

MEETING NOTES
SINGLE USE BAG REDUCTION AND RECYCLING PROGRAM

Store Operations Subcommittee Meeting

Thursday October 2, 2008, 9:00 a.m.

Department of Public Works, Environmental Programs Division, Large Conference Room

I. Introductions

The meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m. Those in attendance were: Emiko Thompson, Nilda Gemeniano and Iwen Tseng with the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. Those who attended via conference call were Burt Kumagawa with the County of Los Angeles Chief Executive Office and Matthew Dodson with California Grocer's Association (CGA).

II. Program Status

a. Checklists Received

On August 21, 2008, Program Resource Packets were sent to 121 stores in the unincorporated County area along with a Store Participation Checklist and a joint letter by the County and CGA announcing the Program. To date, three smaller-scale stores returned their completed checklists indicating their current levels of Program activities. The checklists indicated the stores were willing to implement many of the Program components. One store mentioned that the items on the checklist were expensive to implement for small stores and that they were interested in finding out if the County would provide financial assistance to implement them. None of the larger-scale chain supermarkets returned their checklists. Matthew Dodson of the CGA agreed to help distribute the Program Resource Packets to the corporate executives within the following week. The importance of getting the message to the executives at the corporate level before Thanksgiving was emphasized so that they could work with the store managers before the holidays.

b. City Participation

Currently, nine cities have joined the County's Program. The Program Resource Packets were also provided to the partnering cities in addition to newsletter subscription and other resource information. Some cities plan to distribute the Packets to their stores as-is, while others plan to use parts of the Packet to create their own. The Cities of Pico Rivera and Redondo Beach expressed interest in joining the Public Education Subcommittee.

While CGA policy prohibits giving out member information, cities may draft a joint CGA letter similar to County's joint letter, for stores within their jurisdiction. Mr. Dodson's contact information could also be given to city representatives, and he indicated his willingness to work with the cities to obtain store information. Glendale is in the process of drafting a joint letter.

III. Program Development

a. Discussion on how to reach out and engage the stores

In addition to reaching out to the executives at the corporate level, Mr. Dodson suggested meeting with store managers face-to-face to increase buy-in to the Program. Burt Kumagawa pointed out that previous CGA representatives had advised against direct contact with stores. Mr. Dodson will let Public Works know if the stores agree to be contacted by the County.

b. Set action items, goals, and timelines; and assign tasks

Action items tasked to the Store Operations Subcommittee in accordance with the Board Action of January 22, 2008, were identified on Attachments 1 and 2. Tasks include developing a store personnel training program, increasing promotion of at-store recycling of plastic bags, establishing incentives for reducing single use bag consumption and reusable bag promotions.

Kristin Powers suggested to Mr. Dodson that it would be best for the County to develop a store personnel training program and give it to the store managers to get their buy-in and then distribute the material at employee meetings. Mr. Dodson agreed that there is a need to work with the stores on ways to make the plastic bag recycling bins at stores more prominent, and encourage the stores to provide incentives for customers to bring their own bags. The CGA does not have store policy information related to at-store plastic bag recycling. Individual corporate offices need to be contacted to obtain such information.

c. Select a Subcommittee Chairperson

Mr. Dodson offered to be an active participant to the best extent he could, however, he declined the position of subcommittee chairperson at this time.

IV. Next Steps

The next Store Operations Subcommittee meeting will be held on November 5, 2008. Establishing direct store contact is a preferred method of communication with the stores.