

# SOLID INSIDE WASTE

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/  
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE



Spring 2010

Volume 62

## Countywide Sharps Waste Management Program Expansion Continues

In July 2008, the County Department of Public Works, in conjunction with the City of West Covina, launched the Home-Generated Sharps Waste Management Program (Program) to provide residents with a safe and convenient means for managing their sharps waste (e.g., hypodermic needles and syringes).

In California, it is illegal for any person to dispose of home-generated sharps waste in the trash, recycling, and green waste containers. State law also requires that sharps waste be transported in an approved container. In addition to offering free sharps containers and collecting the filled containers at designated locations, the Program aims to educate Los Angeles County residents on the State law and the resources available to them to properly manage their sharps waste.

Since its inception, the Program has expanded to serve a growing number of communities throughout the County of Los Angeles. Home-generated sharps waste is now accepted at the County's weekly HHW collection events, the Antelope Valley Environmental Collection Center, the City of Santa

Monica and the City of Los Angeles' permanent collection centers, and at 14 County Public Health clinics. In addition, there are over 60 sharps container distribution sites and 20 designated collection sites.

More recently, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department kicked-off its "Safe Drug Drop-Off" Program, which encourages residents to anonymously dispose of home-generated sharps waste, as well as unused or expired medications by utilizing secured drop boxes at 19 designated Sheriff's stations.

For details on container distribution sites and designated collection sites, visit [www.CleanLA.com](http://www.CleanLA.com) or call 1(888) CLEAN LA.

The County Public Works will continue to collaborate with various County Departments, local jurisdictions, and public/private organizations to further expand the Program's reach.

For more information regarding the Program, visit [www.CleanLA.com](http://www.CleanLA.com) or call 1(888) CLEAN LA.



*Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca speaks at the launch of the Sheriff's "Safe Drug Drop-Off" Program's Press Conference.*



*Home-generated sharps waste collected at the County's HHW weekly mobile collection events.*

**JOIN THE TEAM:** If you are interested in participating on the Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Public Education Subcommittee or if you would like to submit an article for *Inside Solid Waste*, please contact **Vanessa Lopez** at 626-458-6563, or [vlopez@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:vlopez@dpw.lacounty.gov). Quarterly meetings are held at the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works Headquarters to discuss and review upcoming newsletters. If you want to be involved or to contribute, please join the Subcommittee!

## City of Calabasas Honors Environmental Stewards

The Calabasas Environmental Commission held its annual Recycling Drawing Contest award ceremony in December 2009. Thirteen out of over 350 entries from grades K-8 were selected for the 2010 City of Calabasas Community Recycling Awareness calendar. During the ceremony, students shared their own recycling habits, including food waste recycling, the 2009 contest theme.

Six of the honored students shared more than just an award; they also shared the same teacher. Ms. Marilyn Fine, Art

Teacher at Lindero Canyon Middle School, is committed to using art to encourage students to seek creative ways to better their communities. Ms. Fine was recognized at the Carl Gibbs Environmental Excellence Award Ceremony on January 5, 2010 with the Education and Recycling Award. The award, named after late Environmental Commissioner, honors excellence in environmental stewardship.

For additional information, please contact Alex Farassati at 818-224-1600.

2009 Recycling Drawing Contest winners:

Name		Grade	School
First	Last		
Jeana	Park Yoon	1st	Castlebay Lane Elementary
Gillian	Yee	2nd	Sierra Canyon School
Khai	Berry	4th	Lupin Hill Elementary
Ally	Malilay	4th	Lupin Hill Elementary
Natalie	Aivazian	5th	Castlebay Lane Elementary
Brandon	Lim	5th	Castlebay Lane Elementary
Sami	Johnson	6th	Lindero Canyon Middle School
Caroline	Mahan	6th	Lindero Canyon Middle School
Maddie	Dingman	7th	Lindero Canyon Middle School
Pamela	Moidel	7th	Lindero Canyon Middle School
Gene	Ryan	7th	A.E. Wright Middle School
Carly	Francis	8th	Lindero Canyon Middle School
Lucy	Rowell	8th	Lindero Canyon Middle School



*2009 Recycling Drawing Contest winners.*



*Ms. Marilyn Fine receives 2009 Carl Gibbs Environmental Excellence Award for Education and Recycling.*

## CalRecycle Acting Director Margo Reid Brown Keynote Speaker at Southern California Waste Management Forum Conference

Acting Director of the newly formed State Department of Resources, Recycling, and Recovery (CalRecycle), Margo Reid Brown, spoke before a group at the 2010 Southern California Waste Management Forum spring conference on March 11, 2010 in Downey.

In January 2010, CalRecycle merged the duties of the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) and Department of Conservation's (DOC) Division of Recycling in order to create efficiency and bring the State's recycling programs together. Ms. Brown, Chair of the former CIWMB, focused on the first 60 days of CalRecycle. She reaffirmed that the department will continue to maintain an open transparent policy process similar to the former CIWMB.

Since January, CalRecycle has held several meetings including the first open workshop at the DOC where more than 80



people participated. CalRecycle's mission is to focus on product stewardship, organic waste recycling, increasing commercial recycling, and the need for local infrastructure. Ms. Brown emphasized that it is important to continue to educate each other on the "cradle to cradle movement."

Since the creation of the CIWMB, statewide diversion went from 10 percent to 54 percent in 2008. The California Redemption Value legislation was signed into law in 1986. Since then over 200 billion bottles and cans have been recycled. With the success of both agencies, Ms. Brown said that the structure may have changed, but the statute and the mission of CalRecycle remain the same.

For additional information, please contact Cynthia Vant Hul of the Task Force Public Education & Outreach Subcommittee at (909) 560-0542 or Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

## Conversion Technology Emissions Are Well Below Emission Standards *UC Riverside Emissions Study Finds*

In December 2009, Professor Bill Welch, Principal Engineer and Emissions Researcher at the University of California at Riverside, presented to the Task Force the findings of a recently completed UC Riverside study which analyzed third-party emissions data from 16 different operating thermal conversion technology facilities. A common misconception regarding such technologies is that they produce dangerous significant levels of toxic air emissions.

The report, *Evaluation of Emissions from Thermal Conversion Technologies Processing Municipal Solid Waste and Biomass (Released June 2009)*, studied 16 gasification facilities around the world and found that the levels of particulate matter, dioxins and furans, and other air pollutants emitted by these facilities were well below current emissions standards in the United States, South Coast Air Quality

Management District, European Union, and Japan, which are among the most stringent air emissions regulations in the world.

Unlike incineration or mass burn combustion facilities, which combust waste to produce steam and ash, gasification technologies use heat to "cook" and break down waste without combusting it. This creates gases, liquids, and solid byproducts that can be used in a wide variety of applications including electricity generation and biofuels production. Gasification technologies can divert from landfill disposal up to 100 percent of the incoming residual waste.

A copy of this report is available for download at the Southern California Conversion Technology website: [www.SoCalConversion.org](http://www.SoCalConversion.org).

Household Hazardous Waste can be taken to any of these locations. Electronic waste is also accepted. Call 1-800-98-TOXIC or 1 (888) CLEAN-LA for more information.

**Gaffey Street Collection Center**

1400 N. Gaffey St.  
San Pedro, CA 90021  
*Open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.*

**Hyperion Treatment Plant**

7660 W. Imperial Highway, Gate B  
Playa Del Rey, CA 90293  
*Open Saturday and Sunday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.*

**Washington Boulevard Collection Center**

2649 E. Washington Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90023  
*Open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.*

**Randall Street S.A.F.E. Center**

11025 Randall St.  
Sun Valley, CA 91352  
*Open Saturday, Sunday, and Monday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.*

**UCLA Location**

550 Charles E. Young Dr.  
West Los Angeles, CA 90095  
*Open Thursday, Friday, and Saturday 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.*

**Los Angeles/Glendale Collection Center**

4600 Colorado Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90039  
*Open Saturday and Sunday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.*

**Antelope Valley Environmental Collection Center**

**Antelope Valley Public Landfill**  
1200 West City Ranch Rd.  
Palmdale, CA 93551  
*Open 1st and 3rd Saturday each month 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.*

# WHAT'S UP?

**HHW ROUNDUPS** are open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. unless otherwise indicated. For more information, call the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works at **1 (888) CLEAN-LA (253-2652)**. For information about City of Los Angeles events, call **1 (800) 98-TOXIC (988-6942)**.

- May 1 **La Mirada** - La Mirada Regional Park, Tennis Court/Swimming Pool Parking Lot Adelfa Drive
- May 8 **Palos Verdes Peninsula** - Rancho Palos Verdes City Hall/City Yard, 30940 Hawthorne Blvd.
- May 8 **El Monte** - El Monte Airport, 4233 North Santa Anita Ave.
- May 15 **Unincorporated Altadena** - L.A. County, DPW Fleet Maintenance Yard 252 West Mountain View Ave.
- May 15 **West Covina** - West Covina Maintenance Yard, 825 Sunset Ave.
- May 22 **Unincorporated Florence-Firestone** - La Mirada Regional Park, Tennis Court/Swimming Pool Parking Lot, Adelfa Drive
- May 22 **Maywood** - Maywood Park, 57th St. and Heliotrope Ave.
- May 29 **Rosemead** - Southern California Edison Company, Southwest corner of Walnut Grove Ave. and Klingerman St.
- June 5 **Pasadena** - The Rose Bowl, Parking Lot "K" 1001 Rose Bowl Blvd.
- June 12 **Pomona** - LA County Fair, Hotel & Exposition Complex Gate 23, Arrow Highway
- June 13 **Unincorporated Agoura** - Calabasas Landfill (Scale Area), 5300 Lost Hills Rd.

## TASK FORCE MEETINGS

Meetings are held at the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works Headquarters, 900 South Fremont Ave., Alhambra.

May 27  
June 17  
July 15

Meetings are scheduled at 1 p.m. in Conference Room C, except May 27, in Conference Room B.

For information, call Benjamin Cortez at 626-458-2536, M-Th, 7 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

Looking for up-to-date information about the Task Force?

Visit [www.lacountyiswmtf.org](http://www.lacountyiswmtf.org) where you can find agendas, meeting minutes, and copies of the Inside Solid Waste newsletter.

# Achieving Greater Waste Diversion in California: Fundamental Strategies and Essential Tools March 2010

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California has led the nation in creating integrated solid waste management programs that place a priority on diverting waste materials away from landfills. Indeed, California is now diverting more than half of the solid waste generated in the state. This is possible, in large part, because local governments and solid waste management companies across the state have made enormous financial investments over the years to develop and implement waste diversion programs as well as constructing and operating recycling facilities.

The members of the California Chapters of the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) are proud of these achievements and will continue to be part of the solution as the state moves forward in achieving even greater diversion milestones. However, tomorrow's milestones can only be reached by thoughtful consideration today of the tools needed for success.

## **TOOL 1: REDUCTION OF SOLID WASTE GENERATION THROUGH PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP**

Preventing waste from ending up in a landfill should start with the initial product itself and continue with those involved in the life cycle of that product. Local government's public outreach can facilitate reducing, reusing and recycling to a certain extent, but ultimately products need to be recyclable to have a complete reuse cycle. Producers should be responsible for designing, manufacturing, and packaging a sustainable recyclable product. Distributors and retailers should also be involved in establishing and managing end-of-life systems for difficult-to-recycle products as an integral part of their marketing and customer service. Product stewardship can be achieved in California but it requires a new approach, such as legislation that incentivizes manufacturers to make an investment in redesigning products that promotes environmental sustainability while establishing a convenient way for consumers to return used or unwanted products to the manufacturer. Without legislative incentives to drive this shift in responsibility, many products will continue to become a waste at the end of their useful life placing the task of their final handling, diversion or disposal on local government, which is not always the most practical and cost effective approach.

## **TOOL 2: ANALYSIS OF THE TRUE LIFECYCLE ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC COSTS OF RECYCLING**

With the AB 32 Scoping Plan requiring for California businesses to participate in commercial waste recycling, a greater percentage of the recyclable goods will be removed from the municipal solid waste stream and less virgin materials will be extracted from the earth. While recycling offers environmental benefits, it also can have environmental impacts, particularly greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, within California and across the planet. Accurate assessment of global environmental effects and the costs associated with recycling choices is important in planning overall environmentally sound and sustainable waste management and diversion systems. Recyclable goods are often shipped overseas and processed under significantly less stringent or non-existent air pollution control, health, and safety standards. Only when accounting for all environmental impacts in a life cycle analysis can we determine the true environmental and economic benefits of California's recycling choices.

## **TOOL 3: INFRASTRUCTURE AND END MARKET DEVELOPMENT IN CALIFORNIA**

Recycling is sustainable only when there are sufficient markets for the goods recovered. The State needs to help develop robust markets by providing economic incentives and assistance to innovative businesses. Facilitation of new processing infrastructure and markets in California for recyclable goods would not only lessen the global environmental impacts associated with recycling noted above, but it would also give the state more control over the recycling markets while creating "green" jobs in the process. In many instances, the infrastructure exists but markets do not. For example, many processing facilities could easily recover additional materials from the waste stream, such as low-value or no-value plastics and fibers, but do not solely because markets are not available. Just as California strives to be the largest producer of recyclable materials, it should equally strive to put them to use in California. To achieve this, regulatory and permitting requirements need to be streamlined to facilitate the development of end markets and processing infrastructure and not impede them.

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### **TOOL 4: USHERING IN NEW TECHNOLOGIES FOR SOLID WASTE**

Once recyclable materials are optimally removed from the solid waste stream, the waste materials that are left behind have little to no beneficial reuse value in today's infrastructure. Business as usual is to landfill these materials. While today's landfills can safely and cost-effectively contain these materials, many of these waste materials can be beneficially used to produce energy or fuel using new types of technologies – conversion technologies. For example, renewable power can be produced from organics placed in biological tanks – anaerobic digesters. These digesters produce methane, which can be captured and used as a fuel in electric generators. Commercially available conversion technologies, such as gasification, can also produce clean power and advanced transportation fuels by utilizing the gas that is created under a thermal process. By removing the existing regulatory and legislative barriers and granting diversion credits, conversion technologies can provide substantial new sources of energy or clean fuel and provide new markets for materials otherwise disposed of in landfills. It should also be recognized that landfills across California currently recover and use landfill gas as a fuel source to produce power, contributing to the state's renewable energy portfolio. Governor Schwarzenegger has directed that by 2020 renewable energy comprise a third of the electricity produced in the state. All of these technologies help in achieving this goal.

### **TOOL 5: CLEAR DEFINITION OF ORGANIC WASTE DIVERSION POLICIES**

Policies at the state level call for increased diversion of "organics" from landfills. Strictly speaking, organic material is anything containing carbon. "Organics" are the largest fraction of the MSW stream and include "compostable organics," such as food wastes, yard trimmings, and wood waste, and non-compostable or other "organic waste." Without differentiating the organics, an uncalled for level of uncertainty is introduced and new diversion programs to address specific waste streams cannot be appropriately considered or developed. Achieving greater diversion of organics from landfills requires new processing infrastructure and new markets for the end products. However, siting new compostable organics processing facilities in many parts of California, particularly urban areas and areas where air quality requirements are stringent, is very difficult, if not impossible. Consequently, regulatory and permitting requirements need to be streamlined and consistent among various agencies to facilitate the development of end markets and processing infrastructure.

In addition, all alternative technologies that divert organics while complying with environmental standards need to be fully considered in future waste diversion milestones.

### **TOOL 6: RETENTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISCRETION BY ALLOWING A RANGE OF ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS FOR ACHIEVING INCREASED DIVERSION**

Given the wide diversity of California's communities, any increase in diversion mandates must allow for consideration of locally specific factors such as economics and environmental impacts, with the goal of facilitating the choices best suited to the community. This will ensure the greatest chance of success in going beyond the existing diversion mandate while maintaining a sound and stable solid waste management system.

### **TOOL 7: FUNDING TO IMPLEMENT NEW PROGRAMS**

The current recession is placing an extraordinary burden on local government. Cities and counties are grappling with how to close their budget shortfalls. This is made even more challenging with cutbacks from the drop in waste revenues that fund solid waste programs. Mandating increased diversion during this economic downturn is untenable without new funding by the state. Increased diversion requires new or augmented public outreach programs as well as new infrastructure. Capital for maintaining existing programs is already severely limited and financing new projects may not be possible in today's financial climate. Local government cannot afford to implement any new diversion programs or mandates without new types of funding resources.

### **TOOL 8: RECOGNITION OF THE VALUE OF ADEQUATE, SAFE LANDFILL CAPACITY**

As noted above, the state's priority for waste management is diversion of wastes from landfills. Because of this, at times, landfills have been characterized as being unsafe and even unnecessary. However, until all of the infrastructure, the markets, the funds, and public and political support are in place to divert all wastes, assuming that is even possible, landfills will continue to serve a critical role in managing solid waste in California. Today's landfills are integrated facilities and not just long-term repositories for solid waste that cannot be recycled; they are designed to protect the environment and public health, serve as a recycling outlet for beneficial reuse of waste materials, and allow production of significant renewable energy from very effective methane capture. Adequate landfill capacity must be a key component of any integrated waste management program.

## Achieving Greater Waste Diversion in California: Fundamental Strategies and Essential Tools March 2010

### TYPES OF SUCCESSFUL DIVERSION PROGRAMS IMPLEMENTED BY MEMBER JURISDICTIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA CHAPTERS OF SWANA:

- Volumetric service rate structure that encourages waste reduction and recycling.
- Widespread use of separate container curbside collection programs in conjunction with comprehensive materials recovery and composting facilities.
- Non-recycled solid waste taken to waste-to-energy facility rather than disposed in landfills.
- Using financial incentives under a Recycling Market Development Zone to encourage recycling and requiring private haulers to provide recycling services to their multi-family and commercial accounts.
- Creative education and public outreach tools to communicate effectively the benefits of waste reduction, reuse, and recycling.
- Diverting certain compostable organics to composting facilities.
- Conducting mobile household hazardous waste (HHW) and e-waste collection programs.
- Significant financial investments to develop and operate materials recovery facilities, permanent HHW and e-waste collection facilities, and other solid waste management infrastructure.
- Invested significant amounts of time and capital to study and evaluate conversion technologies, and analyze data from operating facilities overseas.

Please contact Paul Yoder or Tressa Wallace of Shaw / Yoder / Antwih, Inc. at (916) 446-4656 for further information on this paper or for other information regarding the SWANA LTF.



## CHRISTMAS TREE COLLECTION DEEMED A SUCCESS!

### City of Santa Monica diverts 15 tons of Christmas trees from landfills

The City of Santa Monica and West Coast Arborists chipped over 1,500 recycled Christmas trees into mulch through the "Park Your Tree" program, diverting over 15 tons of material from area landfills.

The Program, encouraged residents to drop off their Christmas trees free of charge at four local parks or the City's Transfer Station from the end of December and throughout January. The trees were recycled into mulch, a weed suppressant, and spread over the west end of the Santa Monica Airport, an open space that would otherwise be weed-infested by mid-spring.

The City of Santa Monica's "Park Your Tree" program has been helping to make the Christmas season greener for over 20 years.

Look for more efforts toward Zero Waste as Santa Monica works on building a more waste-conscious, greener community.

For further information, contact Kim Braun, Acting Solid Waste Manager, at (310) 458-8528.

### How Many Christmas Trees did the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts recycle after the 2009 Holiday Season?

**Calabasas Landfill: 13 tons • Puente Hills Landfill: 3,079 tons • Scholl Canyon Landfill: 607 tons • Downey Area Recycling & Transfer: 227 tons**

# The Los Angeles County Countywide Siting Element Is Undergoing Revision

The County of Los Angeles in concert with the Los Angeles Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) is revising the Los Angeles County Countywide Siting Element (Siting Element), which is the key Countywide policy and long-term planning document impacting the 88 cities in Los Angeles County as well as the County unincorporated communities. The Siting Element describes how the residual solid waste (waste that remains after all recycling and other diversion activities have occurred) will be handled Countywide for the next 15 years.

Revision of the existing Siting Element is necessary to: (1) bring the document up to date with the various changes in solid waste management laws, regulations, strategies, goals, policies, practices, systems, and technology, since adoption of the latest Los Angeles County Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CoIWMP) over a decade ago, (2) facilitate development of new emerging non-disposal technology facilities such as conversion technology, (3) to identify existing in-County landfills with potential for expansion, and (4) integrate the waste-by-rail system into the existing system. The revision will ensure that adequate disposal capacity is provided to protect the health and safety of County residents and businesses in the future.

Additionally, the revised Siting Element, among other things, removes the Elsmere and Blind Canyon Landfill sites from the Siting Element's list of potential new landfills; re-evaluates and updates Siting Element's goals and policies to ensure its continued applicability and efficacy; addresses the effect of implementing the State's Construction and Demolition Waste

and Inert Debris Disposal Regulations (Phase II Regulations) on classification of inert waste landfills (previously referred to in the existing Siting Element as unclassified landfills); and listing of inert waste landfills in the Siting Element.

The Siting Element revision process involves numerous statutory and regulatory requirements, including preparation of the preliminary draft of the Siting Element and its California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document; public/stakeholder review and comment process; preparation of the final draft of the Siting Element and the CEQA document; city adoption processes requiring approval by a majority of the cities in the County containing a majority of the County incorporated population; and ultimately approval by the County Board of Supervisors and California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle).

The County Department of Public Works in coordination with the Task Force and its Facility and Plan Review Subcommittee are currently preparing the preliminary draft of the revised Siting Element. The draft (Siting Element and its CEQA document) are expected to be concurrently released for public review and comment by summer 2011. They will also be accessible online. The County and the Task Force looks forward to input and participation from the various stakeholders in the revision process.

For more information, please contact Chuk Agu of the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works at (626) 458-3556, Mondays through Thursday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. or Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

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