



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONTACT: Devi Peri, 415-458-5539

**On Earth Day North Bay Recycler Asks Hallmark to Make Easter Less Hazardous
*Hazardous Hardware in Singing/Talking Greeting Cards Bad for the Planet***

MARIN, CA - Marin Sanitary Service (MSS) is sounding the alarm about the household hazardous waste hiding in some greeting cards ahead of the upcoming Earth Day and Easter weekend. MSS is sending a letter to the Hallmark Corporation asking them to take action to prevent toxic batteries and other electronics in some greeting cards from ending up in landfills.

In California it's illegal to dispose of batteries in the general waste stream where they have the potential to leach harmful chemicals into the soil and water.

In a letter to Hallmark executives MSS asks the company to "design [the card] green or take it back" and has been using the letter as part of a waste reduction message campaign to Bay Area residents. Over the last few months, MSS has gathered over 200 signatures.

"It takes a tremendous amount of paper, and therefore trees, to produce millions of cards for every special day of the year," said Devi Peri, Marin Sanitary Service Education Coordinator. "Electronic singing, voice recording or lighted cards may contain batteries, mercury switches or tiny electronic circuit boards that all end up in the landfill."

In the US some 7 billion cards are sold every year, worth about \$7.5 billion US.

"We see a lot of greeting cards in recycling carts this time of year, but people don't realize that the cards are very difficult to recycle and we can't recycle cards containing electronics at all," said Joe Garbarino Jr., MSS Chairman of the Board. "Most people are surprised to find that out."

Letter signatory and Marin County resident Gail Koffman commented, "I'm shocked and also dismayed that Hallmark doesn't even alert consumers about the batteries inside these cards. There should be some warning and the card company should be responsible enough to provide a proper disposal method."

MSS is part of a growing producer responsibility movement in the U.S. and has joined thousands of other businesses, organizations and local governments in California that are calling for product stewardship for products that are toxic or have been banned from landfills. Producer responsibility, also known as product stewardship, is the concept of manufacturers taking responsibility for their products at the end of life.

"We want greeting card manufacturers to be responsible for the waste they're creating," said MSS President Patty Garbarino. "We understand that people are going to buy the cards, but we think manufacturers should offer recycling or take-back programs so the cards could be easily recycled. Or better yet, make cards that are less hazardous."

Please respond to this email to request photos of a greeting card with exposed hazardous electronics.

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MSS, a family owned and operated business for over 50 years, has relentlessly pursued zero waste since its inception. Originally founding the first Scavenger's Protection Association in 1920, the Garbarino family has always viewed its mission as reduce, reuse and recycle. MSS includes Marin Resource Recovery and the Marin Recycling Center. Together they serve Marin County's recycling and refuse needs. Please visit our new website at www.marinsanitary.com for more information.