



# The CAO Weekly Report

The week of March 30, 2015

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*Monterey County Administrative Office*  
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- ITD comes through for Food Bank
- Ag Expo offers Spanish language workshops
- Health Department asks “Are you ready to BYOB?”



## Information Technology Department Staff Gathers Donations for Food Bank



Employees at the Information Technology Department (ITD) are showing their giving spirit as well as showcasing the department's ability to rally support in a time of need.

After hearing about the plight of the Monterey County Food Bank, which was hit hard by an arson fire March 23<sup>rd</sup>, the department acted quickly, putting out news of the situation to all staff and explained that those who wanted to make a donation to the Food Bank could do so online or conveniently at work. To sweeten the offer, Director Dianah

Neff offered to match employee contributions.

In just a few days, the department was able to put together a total donation of \$1,550, which was delivered to the Food Bank earlier this week.

ITD staff is part of the groundswell of support for the Food Bank which is the largest supplier of emergency and supplemental food in Monterey County, delivering six million pounds of food each year.

The fire damaged or destroyed six delivery vehicles and some refrigeration space at the Food Bank facility on West Market Street in Salinas, essentially shutting down deliveries and services which had far reaching ramifications throughout the community.

Thanks to donations like the one coordinated by ITD, Food Bank officials say they have been able to get some services back up and running this week, with more coming on line next week.



## Ag Expo 2015: Agricultural Commissioner's Office Sponsors Spanish Language Workshop on Safety, Resource Protection

For the 17th year, the Agricultural Commissioner's Office and the Strawberry Commission have collaborated to sponsor a workshop aimed at local growers, foremen and ranch supervisors called Ag Expo. This year's Ag Expo took place on March 11<sup>th</sup> at the Salinas Sports Complex and drew some 300 participants. There are a variety of agriculture-related workshops given around the Salinas Valley throughout the year, but what makes this event unique is that it is given entirely in Spanish.



One of the Ag Expo workshops in progress.

“The event has been given entirely in Spanish from very early on,” explains Assistant Agricultural Commissioner Bob Roach. “We had bilingual presentations for a while which made for a very long day because it doubled the time spent on the subjects. One day we realized that everyone in the audience understood Spanish, and that helped us streamline the event.”

Ag Expo focuses on a variety of safety and resource protection issues, but always includes erosion, since that particular issue was the genesis for the event.

“The Ag Expo was originally

conceived to provide outreach on erosion issues in North County and has expanded to include many other regulatory issues related to safety and resource protection," explains Roach.

This year the program focused on erosion control, pest management, pesticide safety and plant nutrition. Participants who need continuing education credits, such as Permittees, Pest Control Advisors and Certified Applicators, can earn two hours of credit from the Department of Pesticide Regulation, including 1.5 hours in the most coveted category of Laws and Regulations.

Besides workshops, Ag Expo includes a business-to-business section with a wide variety of vendors who serve the agriculture industry as well as exhibits featuring best practices and information from agencies. This year the expo featured the recycling exhibit from the Health Department's Environmental Health Bureau as well as information from the Resource Conservation District and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.



## Health Department Asks Are you Ready for BYOB?

BYOB - what does it mean to you? Be Your Own Boss? Build Your Own Burger? Best Year On Broadway?

The Health Department interpretation is: Bring Your Own Bag.

It is now official - single use plastic bags are no longer available at places you shop in unincorporated Monterey County as a plastic bag ordinance for the county took effect Friday, March 27th. Shoppers who forget their bags will be able to purchase paper or reusable bags from merchants who will charge a minimum of 10 cents per bag. Customers purchasing food with WIC and CalFresh/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) may be provided a recycled paper bag or reusable bag at no cost.

The reusable bag ordinance is intended to encourage the use of reusable bags while reducing litter and keeping plastic bags out of local waterways. Single use plastic bags plague our waterways, oceans and natural environments, causing immeasurable harm to marine species and communities.

	<b>NO THIN</b> plastic bags in stores after March 27, 2015.
	<b>Bring your own</b> reusable bags to the store.
	Or <b>Pay</b> for paper or reusable bags at the store.

Banning single use plastic bags is good for our community and the environment.

“One reusable bag replaces 600 single use bags,” says John Ramirez, Director of the Monterey County Health Department’s Environmental Health Bureau. “Other jurisdictions with reusable bag ordinances have seen significant decreases in the amount of trash ending up in the waterways.”

The ordinance does NOT prohibit single use protective bags used to protect and transport produce, bulk foods, prescription medication, and meats to the cashier. The ordinance also does not apply to restaurants or take-out food establishments.

To help shoppers get accustomed to bringing their own bags, the Health Department’s Environmental Health Bureau in partnership with Waste Management, The Offset Project and Save Our Shores will be giving out bags at various locations throughout the county. Visit [www.mtyhd.org/byob](http://www.mtyhd.org/byob) to find a location near you.

The Health Department also invites shoppers who are bringing their own bags to take a picture and post it to Facebook or Twitter with #mcbyob.

