

Interdepartmental Working Group

Roadmap to a Sustainable Waste Management Future

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

December 9, 2015
9 A.M. – 11 A.M.

MEETING SUMMARY

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Carlos Ruiz, Public Works

- Attendees were welcomed and participants introduced themselves.
- We have completed the first year of work on the Roadmap effort. The first Annual Roadmap Report was submitted to the Board in October.
- We currently have over 20 Departments and Agencies participating. We hope to increase participation this upcoming year.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES TO DATE

(Meeting PowerPoint [Presentation](#))

County Operations

Chris Sheppard, Public Works

- As part of the new Internal Services Department's hauling services contract, a list of current County facilities was sent out to all members of the subcommittee to confirm the list is accurate and complete, confirm level of service, and obtain contact information.
- Public Works' organics pilot program is diverting cafeteria food waste to worm bins. The demonstration garden in front of Public Works Headquarters' Annex building is complete.
- Public Works' consultant is conducting a waste assessment at Public Works Headquarters on December 11, 2015.
- Discussed the waste assessment conducted at the Department of Health Services in October 2015. Both administrative and cafeteria waste streams were assessed, the majority of waste was paper and organic waste.
- The goal of these assessments is to help us identify facilities that fall under the requirements of AB 1826 and to make recommendations to improve recycling at County facilities.

County Unincorporated Communities

Patrick Holland, Public Works

- The County is planning a waste characterization study, similar to the State study, to help identify materials that can be diverted to reach our recycling goals.
- We began a discussion of items that cause harm to the environment that we should consider banning or doing away with such as single-use plastic bags. Another item discussed was styrofoam. It was suggested that instead of banning this item, we should consider an ordinance that would phase-in alternative compostable materials.
- Another item discussed was single-use water bottles and whether they should be considered for a ban. Public Works is planning to install hydration stations at a few locations at their Headquarters campus to promote the use of refillable water bottles and replace single use plastic water bottle use. According to CalRecycle, 100 million dollars' worth of CRV is thrown in the trash yearly.
- Other materials such as plastics and films which are problematic for material recovery facility (MRF) operations were discussed and this led to the recommendation to have a more detailed presentation on MRF operations.

Regional/Countywide

Gabriel Arenas, Public Works

- A presentation was given at our last subcommittee meeting on Emergency Response and Debris Management. A Communications Plan was developed for both the Operational Area and Unincorporated Area Mass Debris Plans.
- A presentation was given on LACoMAX, the County's materials exchange website, which helps divert unwanted items from going to landfills by allowing users to exchange goods and materials amongst themselves.
- An overview of waste management in the County was provided. Only a fraction of the waste stream is generated by the unincorporated areas, which shows the importance of extending our outreach to cities. There are ten permitted Class III landfills and two transformation (waste-to-energy) facilities in Los Angeles County.

Outreach and Education

Kathy Salama, Public Works

- During our last subcommittee meeting, participants were split into two groups and participated in brainstorming sessions on developing a Roadmap brochure and improving the County Departmental Recycling Program.
- The Roadmap brochure group defined the audience, purpose, and content of the brochure, as well as actions that readers can take to make an impact.
- The recycling program group discussed improving the program by defining the roles, creating an A-Z guide on how to remove/recycle obsolete items and determining the three hardest office items to get rid of: hazardous waste, e-waste and, surplus office supplies.

- We discussed the Land Art Generator Initiative (LAGI), an international art competition taking place in Santa Monica in 2016. Public Works has committed to be a judge for the competition.
- This week we started our annual holiday campaign, launching radio and online commercials on KOST. The campaign also has a Twitter component, asking residents to tell us what they are doing to be more sustainable, with a chance to win prizes.
 - One of the radio commercials was played for the group.

MATERIALS RECOVERY FACILITY PRESENTATION

Presentation by Clark Ajwani, Public Works, and Navnit Padival, County Sanitation Districts (Presentation starts on slide #12)

- Overview on recycling over the years; from drop off centers to curbside recycling, to single-stream recycling, in which all recyclables are placed into one bin.
- Today there is much less paper and metals and more plastic and cardboard.
- Recycling plastics can be confusing. The numbers inside the symbols on plastic containers denote the type of plastic, and do not necessarily mean the container is recyclable. Plastics 1 and 2 are always recyclable because they have a market.
- A MRF is a commodity “factory.” Raw materials come in, labor and equipment are applied, and a sellable product comes out.
- Recyclables are recovered at MRFs either via positive sorting, where recyclables are picked out, or negative sorting, where non-recyclables are removed from the stream.
- Waste is sorted either via floor sorting or belt sorting. Floor sorting is best for large, bulky recyclables, while belt sorting handles medium and small recyclables.
- Recovered recyclables are baled and shipped out to Asian and local markets.
- Green Fence Initiative is a policy introduced in China a few years ago that put severe scrutiny on recyclables from the U.S. after rumors of contaminated shipments. This initiative drastically affected the recycling market.
- Recyclables shipments are heavily reliant on volatile market economics. The cost-effectiveness of recycling a certain material can vary day to day.
- There is still a lot of confusion when it comes to recycling; a 2014 poll by Earth 911 showed that 65% of respondents don’t understand which plastics are recyclable. This leads to contamination.

DISCUSSION: FACILITATING SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

- What can we do? The County can create a policy to purchase more recyclable products.
- Instead of banning styrofoam, we could require businesses that fall under AB 1826 to use compostable containers.
- In the office, we can automatically print all documents double-sided, use electronic systems to replace paper.
- We can use the Roadmap logo to promote the Roadmap efforts.

- Consider creating a template email signature to share with the Working Group that includes the Roadmap logo and language to discourage printing email messages unless necessary.
- There was discussion of the dilemma of archiving emails versus printing documents.

EPR – PHARMACEUTICALS AND SHARPS WASTE ORDINANCE UPDATE

Coby Skye, Public Works

- The draft Ordinance was released in November and is available on the Department of [Public Health’s website](#). We received comments and are currently revising the Ordinance.
- The final draft will be released January 4, 2016. We will request comments by January 15, 2016. The Ordinance will be placed on the February 16, 2016 Board Agenda.

OPEN DISCUSSION AND NEXT STEPS

- New Subcommittee Meeting format. Instead of four meetings, we will have one combined meeting. Next Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for January 14, 2016.
- Next Working Group meeting is tentatively scheduled for March 9, 2016.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

| Name | Department |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Alycia Araya | ACWM |
| Mayen Alcantara | Arts Commission |
| Carlos Zimmerman | Beaches & Harbors |
| Charlotte Miyamoto | Beaches & Harbors |
| Dorothea Park | CEO |
| Marjorie Santos | CEO |
| Cecilia Galdones | Health Services |
| Marta Garcia Sheffield | Health Services |
| Rick Teebay | Internal Services |
| Susana Ortega | Internal Services |
| Inna Sarac | Medical Examiner- Coroner |
| Raul Flores | Parks & Recreation |
| Ada Lopez | Probation |
| Gerry Villalobos | Public Health |
| Armando Aguilar | Public Works - EPD |
| Carlos Ruiz | Public Works - EPD |
| Chris Sheppard | Public Works - EPD |

| Name | Department |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| Clark Ajwani | Public Works - EPD |
| Coby Skye | Public Works - EPD |
| Gabriel Arenas | Public Works - EPD |
| Kathy Salama | Public Works - EPD |
| Nilda Gemeniano | Public Works - EPD |
| Patrick Holland | Public Works - EPD |
| Vanessa Olivas | Public Works - EPD |
| Derryk Ly | Public Works - OSD |
| Dominic Osmeña | Public Works - PDD |
| Maya Saraf | Regional Planning |
| Habib Kharrat | Sanitation Districts |
| Navnit Padival | Sanitation Districts |
| Gregory Nelson | Sheriff |