary District Board Secretary and Alameda County Waste Management Authority Board Vice President

Redwood Surgery Center in Castro Valley received a 2018 Business Efficiency Award for Excellence in Recycling & Composting from StopWaste, the public agency in charge of reducing the waste stream in Alameda County. Redwood, an independent outpatient surgery center started by Dr. Douglas Abeles & Dr. Ravi Panjabi in 2010, is one of five Alameda County businesses that were recognized for outstanding environmental performance and business efficiency this year.

Recycling can be challenging in the medical industry, with unique materials and standards, but Dr. Abeles and Dr. Panjabi were open to change and savings when Jessica Nusse from Castro Valley Sanitary District came by for a waste audit in June of 2017. Jessica saw an opportunity to decrease garbage, increase recycling, and add organics collection, resulting in a cost savings for the surgery center.

Castro Valley Sanitary District provided recycling and organics containers and Jessica helped Redwood Surgery Center set up a new three-bin system with clear signage and staff training. In addition to the new set-up, Liz deOcampo, Office Manager at the surgery center, said the staff training was critical. "The training that Jessica did for the staff and the new recycling and organics receptacles were really helpful and key to the success of the program."

Since they set up their new recycling stations, Redwood Surgery Center has decreased their garbage by 63%, increased recycling by 50%, and added organics collection for the first time. Truly impressive, Redwood Surgery Center cut their garbage bill in half and moved their overall waste diversion from 33% to now recycling and composting 70% of what gets thrown away.

The new system made it easy for staff and they're now teaching visitors how to recycle and compost. "Redwood Surgery Center was excited to make the changes - the staff have taken ownership of the recycling and organics program and even oversee proper separation when there is a guest surgeon, nurse, or anesthesiologist who isn't familiar with three-bin sorting," said Jessica.

For more information about the 2018 StopWaste Business Efficiency Awards, visit www.StopWaste.org/business-awards.