



**MODESTO**  
CALIFORNIA

[www.modestogov.com](http://www.modestogov.com)

(209) 577-5200 • TDD (209) 526-9211

CITY OF MODESTO

# City Beat

DECEMBER 2012

## CITY OFFICES TO CLOSE

City of Modesto offices, located at 1010 Tenth Street, will be closed due to holidays and work furloughs during the following times:

**December 24, 2012-  
January 1, 2013**

Utility billing will be available to answer calls

December 26, 27 and 28 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Utility payments can be made by phone or online 24 hours-a-day/7 days-a-week.



Customer Service  
(209) 577-5395



Pay by Phone  
(209) 577-5395  
Option 4



Pay Online at  
[www.modestogov.com](http://www.modestogov.com)

## HELP KEEP YOUR PLUMBING GREASE FREE

Especially during the holidays and winter months, it is important to consider the following:

### Why are fats, oil, and grease a problem?

Grease is often washed down the kitchen sink and into the plumbing system. Even washing a small amount down your sink drains can cause serious plumbing blockages in your home or, even worse, a sewer overflow in your home or yard. These substances also cause clogging in Modesto's wastewater collection system. Grease in a warm liquid form may not appear harmful; however, as the liquid cools, it hardens and sediment forms on the interior of pipes and treatment equipment. This hardened grease can build up over time and block a sewer line completely and may upset Modesto's wastewater treatment plant processes.

### Why should you care?

Grease-related problems can cause sewage backups and overflows that are messy, costly, and a potential threat to your health and the environment. That is why the City of Modesto wants to help consumers stop the problems associated with grease before they occur.

### How can you have grease-free sewers?

Here are some ways you can help protect your household plumbing, the environment, and Modesto's collection system:

- Never pour grease down sink drains or toilets.
- Scrape grease and food scraps from all cookware and dishware into a trash can for disposal.
- Use strainers in sink drains to catch food scraps and other solids, and empty the strainers into the trash.
- Don't put grease or greasy foods in your home garbage disposal. These units only shred solid material into smaller pieces and do not prevent grease from going down the drain.
- Wipe cookware and dishware prior to washing. Don't rely on commercial additives in detergents to dissolve grease, as they may just pass it down the line and cause problems in other areas.
- Allow cooking grease to cool before placing it in a plastic bag to prevent leakage. The plastic bag should be placed in the black garbage container with your normal weekly garbage.
- Clean kitchen exhaust system filters routinely.
- Talk with your friends and neighbors about grease problems so that the community is aware of the risk.

Call the City of Modesto at (209) 577-6200 with questions about sewer system operations and maintenance or to report a Sewer Overflow.

## CITY CREWS TO COLLECT CHRISTMAS TREES FOR RECYCLING

City of Modesto pruned refuse crews will begin picking up untreated green Christmas trees in January as part of the normal pruned refuse collection.

Please follow pruned refuse collection guidelines for your area. If you do not know which area you are in, please contact the City of Modesto Green Waste Office at (209) 577-5463.

**Follow these simple steps to ensure proper disposal of your Christmas trees:**

### Disposal of Untreated Green Trees:

- Remove ALL items from the tree: ornaments, tinsel, topper, tree stand, etc. Trees will not be picked up if these items have not been removed.
- If tree is more than six (6) feet tall, cut it so that no piece is more than 6 feet in length. *\*Maximum length for any one piece is 6 feet.*
- Place trees curbside to be collected with your regular yard trimmings OR cut up small enough to place in your green waste can with the lid closed.

### Disposal of Trees Treated With Flocking, Paint, or Fireproofing:

Trees with flocking, paint, or fireproofing cannot be composted and will not be collected. These trees may be cut up and placed in your black garbage can or taken to the nearest garbage company transfer station. The lid on the black can must be closed in order for it to be serviced. Transfer stations can be found at the following locations:

**Gilton Solid Waste**  
800 S. McClure Road, Modesto  
(209) 527-3781

**Bertolotti Disposal**  
231 Flamingo Drive, Modesto  
(209) 537-8000

For more information on Christmas tree collection or the City's pruned refuse/green waste program, visit the City of Modesto's Website at [http://www.modestogov.com/prnd/trees/green\\_waste.asp](http://www.modestogov.com/prnd/trees/green_waste.asp) or contact the Green Waste Office at (209) 577-5463.

## City Trees and Mistletoe Removal

For information regarding the City of Modesto Winter Work Plan for City Trees and Mistletoe Removal, visit:  
[www.modestogov.com/trees](http://www.modestogov.com/trees)

## REDUCE HOLIDAY WASTE

Holidays are a time for giving and sharing, and that creates a lot of extra waste!

A typical household generates approximately 45 pounds of trash per week. During the weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year's, each household produces about 15 additional pounds of trash. Almost all of this extra trash is not recyclable, or simply does not get recycled. Here are some ideas to help reduce waste and have fun while doing it:

- Go on an outing to gather and collect leaves, berries, pinecones, fruits and nuts from trees in your yard or neighborhood to decorate your home.
- Buy a live tree that can be planted after the holiday, or use a smaller potted tree to re-use year after year.
- Decorate your tree with special chocolates and candies, homemade gingerbread cookies, strings of popcorn, and ornaments made from flour or sugar.
- Wrap gifts in something that can be used by the recipient: a bandana, scarf, towel or blanket.
- Reload your empty gift cards and give them as gifts rather than tossing them out.

These are some small and simple things that we can all do to help reduce waste, while reusing and recycling everyday items.

## \*\*IMPORTANT INFORMATION\*\*

### HOLIDAY GARBAGE COLLECTION SCHEDULE

Service will run one day late on Christmas Day and New Year's Day. There will be no garbage collection on Tuesday, December 25, 2012 and Tuesday, January 1, 2013.



- Tuesday customers will be serviced on Wednesday
- Wednesday customers will be serviced on Thursday
- Thursday customers will be serviced on Friday
- Friday customers will be serviced on Saturday