



## Town of Los Altos Hills: 2025 Lid Flip Route Audit

In collaboration with the Town of Los Altos Hills, GreenWaste contracted Blue Strike Environmental to conduct a Lid Flip Route Audit. The audit monitored contamination in randomly selected residential and commercial accounts, aiming to audit 1.4% of the 2,942 accounts (40 residential and 2 commercial). The focus was on curbside accounts with Mixed Compostables, Recycling, and Yard Waste services, conducted from January 6-7, 2025.

GreenWaste provided routes and addresses through the Town's Recyclist dashboard. If a target address did not set out carts, a neighboring address would be audited instead. Contamination was monitored for all three streams. If found, an "Oops Tag!" was placed on the cart, indicating the type of contamination. The back of the tag included a mini sorting guide and notes section to educate residents on proper disposal.

### Results/Summary:

- The total number of lid flips was 237. Of these, 6 were commercial and 231 residential.
- Total flips with contamination (any level)
  - 7.6% contamination rate *overall* (18 total)
  - 7.4% contamination rate for *residential* (17 total)
  - 16.7% contamination rate for *commercial* (1 total)

### Number of Contaminated Flips by Waste Stream and Contamination Level (*Residential*)

Contamination Level	Mixed Compostables	Recycling	Yard Waste	Total
Low (<10%)	2	3	1	6
Medium (10-50%)	2	4	0	6
High (>50%)	5	0	0	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>

### Number of Contaminated Flips by Waste Stream and Contamination Level (*Commercial*)

Contamination Level	Mixed Compostables	Recycling	Yard Waste	Total
Low (<10%)	0	0	0	0
Medium (10-50%)	0	0	0	0
High (>50%)	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>



Percent of Flips With Contamination				
Waste Stream		Residential	Commercial	Total
Mixed Compostables	Low (<10%)	2.6%	0%	7.70%
	Medium (10-50%)	2.6%	0%	0%
	High (>50%)	6.5%	33.3%	0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>45%</b>
Mixed Recycling	Low (<10%)	3.9%	0%	3.9%
	Medium (10-50%)	5.2%	0%	5.2%
	High (>50%)	0%	0%	0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>
Yard Waste	Low (<10%)	1.3%	0%	1.3%
	Medium (10-50%)	0%	0%	0%
	High (>50%)	0%	0%	0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>

Overall, contamination was low, resulting in less than 8%. Common contaminants found among the three streams were as follows:

**Mixed Compostables (gray cart):** The main contaminants found inside the Mixed Compostables carts were recyclable materials such as small amounts of cardboard boxes, aluminum cans (non-ferrous metal) and plastic bottles (Polyethylene Terephthalate, PET #1).

**Recycling (blue cart):** The main contaminant found inside the Recycling carts were one-off garbage items, mainly consisting of deflated balloons, food take out containers, and food soiled cardboard.

**Yard Waste (green cart):** Out of the 77 Yard Waste carts that were inspected, only one was tagged for very low level of contamination that consisted of a recyclable aluminum can.



Common contaminants:

Mixed Compostables



Yard Waste





### **Educational Materials (Oops! Tag)**

A total of 17 “Oops!” tags were left behind on carts that were contaminated and BlueStrike recorded one generator with contamination in two streams.

<b>Total education materials (commercial and residential)</b>
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Mixed Compostables	Recycling	Yard Waste	Total
10	7	1	18

Overall, contamination levels were generally low across all streams, including residential addresses. Commercial accounts also showed low contamination levels, but due to a smaller sample size, they had a higher percentage of contamination. By collecting the garbage and organics in the gray cart, the chances of contamination are reduced. Blue Strike concluded that the low amounts of contaminants were attributed to GreenWaste’s Collection Program.