

Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/  
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

Minutes of April 16, 2009

County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
900 South Fremont Avenue  
Alhambra, California

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Margaret Clark, League of California Cities-Los Angeles Division  
Betsey Landis, Environmental Organization Representative  
Mary Ann Lutz, League of California Cities-Los Angeles Division  
Gerry Miller, represented by Charles Modica, City of Los Angeles  
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative  
Ron Saldana, Private Sector Representative  
Greig Smith, City of Los Angeles

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS REPRESENTED BY OTHERS:**

Gail Farber, represented by Carlos Ruiz, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Dr. Jonathan Fielding, rep. by Gerry Villalobos, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health  
Stephen Maguin, rep. by Chris Salomon, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County  
Enrique Zaldivar, represented by Karen Coca, City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:**

Carl Clark, Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc.  
Michael Conway, City of Long Beach  
David Kim, City of Los Angeles  
Sam Perdomo, Business/Commerce Representative  
Dr. Barry Wallerstein, South Coast Air Quality Management District

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Paul Alva, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Joe Bartolata, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
James Benken, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Nicole Bernson, City of Los Angeles  
David Coscia, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Rogelio Gamino, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Rafael Garcia, BFI/Republic  
Wayde Hunter, NVC/ATAS/GHNVC  
Tom John, Forecebel USA, Inc.  
Josh Kirschenbaum, Newaste  
Chi-Sun Lee, Forecebel USA, Inc.  
Linda Lee, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Michelle Leonard, SCS Engineers  
Tobie Mitchell, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Mark Patti, City of Santa Clarita  
Lindsay Sagorski, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Steven Samaniego, Rincon Environmental  
Emiko Thompson, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 19, 2009**

A motion was made to approve the corrected minutes of March 19, 2009. The motion passed unanimously.

**III. REPORT FROM THE ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE**

Ms. Tobie Mitchell provided an update on the Subcommittee meeting held earlier in the day. She reported that County staff will conduct presentations on the conversion technology demonstration project at the San Diego Biocycle Conference, which will be held from April 27 to April 30, and the Biomass Collaboration, which takes place on May 12 and 13 in Sacramento. Ms. Mitchell indicated that last month Mr. Coby Skye provided a presentation on conversion technologies to the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) at their Western Regional Symposium.

Ms. Mitchell reported that County staff is working with County Counsel to develop agreements with the technology development team that staff has been consulting with. She stated that staff plans to make recommendations for projects and consultants to the Board of Supervisors by the end of May or beginning of June.

Ms. Mitchell reported that the Subcommittee heard a presentation by the University of California Riverside, College of Engineering Center for Environmental Research and Technology (UC Riverside) on their hydrogasification conversion technology project, which seeks to convert biomass and biosolids into fuel. She noted that the UC Riverside development team had produced a very influential study on conversion technology emissions in 2006. The study was funded by the Waste Board and has been referenced by the Waste Board and the County of Los Angeles in various reports.

Ms. Mitchell reported that the UC Riverside development team is applying for a grant from the California Energy Commission (CEC) to fund the hydrogasification conversion technology project. She indicated that after hearing the presentation, the Subcommittee unanimously adopted a motion requesting that the Task Force send a letter to the CEC in support of the project's request for funding.

A motion was made to send letter to the California Energy Commission in support of the application of the University of California Riverside requesting a grant for conducting the study on conversion technology. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Mitchell also reported that the Subcommittee approved a second motion requesting that the Task Force sends the State legislature a letter in support of the most recent language of AB 222, which was released on April 14.

Mr. Mike Mohajer stated that AB 222 is a follow up to previous legislation on conversion technologies that the Task Force and the County of Los Angeles have introduced. He stated that AB 222 is yet another effort to promote the development of conversion technologies. The Bill is coauthored by assembly members Anthony Adams and Fiona Ma, who is the majority whip in the Assembly, as well as several other Assembly Members. Mr. Mohajer stated that the Bill is scheduled to be heard before the Utilities and Commerce Committee on April 27, 2009, and that he will attend to represent the Task Force.

A two part motion was made to 1) send a letter in support of the most recent language of AB 222, released April 14, 2009, to assembly members Adams and Ma and 2) send a letter to all the mayors and city managers in Los Angeles County requesting they forward a letter in support of AB 222 to the legislature. The second letter should include a sample letter that Cities could use when drafting their letters of support. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Mohajer stated that staff should seek letters of support for AB 222 from Councilmember Greig Smith and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). SCAG will hold its regional council meeting on May 7, 2009. Assembly member Fiona Ma will be the keynote speaker at this event.

#### **IV. FORCEBEL – SUPEX SYSTEM FOR RECLAIMING MSW LANDFILLS**

Mr. Chi-Sun Lee, the Director supporting the planning and direction of the technology cooperation program of the US/Asia Environmental Partnership, introduced Mr. Tom T. John, who is the owner of Tom John, P.E. Incorporated, to provide a presentation ([see attachment](#)) on the Forcebel Company's SUPEX Systems for reclaiming MSW landfills and MTB system for sorting municipal solid waste (MSW) and recycling.

According to Mr. John, SUPEX system was created to process the waste materials already on active and inactive landfill sites while the Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) System was created to separates combustibles from noncombustibles before entering landfill or Resource Recovery Facility (RRF). Currently, the main problem with operational landfills is that they have a limited capacity and as landfills reach

their design limits, more landfills are needed, but they are not necessarily readily available.

Mr. John stated that SUPEX can separate and “recover” the materials in an existing or closed landfill and is comprised of a series of processing units specifically chosen to separate the materials found in the individual landfill. SUPEX sorts out combustibles, recoverable metals, compostable materials, and soils/sand/rocks which can be used for construction, leaving only about 5 percent to 10 percent of the original volume for landfill disposal.

Mr. John stated that SUPEX components used to sort the materials are custom selected to best fit the type of trash in the specific landfill. Components may be added or removed from the process line if the landfill composition changes during processing. Furthermore, components may be implemented concurrently in the process line to increase the rate of volume processing for a particular waste segment.

Mr. John explained that after processed by SUPEX, any removed combustible matter would be compressed to approximately 50% of the original volume and returned to a landfill or transported to a Waste to Energy plant or approved industrial furnace for use as Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF). Any removed food wastes could be sent for composting, while the removed metals could be recovered for reprocessing. Additionally, the removed soils and aggregate could be used in the construction of roadways and buildings, while the remaining material – about 5 percent to 10 percent of the original volume - is returned to the landfill, or is sent to another landfill location

Mr. John mentioned that SUPEX processing costs per ton processed are competitive with most landfill tipping fees, and each cubic meter of volume recovered may be “re-sold” as available landfill space. The benefit is that SUPEX can eliminate the long term odor/health risks from the gasses and extend the life of the landfill or restore the value of the land. Mr. John stated that most importantly, SUPEX is a demonstrated technology that has been successfully implemented in Korea, Japan and Taiwan.

Mr. John stated that the typical MBT system consists of a primary rotating/secondary fixed knife segment which shreds the plastic bag and the paper, cardboard, and plastics in the trash; a mechanical rake segment removes the light weight and high energy value materials (fluff); an inertial separator further segregates the materials by density, and a vibrating screen to separate the soils/sands/gravel and similar materials. After the MBT process, the fluff and other combustibles are separated and compressed. These materials may be returned to a landfill or transported to an Incinerator, Waste to Energy plant or approved industrial furnace for use as RDF, where the high heat value of the materials reduces the plant’s requirement for supplemental oil. He concluded his presentation by stating that the SUPEX and MBT

systems are proven technologies, provide substantial benefits, are cost effective solutions, and are environmentally and socio-economically right thing to do.

Ms. Margaret Clark asked whether conversion technologies have been studied in dealing with those residual materials that are to go back to the landfill. Mr. John explained that although conversion technologies have been looked at, the original plan of the SUPEX system was simply the mechanical separation of materials.

Ms. Landis questioned whether there was a minimum surface area required in order to operate, as the terrain of many of the local landfills are not flat, have canyons, and might prove difficult to efficiently operate the machinery. Mr. John said that the machinery should be able to operate in these conditions provided that the system is placed in a nearby location and the materials delivered to it. Ms. Landis suggested that it may be helpful to determine how many different types of materials to be removed, and what the minimum size or space that would be needed for so many different lines of removal.

Ms. Landis also asked to whether there are any preferences to the age of the landfills. Mr. John stated there are no preferences, but the age and materials sought after will dictate the types of equipment needed to effectively process the landfill.

Mr. Mike Mohajer inquired on the processing cost per ton. Mr. Chi-Sun Lee stated that the cost is \$30 to \$35 per ton in Japan. Mr. Mohajer suggested that in the Los Angeles region, where there are a lot of gravel pits that are being used for mostly construction and demolition materials, it may be beneficial to look further into use of equipment and machinery in these locations.

## **V. UPDATE ON AB 2296**

Mr. Martins Aiyetiwa reported that at last month's Task Force meeting, staff was instructed to work with Mr. Mike Mohajer, Ms. Betsey Landis, and Mr. Chuck Boehmke in drafting comments on the proposed Phase II regulations. A letter with comments was sent to the Waste Board on April 9, 2009.

Mr. Aiyetiwa stated that the comment letter focused on two main issues. The first issue related to the "step down" provision in the proposed regulations. He indicated that this provision disproportionately affects landfill operators with a trust fund as the financial mechanism and that is of paramount importance to local governments. The second issues related to a "step up" provision that would require landfill owners and operators to "step up" if they are not performing to the standard required.

Mr. Aiyetiwa reported that the Waste Board will conduct a public hearing on April 16, 2009, to discuss the proposed regulations. In addition, on April 23, 2009, the full Waste Board will consider adoption of the proposed Phase II regulations, as well as the staff recommendations to the State legislature regarding AB 2296. He noted that AB 2296 requires the Waste Board to finalize its recommendations by July 1, 2009. Mr. Aiyetiwa indicated that a summary of the Waste Board staff recommendations to the State legislature will be provided at the next Task Force meeting.

Mr. Mohajer indicated that he plans to attend the Waste Board meeting of April 23. He stated that elements in the recommendations that are not consistent with the Task Force position must be addressed. He indicated that with the consent of the Task Force, he will raise the issues before the Waste Board, if necessary. Task Force members agreed and consent was given to Mr. Mohajer to address issues at the Waste Board meeting.

## **VI. UPDATE ON AB 283**

Mr. Mohajer explained that AB 283 is the product stewardship and extended producer responsibility (EPR) Bill authored by assembly member Wesley Chesbro. He stated that after reviewing the original Bill, the Task Force sent a letter of concern listing a number of issues to be addressed by the legislature. Mr. Mohajer indicated that the Bill was amended and released with a new language on April 13, 2009.

Mr. Mohajer indicated that the new version of the Bill has addressed most of the Task Force's concerns but some suggested revisions had not yet been incorporated. For example, the definition of "cradle to cradle" was modified but does not include the provisions suggested by the Task Force. The Bill also still refers to the requirement of local governments to develop materials processing facilities. Mr. Mohajer noted that the goal of the Bill is to promote EPR, not to grant jurisdiction to the Waste Board over local projects.

Mr. Mohajer noted that the Bill has progressed in the legislature despite stiff opposition from the manufacturing industry. He indicated that the Bill is scheduled for consideration by the Natural Resources Committee on April 20 and that he plans to attend that committee meeting.

Mr. Mohajer stated that although the Bill has not addressed all of the Task Force's concerns, it includes items of special interest to the Task Force and local jurisdictions; for example, it requires all universal waste to be included as part of the EPR process.

A motion was made to send a letter to the Bill's author to support and amend AB 283 to include provisions specified by the TF in the definition of cradle to cradle design,

and eliminate the requirements for local governments. The motion passed with Ms. Betsey Landis opposing.

**VII. UPDATE ON AB 222**

See item III above.

**VIII. UPDATE ON LIFE CYCLE ASSESSMENT OF ORGANICS DIVERSION ALTERNATIVES**

Ms. Linda Lee reported that the Waste Board is conducting a life cycle assessment of organics diversion alternatives in response to the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. In addition, the Waste Board established Strategic Directive 6.1 which calls for a reduction of 50 percent in the amount of organics disposed at landfills.

Ms. Lee stated that diversion alternatives considered in the life cycle assessment include composting, chipping and grinding, recycling, aerobic digestion, biomass to energy, and waste to energy facilities. She indicated that each of these alternatives is to be assessed for greenhouse gas emissions and cost savings in comparison to the base case, landfill disposal, which includes the use of greenwaste as alternative daily cover (ADC).

Ms. Lee also reported that staff was directed to prepare a letter to the Waste Board expressing the Task Force's concerns, including the omission of conversion technology as an organics diversion alternative, and counting the use of greenwaste as ADC as disposal. She stated that the Waste Board has published three preliminary study results. Staff has reviewed two of the studies and has prepared comments to be included in the letter to be sent to the Waste Board. Ms. Lee noted that the third study was published earlier in the day and staff will be reviewing it in the coming days.

**IX. SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL UPDATE**

Mr. Rafael Garcia provided an update on Sunshine City/County Landfill.

Mr. Garcia stated that since their last visit to the Task Force on December 18, 2008, there have been a number of new developments.

He stated that on December 18, 2008, the Task Force granted a Finding of Conformance for the joint City/County landfill project and the County Technical

Advisory Committee (TAC) also determined that BFI/Allied Waste had met all of the County requirements for the joint operation.

Mr. Garcia reported that on January 9, 2009, a meeting was held with the City of Los Angeles TAC, during which the City also determined that BFI/Allied had met all of the necessary requirements for the same project. He indicated that there have been no major physical changes in operation since then.

Mr. Garcia reported that prior to the joint City/County project, the site had consistently had only two operating working phases. Now, there is only one operating working phase, and the city side of the landfill operation is currently closed. He brought this to the Task Force's attention as it is both cost effective and good for the environment, with less equipment working and lower emissions.

Mr. Garcia also reported that in December 2008, Republic and Allied merged as a company. As a result of this merger, there has been an increase in volume at the site. He stated that from Monday through Friday, they are averaging 9,500 to 10,000 tons of waste at the site which is under the permitted 12,100 ton capacity.

Mr. Mike Mohajer asked whether the incoming tonnages are being disposed in the city portion of the landfill and whether the County CUP restricts the amount of waste that can be disposed in the County portion until the County and the City resolve the Alternatives to Landfilling Fee issue. Mr. Carlos Ruiz explained that the County does not have such restriction, but the requirement in the County permit is that the operation must follow the Fill Sequencing Plan approved by the County.

Mr. Wayne Hunter of the North Valley Coalition asked the question as to why the County of Los Angeles did not issue a Notice of Violation to BFI for exceeding their 6,000 ton per day limit on the County side from December 2008 to January 9, 2009 before it was approved by the City. Mr. Carlos Ruiz replied that as of December 31, 2008, BFI had met all of the requirements of the County. Mr. Martins Aiyetiwa further explained that the County contacted the City concerning the approval and they confirmed that they approved the joint City/County landfill. Therefore, on the basis of the County's approval on December 18, 2008, and City's approval on January 9, 2009, the County believes that BFI had operated within its permit.

Mr. Mike Mohajer stated that a number of reporting requirements were in the Finding of Conformance issued to BFI. However, he has not seen any of the reports. One of those requirements includes a letter to the Task Force regarding change of ownership, such as BFI's recent merger with Republic. He reminded BFI that they must continue to comply with all reporting requirements and conditions within the Finding of Conformance.

Mr. Mohajer also requested staff to provide the status of the Chiquita Canyon Landfill and Waste Connections and their proposal for expansion.

## **X. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Mr. Rogelio Gamiño provided updates on the following Legislative Bills ([see attachment](#)):

### **1. AB 925—introduced by Saldana**

This Bill would prohibit a retailer, on and after January 1, 2012, from selling or offering for sale a single-use plastic beverage container with a cap that is not affixed to, or part of, the beverage container. The bill would also prohibit a retailer, on and after that date, from selling or offering for sale a single-use beverage container with a cap, unless the cap is made of a recyclable material, as defined.

Mr. Gamiño noted that at the last Task Force meeting, members had asked how the pull tab problem was solved considering that the proposed Bill places the burden on the retailer.

Mr. Gamiño pointed out that in the 1960's the pull-tab version of the aluminum can was a common form of litter as well as a potential source for injury as the tabs were occasionally dropped into the can and accidentally swallowed. In the 1970's stay tabs were introduced, partly to prevent the injuries caused by removable tabs.

Mr. Gamiño indicated that most of the 40 billion plastic bottles produced in the U.S. are used for beverages. He noted that plastic bottle caps are made from a different grade of plastic which requires more heat to melt. For that reason, along with the lack of market value, many municipalities do not collect the caps for recycling. The caps end up as litter or trash, in landfills and beaches, or migrating into rivers and oceans.

Mr. Gamiño suggested that one option to consider in solving the burden put on retailers by the Bill is to involve the manufacturers in discussions to affix caps on bottles.

2. AB 1173—introduced by Huffman

This Bill would direct the Public Utilities Commission to only utilize Public Goods Charge funds to subsidize fluorescent manufacturers and distributors for lamps that meet the Energy Star qualification on mercury standards and lamp life as well as implement a fluorescent lamp recycling program.

Mr. Gamiño stated that this Bill could alleviate the burden of fluorescent light disposal from the County's household hazardous waste program; reduce the County's cost to properly dispose of this material; and establish additional and convenient collection points for the public.

A motion was made to send a letter of support for AB 1173 to assembly member Huffman. The motion passed unanimously.

3. AB 1343—introduced by Huffman

This bill would require architectural paint manufacturers to develop and implement strategies to reduce the generation, promote the reuse, and manage the end-of-life of post consumer paint through collecting, transporting, and processing. The manufacturers would be allowed to establish a cost recovery system to collect a fee from the consumer.

Mr. Gamiño stated that this Bill could alleviate the burden of paint disposal from the County's household hazardous waste program; reduce the County's cost to properly dispose of this material; and establish additional and convenient collection points for the public. He suggested having the cost for the recovery program built into the cost of the paint so as not to deter individuals from recycling their paints at the newly established collection.

Staff was instructed to bring the Bill back with clarification on the language.

4. SB 25—introduced by Padilla

As introduced on December 1, 2008, SB 25 contained a provision requiring the Waste Board, by an unspecified date, to develop a strategic and comprehensive plan to achieve a 60 percent and 75 percent diversion rate from landfill disposal or transformation.

Mr. Gamiño noted that the Bill also proposes an increase in tipping fees from \$1.40 to \$2.13 per ton. He also indicated that a letter of concern was sent on

December 1, 2008 but the Bill still does not address the Task Force's previous concerns.

A motion was made to send letter to Senator Padilla strongly opposing SB 25. The motion passed unanimously.

5. SB 524—introduced by Correa

This Bill would require the California Environmental Protection Agency, on or before February 1, 2010, to establish an auto shredder residue working group to review and evaluate the use of treated auto shredder residue as alternative daily cover, and submit a report on or before December 31, 2010, to the Legislature on the findings of the working group. The bill would also prohibit DTSC from altering the current use of auto shredder residue as alternative daily cover, pending the issuance of the report.

Staff was instructed to conduct further research on the Bill and bring it back before the Task Force.

**XI. OCEAN PROTECTION COUNCIL'S MASTER ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (MEA) ON SINGLE-USE PLASTIC AND PAPER BAGS**

Ms. Emiko Thompson provided a presentation ([see attachment](#)) on the County's Single Use Bag Reduction and Recycling Program.

Ms. Thompson presented an overview of the County's program, stating that on January 22, 2008, the County Board of Supervisors adopted the Single Use Bag Reduction and Recycling Program to reduce the environmental impacts of litter, from single-use bags distributed at stores. She explained, the following regarding plastic bags:

- They're lightweight, and can easily become litter
- Many end up in our waterways and ocean
- When they tear into smaller pieces, they're even more problematic to the environment, and
- Can degrade the marine ecosystem.

Ms. Thompson explained that one of the most effective alternatives to curb the impact of plastic bags on the environment is for shoppers to utilize reusable bags, as they, reduce the potential for litter, instill environmentally sustainable practices, and conserve natural resources. She stated that as part of the County's program, a working group was established to examine the issues regarding single-use bags. The

group consists of a wide range of stakeholders who meet monthly to collectively develop the components of this Program. Some of the main goals of the program are to promote reusable bags, increase at-store recycling of plastic bags, increase the recycled content of paper bags, and litter abatement.

The program currently affects large supermarkets and retail stores as defined in Assembly Bill 2449. The program is voluntary and has three main components:

- Store Training: such as reducing double-bagging, or refraining from bagging single items
- Customer Incentives: including offering reward points to customer who bring reusable bags
- Public Education and Awareness: such as displaying anti-litter and other environmental messages

The Program targets to have a region-wide impact and not just the unincorporated areas. To date, there are ten partner cities: Azusa, Bell, Glendale, Hermosa Beach, Lomita, Pico Rivera, Pomona, Redondo Beach, Santa Fe Springs, and Signal Hill.

Benchmarks of the Program are to reduce the plastic bag disposal rate by 30% by July 2010 and 65% by July 2013. Falling short of these benchmarks may trigger actions towards banning plastic bags. In preparation, an ordinance to ban plastic bags is currently being drafted by County Counsel in coordination with Public Works, Regional Planning, and the Chief Executive Office. Ms. Thompson explained that other jurisdictions have taken similar actions:

- Malibu – Adopted an ordinance banning plastic bags in May 2008, which became effective in December 2008
- Santa Monica – is considering banning plastic bags and has drafted an ordinance
- City of Los Angeles – will ban plastic bags if legislation for a statewide per-bag fee is not passed by July 2010
- Manhattan Beach – Adopted an ordinance banning plastic bags. However, on February 20, 2009, a Superior Court judge ruled that the City needed to first complete an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) before passing their ordinance.

Accordingly, the County will prepare an EIR to accompany the County's ordinance, which will be a Regional EIR so that it may also be useful to other jurisdictions. Public Works is retaining a consultant to conduct the EIR, which is anticipated for completion by April 2010.

Ms. Thompson stated that on a separate but related matter, on April 23, 2009, the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) will be considering their funding and preparation of a Master Environmental Assessment (MEA) on single-use plastic and paper bags at their meeting in Sacramento. The MEA would serve as a technical resource which could be incorporated into EIRs prepared by municipalities and would provide useful data on the overall impacts of single-use bags over the entire state. The MEA would not take the place of an EIR, but it would serve as an additional data resource, as well as potentially reduce the cost to municipalities for the preparation of their EIRs.

Ms. Thompson requested that the Task Force submit a Letter of Support to the OPC for their MEA. She stated that support from the Task Force would enhance resources for public policy decision makers, and strengthen regional impact and actions regarding single use bags. Since Public Works serves a major role in the County's Program, staff recommends that the Chair of the Task Force send a support letter to the OPC for the preparation of an MEA.

A motion was made to send a letter of support as requested. The motion passed unanimously

**XII. REPORT FROM CIWMB**

No action. Item postponed until the next meeting.

**XIII. UPDATE ON COURT DECISION ON LAWSUIT BROUGHT AGAINST REGIONAL WATER BOARD**

No action. Item postponed until the next meeting.

**XIV. NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May 21, 2009, at 2 p.m.

**XV. OPEN DISCUSSION/PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no further public comment. The meeting adjourned at 3:09 p.m.