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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **DOWNTOWN STREETS TEAM COLLECTS 1,000,000 BUTTS** ***Toxic Cigarette Waste Sent to Recycler to Make Pallets***

**SAN RAFAEL, CA** — [The Downtown Streets Team](#) has reached a milestone: *in less than one year, they have picked up over one million cigarette butts off the streets of San Rafael.* These butts were sent to [Terra Cycle](#) in New Jersey to be recycled into industrial pallets.

The Downtown Streets Team (DST) provides homeless and low-income men and women in San Rafael with the resources they need to rebuild their lives. Funded by the City of San Rafael and local businesses and nonprofits, the DST spends much of their time volunteering downtown, picking up litter, removing graffiti, and keeping San Rafael clean. They joined the [San Rafael Clean Coalition](#) in 2013 and immediately embraced the cause of cigarette litter eradication, recognizing the harms this toxic waste causes when it enters storm drains and flows out to the Bay.

In early 2014, the DST began packing and sending cigarette butts to Terra Cycle, a company funded by the Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company, to be recycled. The program was a continuation of a pilot that was conducted by San Rafael Clean and St. Vincent de Paul Society Free Dining room in 2012.

In less than one year, 1,000,000 cigarette butts were collected. Laid end to end, starting at the San Rafael Civic Center they would reach to Fishman's Wharf in San Francisco. The butts take up a space 10' x 10' x 10'. That's 100 cubic feet of cigarette litter weighing in at over 375 pounds!

Andrew Hening, DST's Marin County Regional Director, says, "I honestly never imagined we would collect so many butts so fast. I am incredibly proud of our Team Members' hard work diverting this toxic litter from our creeks and waterways, while also working to show that those who are homeless can be part of the solutions to the challenges our community faces."

Andree Jansheski, owner of Bellam Self Storage and Boxes sponsored the program, paying Streets Team 1 cent per butt: \$10,000 in total. "We estimate that over 10,000 butts are littered *every 3-4 days* in San Rafael. We need to educate every smoker, including those who we employ in our businesses, on how to properly discard cigarette butts. It's the law, and people should take responsibility for their actions."

San Rafael Clean will be working to install new cigarette waste receptacles downtown in the coming year. To learn more or contribute to the Campaign, visit [www.SanRafaelClean.org](http://www.SanRafaelClean.org) or call 415-485-3071.

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*The mission of San Rafael Clean is to encourage community members to be stewards of San Rafael by creating a clean and safe environment through litter abatement and recycling efforts.*