

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

DATE: MAY 24, 2006
TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
FROM: GREG RAMIREZ, CITY MANAGER
BY: NATHAN HAMBURGER, ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER
**SUBJECT: SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT & RECYCLING ANNUAL REPORT
AND PROGRAM UPDATE**

California law requires that every municipal agency file an annual report with the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) documenting progress on attaining and sustaining the State's mandate of a 50% waste diversion rate established under AB 939. In accordance with these requirements, the City submitted its Annual Report to the CIWMB with a diversion rate of 38%. All cities must strive to maintain the 50% diversion rate and show a utilization of various programs to attain this diversion rate.

The 38% diversion rate is an improvement from the 25% achieved in the prior year's annual report. The diversion rate is derived from a rate of how much waste is diverted to the landfill as compared to the amount of waste produced within an agency's boundaries. The City's base generation rate was established in 1997 as 46,768 tons per year. The assigned base year generation rate along with data attained from the regional landfill operators and waste haulers is used in calculating the current diversion rate.

In 1997, the waste stream generation rate was attributed 74% from residential sources and 26% from commercial sources. The current numbers have shifted and now 32% of the waste generated is attributable to residential sources and 68% to commercial sources. The residential sector has changed their habits and utilized the many opportunities to reduce landfill waste. The City's curbside recycling program and marketing campaigns to encourage recycling seem to have positively influenced their habits. Staff has created a citywide brochure and refrigerator magnet that have been distributed to every home in our community as well as promoted and operated household hazardous waste collection events (first Saturday of each month). In addition, updated information is available on the City's website and articles and reminders of "Christmas tree" recycling and bulky item pickup options have been featured in recent newsletters. Through these programs, the residential sector has continued to divert nearly 50% of the waste it generates. Although the residents should be commended for their diversion efforts, there is still progress to be made.

The commercial sector continues to fall short of expectations (current commercial diversion rate of 24%). The amount of the commercial sector's waste tonnage has continued to steadily increase, which means that there is an even higher need for this group to utilize recycling and green waste options to achieve a 50% diversion rate. In light of these facts, staff is proposing to conduct the following items in an effort to improve commercial recycling:

- (1) Mandating diversion rate for all haulers who are issued waste hauling permits (will be changed starting with 2007 permit applications).
- (2) Marketing campaign to promote further commercial recycling at each of our commercial sites with the message that explains how recycling reduces the amount of waste in waste containers, which would require less frequent pickups. Thus, fewer pickups mean a savings monthly/annually.
- (3) Meet with commercial haulers more often to strongly encourage that they remain active in commercial sector recycling (twice a year).
- (4) Create and distribute a commercial focused recycling brochure (scheduled to be distributed in July 2006).
- (5) Continue to promote and enforce the City's existing Construction and Demolition debris recycling program (introduced as a new program in 2005-06).

Over the past year staff has been working along with our consultant, Solid Waste Solutions (SWS) to enhance the commercial on-site green waste program. Commercial green waste refers to grass and landscaping clippings from commercial sites such as office buildings, shopping centers and in common areas within HOA maintained areas. Green waste can be taken to the landfill and used as a daily cover for the layers of waste, known as Alternate Daily Cover (ADC). ADC reduces the amount of tonnage that is counted against the City's total annual disposal. Given its weight and volume, diverting green waste from the normal waste stream could significantly increase the diversion rate (The residential sector utilizes this program very well with their weekly pickups).

This portion of the City's commercial solid waste program faces an uphill battle. There are several barriers that need to still be eliminated in order to establish a viable commercial green waste program. In order to create a strong green waste program, the City will need to insure that all of the commercial haulers participate in the ADC program at the local landfills as well as offer green waste bins to their commercial customers. Secondly, staff will need to make further efforts to communicate with the local gardeners/landscapers to request and strongly encourage their participation in the program at the Calabasas landfill. At times this can be difficult because there is such a high turnover rate with these companies and their staff. City staff and our consultant will also continue to work with Los Angeles County and CIWMB to implement free local composting seminars.

Staff will utilize the expertise of the City's waste consultants to implement and improve our community programs. Many of these topics have recently been discussed with our consultant and are being researched and planned out to take place over the next 12 months. All solid waste and recycling activities, including consultant and staff costs, are funded from the City's Solid Waste Management Fund which was established in the early 1990's in response to the various mandates stemming from AB 939.

Many cities throughout California are in the same or a similar situation in regards to commercial sector recycling and are collectively working to find solutions that are realistically viable. The City's overall waste diversion rate has increased, which is a step in the right direction. Through the implementation of the programs mentioned, specifically those targeting the commercial sector, there are achievable gains to be made.

RECOMMENDATION

Receive and file this report. This item is presented to the City Council to serve as a means of communicating our progress relating to the solid waste and recycling program and to further advise the City Council on additional programs that will be implemented. No formal action is required at this time.