

## COMMENTARY

# A world with zero waste

Waste haulers in Tulare County have made great strides toward keeping recyclable materials from our landfills. But the future is no longer about recycling when it's possible, it's about recycling almost everything. This concept is called zero waste, and Peña's Disposal Service in Cutler, which started the first recycling program in Tulare County, is ready to lead the way to zero waste.

The concept of zero waste centers on the idea that all products should be reused so that only a small amount of products make it to the landfill.

This means changing our habits and how we live our lives.

For example, using both sides of paper before we recycle it and reusing cardboard boxes that products have come in before recycling them. It also means becoming more responsible in our shopping by only purchasing products that can be reused and recycled.

It also means urging manufacturers to only make products that can be reused and recycled. We must work together to implement zero waste programs at home and at work.

This is a great time for

us to adopt zero waste at home and at work, because while it preserves our natural resources, it also saves us money — a big plus in this economy.

One way to figure out what you can do at work or at home to follow zero waste principles is to get a waste audit.

Businesses large and small are doing this — Toyota and Cigna, to name a few. Waste audits are a chance for waste haulers such as Peña's Disposal to examine waste that is generated

### **ART PEÑA** Recycling

and educate residents and businesses on what can be reused and recycled.

The concept of zero waste goes hand-in-hand with the very foundation of Peña's Disposal.

The company started as the ultimate recycling operation in 1948, when Salvador Peña, my grandfather, began a route collecting food waste for use on his pig ranch.

From simple beginnings, Peña's has grown into a leader of disposal services in the local industry, was first on the road with green vehicles and is the only facility in Tulare County to

process refuse, recycling, construction and demolition materials, e-waste and green waste all at one site.

Peña's Disposal is committed to leading the way to zero waste. We urge you to attend Recycling Night on Saturday at the Visalia Rawhide (gates open at 6 p.m.; game time is at 7 p.m.).

As the night's sponsor, we'll give the first 500 fans through the gates a free recyclable grocery tote and other goodies to help them embrace zero waste.

> *Art Peña is owner and vice president of Peña's Disposal Service.*