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**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**  
**for**  
**NON-EXCLUSIVE COMMERCIAL SOLID WASTE COLLECTION FRANCHISE CUSTOMERS**

**What was the previous trash collection system in the unincorporated Los Angeles County areas?**

Commercial solid waste collection services in bins or dumpsters within the unincorporated County areas (excluding the Garbage Disposal Districts and cities) were previously provided by private waste haulers through an open-market system where customers directly arranged for services with waste haulers and not with the County.

**Why change the previous waste collection system in the unincorporated Los Angeles County areas?**

The open-market system was unable to meet customer and service demands due to changes in Federal and State laws, public attitudes towards protecting the environment, and customers' desire for enhanced recycling and collection services. Pursuant to State law, the County must implement a mandatory commercial recycling and waste reduction program by July 1, 2012 due to diminishing space in landfills and growing environmental concerns. In order to comply with the State's mandate, the County implemented a commercial franchise system for the unincorporated areas of the County.

**What type of system did the County implement?**

The County implemented a Non-Exclusive Commercial Solid Waste Collection Franchise System (non-exclusive franchise) on July 1, 2012. A non-exclusive franchise is a system in which a jurisdiction allows solid waste collection services to be provided by private waste haulers but requires haulers to enter into a non-exclusive commercial franchise agreement (Agreement) with the jurisdiction, in this case the County. Under this non-exclusive franchise system, customers will have a choice of more than one waste hauler because the system is open to competition to all haulers that enter into an Agreement. The waste haulers deal directly with the public and businesses in competing for customers.

**When did the Board of Supervisors authorize the franchise system to move forward on a countywide basis?**

On September 28, 2004, the Board adopted an ordinance to authorize franchise agreements for solid waste handling services in all or part of the unincorporated areas.

**What is the non-exclusive franchise system intended to do?**

The franchise system is intended to:

- Enhance recycling efforts and participation by providing customers separate collection of trash, recyclables and green waste materials, offering free bulky item and electronic waste collection, and by distributing recycling and waste diversion educational outreach materials.
- Improve customer service by offering a standardized, high-level of service, based on community input and specific needs. The County will enforce service standards through daily inspection of hauler's performance and assessment of liquidated damages for not meeting the standards prescribed in the agreement.
- Improve documentation of recycling efforts by requiring the franchise waste hauler to provide collection, disposal, and recycling information. This aids the County's effort to substantiate its compliance with the State's waste reduction mandate.

Overall, the franchise system will assist the County in meeting the State mandate by increasing recycling, requiring better reporting, and providing funding for additional recycling and educational programs.

**Who is required to obtain an Agreement?**

All waste haulers who provide service or plan to provide service in **bins or dumpsters and roll-off boxes** to residential, multi-family, commercial, industrial and institutional properties in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County (excluding the Garbage Disposal Districts and cities) will be required to enter into an Agreement. Additionally, this requirement applies to all waste haulers providing roll-off and construction and demolition handling services in the unincorporated areas of the County.

### **Who will be affected?**

All customers that utilize **bins or dumpsters and roll-off boxes** for the collection of their solid waste within the unincorporated County areas (excluding the Garbage Disposal Districts and cities) will be affected. These customers may be residential, multi-family, or commercial properties. All customers that utilize **carts** for the collection of their solid waste within the unincorporated County areas are excluded.

### **How does a Non-Exclusive Solid Waste Commercial Franchise work?**

A non-exclusive solid waste commercial franchise allows the County to enter into agreements with waste haulers to provide waste collection services to customers such as multi-family and commercial properties in the unincorporated areas of the County. Under these agreements, waste haulers would abide by specific service standards and requirements.

### **When did the new franchise system become effective?**

The new system began on July 1, 2012.

### **Can I stay with my current hauler?**

Yes, provided your hauler is a franchise waste hauler. Waste haulers are required to enter into a non-exclusive commercial franchise agreement with the County in order to provide services in bin or dumpsters and roll-off boxes to customers within the unincorporated areas of the County. Customers will be able to arrange for collection services with any of the franchised waste haulers.

### **Will my rates increase under the new system?**

The franchise agreement will not dictate or set rates. However, you may lower your trash bill by subscribing to recycling services because less trash will be collected resulting in a smaller trash container. By downsizing your trash container you may reduce your costs.

### **What do the State's mandatory commercial recycling regulations require?**

Assembly Bill 341 and Assembly Bill 32 require all businesses that generate 4 cubic yards of commercial solid waste per week and multi-family properties (5 units or more) to arrange for recycling service starting July 1, 2012 through one of the following:

- o Subscribe to service that collects recyclables separately, or
- o Send materials to mixed waste processing facility that diverts recyclables, or
- o Self-haul your own recyclables

### **What are the recycling service options that the County is offering with the new system?**

All customers that are subject to the State's mandatory commercial recycling regulation will receive one of the following at no additional charge:

- o One cubic yard recycling bin/capacity;
- o Two 96 gallon recycling carts due to storage constraints;
- o Processing at a mixed waste processing facility to recover recyclables

Additional recycling containers, capacity and frequency will be offered for no more than half the rate for the same type of trash collection service.

### **I'm a residential customer. What are my recycling options?**

Residential customers such as single family homes and condos that use dumpsters can request the same recycling services above at no additional charge by contacting their franchise waste hauler.

### **I am interested in recycling but I don't have the space for additional bins. What can I do?**

The franchise agreement requires waste haulers to provide recycling services to customers. The waste hauler will work with you to determine and customize recycling services to meet your needs such as exchanging your current trash bin for smaller bins or providing smaller recycling carts.

### **I am not sure what can be recycled.**

Educational materials were mailed to customers in July including a list of recyclable materials. If you haven't received information please contact your franchise waste hauler to request a copy.

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

Residential and multi-family customers have the choice of having bulky items and electronics collected by selecting one of the following free service options: (1) 5 pickups of bulky items (limit of 5 items per pick-up) and unlimited amounts of certain electronics upon request each year or (2) One annual cleanup event with a collection of unlimited amounts of bulky items and certain electronics on the date agreed to between the customer and the waste hauler.

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

Customers are encouraged to contact their waste hauler first to resolve issues concerning the delivery of service. If the waste hauler fails to resolve the issue to your satisfaction please contact Public Works at the franchise hotline number below.

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

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

**Under the franchise system, when can a customer terminate trash collection service or change service provider?**

**Customers' Bill of Rights.** Your waste hauler should have given you a copy of your Customer Bill of Rights on July 1 2012 (or if you are a new customer, when your service begins). The Bill of Rights tells you generally what types of discards your hauler must collect, and when and where it must collect them. It also describes your billing and termination rights.

**Your service order.** In addition, if your hauler has not already given you a written subscription (service) order, it must do so by January 1, 2013. Your subscription order tells you specifically the rates you will pay for your service.

- 1. No-fault termination right: 90 days.** In general, you can terminate your service - for any reason or no reason - by giving your hauler a **90-day** notice of termination.
- 2. Determination for cause: 14 days.** However, if your hauler does not give you service described under Customers' Bill of Rights (including over-charging you), you may terminate your service by giving your hauler a **14-day** notice of termination.

If you were an existing customer on July 1, 2012 and your hauler did *not* give you a copy of the Customer Bill of Rights as required, you may terminate your service by giving 14 days' notice. However, in the future, you can terminate only after giving 90 days' notice *unless* your hauler fails to provide service as required under the Bill of Rights, your subscription order and the hauler's franchise agreement with the County.

**How is a "Customer Contact" established for the purposes of terminating franchise services or regarding any service related questions?**

Please refer to the approved Customer Bill of Rights under the section **Where You Can Contact Us**. You may call your waste hauler directly regarding service or complaints at their toll free customer service phone number. You may also go to their office or contact them by mail correspondence to their office address or by e-mail. If your waste hauler does not satisfactorily resolve any complaint; you may call the County at 1-800-993-5844.

**Does our Customer Service Agreement need to be consistent with the County approved Customer Subscription Order and Bill of Rights?**

Yes, it must include all applicable franchise services, terms and conditions and cannot be in conflict with the County's approved Customer Subscription Order and Bill of Rights. However, Section 7 – Customer Service, Subsection C.6 of the Franchise Agreement, allows a waste hauler up to 6 months to amend its contract to be consistent with the County approved Customer Subscription Order and Bill of Rights.

**Does a customer generated Agreement need to be consistent with the County approved Customer Subscription Order and Bill of Rights?**

Yes, it must include all applicable franchise services, either within the customer's text or referenced and attached to the customer's text. The County approved Customer Subscription Order and Bill of Rights establishes minimum standards for waste haulers providing trash collection service in the unincorporated County areas.

**If you have any questions, please call the franchise hotline at (800) 993-5844, Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. or for more information please visit [www.LACountySWIMS.org](http://www.LACountySWIMS.org).**