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MATCH OF THE CATALOG

"SMALL TOWN RECYCLER MAKES IT BIG WITH CALMAX"

By Kevin Taylor CALMAX Coordinator

When Rita Gonzales started her own brokering business (Saticoy Recycling) three years ago, she knew she would have to do some serious research on ways to find an ample supply of materials she could use and sell. Because her business is in the small town of Saticoy in Ventura County, finding profitable quantities of usable materials can be a challenge. After contacting several governmental agencies for leads, she heard of a program called CALMAX; Since then she has been a regular user and supporter of CALMAX.

Saticoy Recycling started out by recycling cardboard, later adding wood, and eventually, with the help of CALMAX expanded their inventory to include many different types of materials. In fact, in the last two years, Rita estimates she has received more than **550 tons** of material and saved over **$33,000** through dozens of CALMAX exchanges. The most popular items Rita has acquired through CALMAX are dimensional lumber, plastic, and laser toner. Most of the lumber finds its way down to Mexico, but the large pieces are remanufactured into moulding. Surprisingly, much of the plastic is used by another company in the production of fire logs. The laser toner cartidges are not only located through CALMAX, but are then sold to another firm which also advertises in CALMAX. Rita has even found unique materials through CALMAX that she has used herself, the most unusual being glass blocks for decorative use in her home.

Rita also makes use of VC MAX, a local materials exchange program operated by Ventura County. VC MAX and CALMAX share their listings to help make each program more effective on both a local and state level. Speaking of more effective...Rita is also a big believer in the internet and routinely checks the CALMAX web site (http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/mrt/calmax/calmax.htm), which offers more current information than the bimonthly catalog (and saves the State money). Additionally, she keeps an eye on other material exchange programs outside of California for materials that may be available. She learned of these other programs through the CALMAX program, which lists many other reuse and resource programs.

Tips on using CALMAX and other exchanges? Rita says, "Most people don't look at both the available ***and*** wanted listings when they're getting rid of or looking for things. You need to research the catalog and look at everything. Additionally she says, "Through CALMAX, you can find all kinds of unusual things, but even more important, through this program, you can network with all kinds of people and help stimulate business."

We'd like to salute Rita Gonzales of Saticoy Recycling on using CALMAX to its fullest to help make her business a success. At CALMAX, we are proud to know we can help foster waste prevention, while helping businesses flourish and grow. We not only thank all of you who use CALMAX, but especially those who take the time to tell us about your success stories.