

# Roadmap to a Sustainable Waste Management Future

## County Operations Subcommittee Meeting

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Los Angeles County Department of Public Works  
900 S. Fremont Ave, Alhambra CA 91803  
Conference Room B

Thursday, August 9, 2018  
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

### MEETING SUMMARY

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

Kimberly Lyman, Public Works

- Attendees were welcomed, and participants introduced themselves.

#### **Recap of Previous Subcommittee Meeting (May 2018)**

Nilda Gemeniano, Public Works

- A presentation was given about the County Procurement Policy (P-1050); how it was developed and how it brought more attention to the way the County should purchase more sustainable items.
  - The County has partnered with US Communities Go Green Program to purchase more sustainable products.
  - County operations are not to purchase or use plastic carryout bags or expanded polystyrene (EPS, aka Styrofoam™) food containers.
  - Departments are advised to revise procurement agreements to purchase products with more recycled content and are encouraged to reuse/repurpose products.
- There were discussions on reducing waste to conserve landfill space, and on challenges on finding markets for recyclables due to latest foreign import policies.
- New Facility Ancillary Services Master Agreement (FASMA) addresses Assembly Bill (AB) 1826 (mandatory recycling of organic waste by businesses and institutions that meet certain compliance thresholds) and Senate Bill (SB) 1383 (50 percent of organic waste to be diverted by 2020 and 75 percent by 2025).
  - The FASMA released in April 2018 now has ten hauling regions with new services, pricing for services, and includes facility waste assessments.

#### **Small-Scale On-Site Food Waste Processing Technologies**

Kawsar Vazifdar, Public Works (Presentation begins on slide [#3](#))

- A presentation was made on options for processing or recycling food waste on-site at County facilities through various technologies. (Strategy 4, Initiative B3)

- AB 1826 requires businesses, including County facilities, to arrange for organic waste recycling services if they generate over a certain threshold of organic waste each week.
  - Starting January 1, 2019, the law will apply to facilities that generate more than four cubic yards per week of commercial solid waste, which means more County facilities will be affected.
  - Anaerobic digesters and in-vessel composters meet the requirements of AB 1826 for recycling organic waste.
    - Anaerobic digesters convert food waste to biogas and produce a liquid and/or solid fertilizer. The biogas can be used to produce electricity, fuel, or combined heat and power based on the needs of a facility.
    - In-vessel composters convert food waste to compost in an enclosed system.
  - Using liquefiers and dehydrators to process food waste is not considered recycling under AB 1826; food waste needs to be processed further to be considered recycling.
    - Processing the slurry from a liquefier through composting or anaerobic digestion would be considered recycling. Using the slurry as animal feed is also considered recycling.
    - Dehydrating food waste reduces weight and volume, which in turn can possibly reduce waste hauling costs. Using uncomposted food waste as a mulch or fertilizer is still considered disposal; however, dehydrated food waste can be composted, which meets the requirements of AB 1826 for recycling organic waste.
- Only certain County facilities will be required to comply with AB 1826, but all County facilities will be required to comply with SB 1383 by 2022.
- Departments interested in small-scale anaerobic digesters, in-vessel composters, and dehydrators are advised to contact Kawsar Vazifdar for further information and possible on-site assessment.
- Methods to reduce odor and insects during the food waste collection process were discussed:
  - Consider more frequent food collections (two to three times a week versus once a week) and check the pricing chart of your facility's waste hauler.
  - Obtain a smaller bin/dumpster that is picked up more frequently.
  - Consider a food dehydrator to dry out food to reduce odor.
  - Contact your department's waste hauler to see if other collection bins and/or dumpsters are available in different sizes and/or come with lids and/or liners.
- To confirm funding for program compliance with SB 1383, attendees were advised to consult with their Budget section, request additional funding in their annual budget, and educate their Department to prioritize setting more money aside for compliance.

## **Public Works Headquarters Food Waste Collection Program**

Nam Doan, Public Works (Presentation begins on slide [#14](#))

- An update was given on recent developments in the food waste recycling program initiated at the Public Works Headquarters' (Headquarters) building last year. (Strategy 1, Initiative D1b)
- To develop a food waste recycling program, Departments must contact their waste hauler to confirm their requirements for food waste collection. Based on the requirements, departments will need to set up internal food waste collection bins with proper signage, develop outreach materials explaining how to recycle food waste and why food waste recycling is beneficial (Public Works also has outreach materials available), and subscribe to a food waste collection service.
  - Under the new FASMA, all County facilities can now subscribe to food waste collection services through the Internal Services Department.
- In June 2018, food waste collection bins were added to Headquarters' breakrooms.
- Environmental Programs Division (EPD) incorporated feedback from previous meetings and developed a flyer that explains how to separate food waste, trash and beverage containers and why it is important to recycle food waste. Flyers were placed in breakrooms above food waste bins, and an email was sent to Public Works' employees notifying them of the food waste bins.
- The biggest challenge initially experienced was contamination (e.g. clamshells, napkins, utensils, etc.); however, low contamination is consistently recorded from the new bins placed in breakrooms.
- Food waste ambassadors provided outreach at special events; Public Works is developing a "Scrape Your Plate" video to share on Public Works' internal website, and possibly emailed to employees and aired at special events.
- Participants were advised to learn who will be their facility manager or Department Recycling Coordinator is in order to share information and contact Public Works for further assistance.

## **Challenges to County Food Waste Recycling (Strategy 1, Initiative D1)**

Kawsar Vazifdar, Public Works (Presentation begins on slide [#26](#))

- Some of the challenges County Departments will face in developing and implementing food waste recycling at County facilities include:
  - Food waste recycling services cost more than trash collection.
  - Lack of outlets to process food waste:
    - Anaerobic digestion cannot process all types of waste, such as food-soiled paper. Certain facilities also have different requirements on accepting green waste.
    - Composting facilities can take a wider variety of food waste; however, there are not enough composting facilities in the County, and they have higher standards to reduce the risk of producing contaminated compost.
  - Significant shortfall of organic waste processing capacity in Los Angeles County
    - Capacity is available outside of the County, but because it is under the control of other jurisdictions, the County does not know if that will always be

available. County would also have to transport organic waste farther to out-of-County facilities.

- Potential Solutions
  - Continuing education to combat contamination.
  - Begin source reducing at facilities.
  - Subscribe to a food waste collection service to reduce costs.
  - Analyze how much waste collection service a facility needs (i.e. if there are too many dumpsters at a facility not being used, a department can reduce their collection service, and use the savings to subscribe to an organic waste collection service).
  - If it is difficult to find organic waste processing services, a department can manage organic waste on-site (e.g. in-vessel composting or small-scale anaerobic digestion system).
- Recommendations for implementing food waste recycling at County facilities
  - Training via SABA/Learning Net - contact the Department of Human Resources
    - Public Works is in the process of exploring the use of a consultant to develop digital training resources.
  - Add recycling to new-hire orientation.
  - Focus efforts on facility cafeterias.
  - Develop ways to prevent contamination of food waste collection bins.

### **Food Waste Reduction Outreach**

Nilda Gemeniano, Public Works

- 40 percent of food in the United States (US) goes uneaten.
- In September 2015, both the US and the United Nations (UN) set a goal of 50 percent reduction in food waste and food loss by 2030.
  - US food waste per person was about 219 pounds in 2010. The 2030 reduction goal aims to reduce food waste going to landfills and waste-to-energy facilities by 50 percent, which is about 109 pounds per person.
  - In 2010, food supply loss was at 31 percent, which is about 133 billion pounds. The 2030 reduction goal aims to cut food supply loss at the retail and consumer level in half, to approximately 66 billion pounds.
- For the UN to achieve their objective of ensuring sustainable and production patterns, it must halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer level and reduce food losses along production and supply chains by 2030.
- The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) has since developed a media campaign directed at consumers to reduce food waste, called “Save The Food” (slide [#37](#)).
  - The campaign website, [www.SaveTheFood.com](http://www.SaveTheFood.com), includes pages on tips, such as for food revival, freezing, storage, reducing food waste with kids, meal planning, shopping, and ways to cook and use up food. (Strategy 1, Initiative A4a)
  - The website also includes templates to use on social media, as well as flyers, audio public service announcements, and videos.

## Next Steps

- Internal Services will research the feasibility of amending custodial service contracts at County facilities to include collection of food waste and other recyclables.

## Meeting Participants

<b>Name</b>	<b>Department</b>
Ken Pellman	ACWM
Violet O. Contreras	Alternate Public Defender
Isaura Capell	Auditor-Controller
Maral Tashjian	Beaches & Harbors
Rita Kampalath	CEO
Candy Rodarte	Internal Services
Lois Giron	Internal Services
Inna Sarac	Medical Examiner - Coroner
Alex Mena	Parks & Recreation
Jim Smith	Parks & Recreation
Marisela Alderete	Probation
Bernadet Garcia-Silva	Public Health
Jose Galindo	Public Health
Beda Sasis	Public Social Services
Andrew Lee	Public Works - EPD
Arlene Morales	Public Works - EPD
Armando C. Aguilar	Public Works - EPD
Bella Hernandez	Public Works - EPD
Diana Lee	Public Works - EPD
Kawsar Vazifdar	Public Works - EPD
Kimberly Lyman	Public Works - EPD
La Salle Duong	Public Works - EPD
Martins Aiyetiwa	Public Works - EPD
Mireille Nseir	Public Works - EPD
Nam Doan	Public Works - EPD
Nilda Gemeniano	Public Works - EPD
Patrick Holland	Public Works - EPD
Theresa Hernandez	Public Works - EPD
Vigen Abramyan	Public Works - EPD
William Moreno	Public Works - EPD
Carmen Izaguirre-Gomez	Regional Planning
Anna Petrosyan	Registrar Recorder/County Clerk
Adrienne B. Ferree	Sheriff
Richard Sigur	Sheriff
Fernando Rubio	Treasurer & Tax Collector