

MANTECA BULLETIN

Fueling trucks with garbage

Manteca harnessing power of food waste

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The leftovers that don't get eaten from next year's Thanksgiving dinners and the remnants of pizza from Sunday football parties that get tossed in 2016 will be more than just garbage. They will fuel Manteca's new refuse collection trucks.

It is part of a long-range strategy the City Council has put in motion that — after initial start-up expenses — promises to give Manteca another long-haul run at stabilized solid waste charges for residents. Manteca, which has rates that are lower in virtually every category than other communities in the Northern San Joaquin Valley, hasn't raised rates in 14 years. It is a fete unmatched by any other jurisdiction in the region.

The move to take food waste and combining it with other organic waste at the city's wastewater treatment plant to produce methane gas to eventually power a municipal fleet of 30 solid waste trucks will mean cleaner air and lower fuel costs.

It also will allow Manteca — along with the City of Tracy — to comply with legislative mandates to start diverting food waste from being buried at landfills. Tracy will benefit since that city will swap its food waste with Manteca's recyclables. The combined food waste collected from the two cities is expected to be enough to fuel 30 trucks.

Cost reductions are already being obtained as the city is no longer hauling garbage directly to the Austin Road landfill but to the county run Lovelace Transfer Station just a mile north of Del Webb at Woodbridge. Not only does it translate into less miles per truck but it increases the number of pick-ups that a truck can do in a day. That is allowing the city to reduce staff through attrition and increase driver efficiency. It also eliminates the wear and tear of city garbage trucks having to drive on dirt paths at the landfill that are problematic especially in inclement weather.

Food waste will be separated from the rest of the garbage at Lovelace. The food waste will then be trucked to a facility being put in place at the city's wastewater treatment plant to produce methane gas. On Tuesday, the City Council has two items on the agenda to move toward implementation of the system.

They will be asked to approve Clean Energy as a sole source provider of compressed natural gas (CNG) for the city until such time. Manteca has adequate methane gas production to power all of its solid

waste replacement vehicles. The city has already ordered five CNG powered solid waste trucks. Trucks are being switched as they are scheduled for replacement due to wear.

A second item is for a \$79,000 contract with Herwit Engineering for the design of the solid waste food separation equipment installation project.

The council meets Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the Civic Center, 1001 W. Center St.

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