

Residential Franchise

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the purpose of the community meetings?

A: The purpose of the community meetings is to provide residents with information regarding the County's plan to implement a franchise waste collection system in the unincorporated County areas and to request your participation in developing a system that best fits your community's needs.

Q: Why change the current waste collection system in the unincorporated County areas?

A: Waste collection services in the unincorporated County areas are currently provided through an open-market system in which residents directly arrange for services with the waste hauler. However, this open-market system has been ineffective in controlling rate increases, ensuring service excellence, and meeting the State waste reduction mandate.

Q: What is the State Waste Reduction Mandate?

A: State law requires cities and counties to reduce the amount of solid waste by 50%. This means half of the waste generated must be recycled or otherwise diverted from landfill disposal. This reduces the need for more landfills and conserves our natural resources. The franchise system will assist the County in meeting the State mandate by increasing recycling, requiring better reporting, and provided funding for additional recycling and educational programs.

Q: How does a Franchise Waste Collection System work?

A: A franchise waste collection system allows the County to sign agreements with waste haulers to provide waste collection services to residents in an unincorporated County area. Under these agreements, waste haulers would abide by specific service standards, rate control measures, and reporting requirements. The franchise waste collection system will also provide the County with tools for enforcement.

Q: What are the benefits of a franchise system?

A: A franchise system will provide residents with quality waste collection services, consistent rates, improved customer service, and special features, such as annual clean-up events and bulky item pick-up included with the standard service.

Q: How will a waste hauler be selected for my community?

A: The franchise waste haulers are selected through competitive process. All permitted waste haulers operating in the County are requested to submit proposals for consideration. Criteria for selecting the best qualified waste hauler include price, work plan, financial resources, references, experience, environmental record, and procurement and/or contract/agreement disputes. A committee will review the proposals and assign a score for each criteria. The waste hauler who receives the highest overall score may be awarded the franchise.

Q: When will the new franchise system be implemented?

A: Service for the first six franchise areas is anticipated to begin in 2007. Other areas will

follow after that.

Q: Will my rate increase or decrease with the new system?

A: Yes, your rates will increase or decrease depending on the market conditions and the types of service chosen by the community, such as container type, quantity, separate or commingled collection, and special collection services.

Q: Can waste haulers raise rates during the term of the franchise?

A: Yes, subject to County review and approval. The franchise waste hauler may request annual rate adjustments, but must justify the need for the rate adjustment based on changes to the consumer price index, producer price index, changes in environmental laws or increased landfill disposal costs. The rate adjustments will be subject to the limits specified in the franchise agreement.

Q: Can my franchise waste hauler increase my rates due to changes in the fuel prices?

A: Yes, but only if there has been a 100 percent increase in the Producer Price Index (PPI). Such an adjustment requires County approval.

Q: How many containers can I receive free of charge with the three can system?

A: Initially you will receive three containers, one for trash, one for recyclable materials, and one for green waste. You can also receive one additional green waste container and one recyclable container at no extra cost to you upon request.

Q: If I need more containers, how much will I have to pay for each extra container?

A: You can receive additional containers at a cost of \$5 per container per month.

Q: Can I have smaller containers if I find the 96-gallon containers too cumbersome?

A: Yes, residents can request smaller containers equivalent in capacity to the 96-gallon container at no extra cost to you.

Q: Who is responsible for replacing damaged trash containers under the franchise system?

A: Your franchise waste hauler will be responsible for replacing damaged containers within seven days after being notified of the problem by you.

Q: In my community some of the residents share a bin, will this be allowed under the franchise system?

A: Yes, you would have to provide Public Works with a copy of a trash bill to verify trash is being collected and the name and address of the neighbors sharing the bin.

Q: I don't have trash service. I haul my own trash. Will I be able to continue this under the franchise system?

A: Yes, you may continue to self-haul under the franchise system.

Q: What happens if my waste hauler mixes my recyclable materials with the trash?

A: Franchise waste haulers are required to collect separately the trash, recyclable materials, and green waste. If you observe your waste hauler mixing recyclables or green waste with trash, we request that you please contact Public Works. Haulers found in violation may be fined for each occurrence. To ensure contract compliance, Public Works will have

inspectors assigned to monitor trash collection in the franchise areas.

Q: Will senior discounts be available?

A: The senior discount is available to residents who meet the following criteria: 65 years or older, head of household, and qualify for discounted utility rates based on financial need as evidenced by water, power, or telephone bill.

Q: How much is the franchise fee and how will the franchise fee be used?

A: Franchise waste haulers will pay a 10 percent franchise fee. A portion of the franchise fee will be used for administrative costs, with the majority being used to implement needed programs within the franchise communities, such as additional household hazardous waste and electronic/universal waste collection events, smart gardening workshops, recycling incentive programs, illegal dumping prevention and cleanup programs, and school recycling programs.

Q: Under the new system, who can I call if I have a complaint about the trash collection services I receive?

A: Residents are encouraged to contact the waste hauler first to resolve issues concerning the delivery of service. If the waste hauler fails to resolve the issue please contact Public Works.

Q: How will the County ensure the franchise residents receive quality service from the hauler?

A: The County will monitor compliance with the service standards prescribed by the franchise agreement and ensure residents receive quality service. Waste haulers who fail to meet these standards may be assessed fines or have their agreement terminated by the County for poor performance.

Q: Do I have to pay extra to have furniture or appliances picked up? How many items are allowed for each pick-up?

A: Twice per year residents may set out bulky items (e.g., furniture, appliances, and electronic devices) in unlimited quantities at no additional cost.

Q: Will I receive information on ways to recycle before the new franchise system begins?

A: Yes, after the franchise agreement has been awarded, the selected waste hauler(s) will hold meetings in your community to explain how the new system will work and provide information on how and what to recycle. The County will also provide additional information through community workshops and recycling events scheduled for your community throughout the year.

Q: I am not sure what can be recycled.

A: As the franchise system is rolled out, Public Works and the franchise waste hauler will provide residents with a list of the materials that can be placed in the recycling containers. You can also visit 888CleanLA.com for additional information.

Q: Trash is being collected three times per week on my street which poses a problem for street sweeping. Will the franchise system address this concern?

A: Yes. Public Works will coordinate trash collection services with the street sweeping schedule for each community.

Q: Who decides if my community will have an exclusive (one hauler), semi-exclusive (two to three haulers), or non-exclusive (several waste haulers) agreement?

A: The type of franchise and the list of services will be decided upon consideration of the input received from the community. This includes the community's input provided through the survey responses, telephone calls, and comments made during the community meetings.

Q: If the majority of residents in my community want a semi-exclusive (two to three haulers) franchise system, will the waste haulers have to pick up trash on the same day?

A: To reduce the noise and traffic impacts on your community, the County would make every effort to have the franchise haulers collect trash, green waste and recyclable material on the same day.

Q: Can I still hire the hauler of my choice for construction, home repair and roll-off services?

A: Yes, residents have the option of either using the franchise hauler or contacting the hauler of their choice for these services.

Q: Can I stay with my current hauler even if they are not chosen to provide services to my community?

A: No, residents will have the option of either using the franchise hauler or hauling their own trash.

Q: Will the new system help me dispose of used needles?

A: Yes. Public Works has a free mail-back program available to all the residents of Rowland Heights for the proper management of sharps waste. You may request a free mail-back container by calling our 1(800) 993-5844 hotline. Also, Public Works has a **Countywide Home-Generated Sharps Management Program** that provides county residents with convenient means to dispose of needles in an environmentally friendly way.

Q: If I already recycle my own materials at a recycling center, will I be able to receive an extra bin for refuse free of charge?

A: No. A primary objective of the proposed collection system is to divert as much waste as possible from landfills. For this reason, we are providing residents with ample capacity for recyclable materials and green waste (up to two large-capacity containers each). If you are taking your high-value recyclable materials to a recycling center you may continue to do so.

Q: Will the franchise system be the same for the entire community?

A: Yes, the community will have one franchise system, and the franchise agreement will include a list of standard services designed to best fit the overall needs of the community. Residents may request special or additional services (such as scooter service via a small truck and manual roll-out service) at the rates prescribed in the franchise agreement.

Q: Who is responsible for cleaning up oil leaks, spills or debris left on my street by the trash truck drivers?

A: The franchise waste hauler is responsible for ensuring their trucks operate in a manner that is safe. The hauler is required to clean up all spills, leaks and any debris left by their drivers immediately or be subject to penalties as outlined in the agreement.

Q: What is the term of the franchise agreement?

A: The term of the franchise agreement is seven years.

Sponsored by the County of Los Angeles
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