

Facility and Plan Review Subcommittee
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

July 18, 2019

Los Angeles County Public Works
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, CA 91803

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Betsey Landis, Chair, Environmental Organization Representative
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative
Shikari Nakagawa-Ota, rep by John Kaddis, County of Los Angeles Department of
Public Health
Carlos Ruiz, Los Angeles County Public Works
Sam Shammass, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Reyna Pereira, City of Los Angeles

OTHERS PRESENT:

Chris Coyle, Republic Services
Brenda Eels, Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc.
Michael Harmon, Los Angeles County Public Works
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens
Gerald Ley, Los Angeles County Public Works
Margarita Quiroz, Los Angeles County Public Works
Carol Oyola, Los Angeles County Public Works
Trishena Robinson, Los Angeles County Public Works
Sarah Solomon, Los Angeles County Public Works
Vu Truong, Los Angeles County Public Works
Daniel Wibisono, Los Angeles County Public Works

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Landis called the meeting to order at 11:14 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF JUNE 20, 2019 MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the Minutes from the June 20, 2019, Subcommittee Meeting was made by Mr. Shammass and seconded by Mr. Ruiz. Motion passed with a 4/1 vote with Mr. Mohajer voting no.

III. UPDATE ON SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL

Odor Complaints

Mr. Truong provided an update on the Sunshine Canyon Landfill (SCL) odor complaints from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) for the month of June 2019 ([Link](#)).

- In comparison to May of 2019, the number of complaints received in June increased from 2 to 5 complaints.
- Compared to June of last year, the number of complaints this June decreased from 9 to 5 complaints.
- The total number of complaints received this year is 129.
- As of July 9, 2019, AQMD has not issued any Odor Complaint Notice of Violations (NOV) to SCL for the month of June 2019.

Copies of the latest odor complaint charts were made available to Subcommittee Members.

Ms. Landis asked if there was only one complaint AQMD checked on that was reported. Mr. Truong answered yes and added there were four complaints that were no field response. Ms. Landis questioned the reason AQMD's report stated no field response. Mr. Hunter, with the North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens, said AQMDs response is based on time, inspector availability, and the number of calls made. Discussion ensued.

Perimeter Monitoring Well 205R

Mr. Harmon provided an update on the status of methane readings from the perimeter monitoring well 205R.

Staff received the SCL Solid Waste Facility Permit Monthly Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) report dated July 15, 2019, from Republic Services (Republic) for the month of June 2019. The Report provides the methane concentration reading

for perimeter monitoring well 205R, taken on June 20, 2019. The highest methane gas reading from this perimeter well was 2.4 percent methane by volume and continues to be below the 5 percent methane limit. Staff will continue to monitor the monitoring well methane probe readings and will provide updates to the Subcommittee.

Additionally, Republic stated that well 205R will remain in operation as a perimeter monitoring well and monitoring records will continue to be reported to the LEA monthly.

Well Oil Abandonment of Republic-Owned and Other Oil Wells

The Subcommittee requested the certification of abandonment from Republic at the May Subcommittee meeting. The work is for the two wells owned by Republic. Republic staff indicated that as of July 16, 2019, the Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) continues to process Republic's request to release the surety bonds from the plugging and abandonment activity. Staff will provide the official certification of abandonment from DOGGR when it becomes available.

Mr. Chris Coyle, General Manager at Republic Services, stated the Subcommittee should receive the certification next month. Ms. Landis asked if DOGGR is providing sureties that the wells are plugged and staying plugged. Mr. Harmon responded that one of the steps in abandoning the wells is that the operator has insurance or bonds to conduct the abandonment activity. This is to guarantee the plugging and abandonment will be conducted to DOGGR standards. When the bonds are released it signals the end of the abandoning activity. Mr. Coyle added that DOGGR notified Republic that they are releasing the surety bonds, which means they are satisfied with the plugging. Republic will provide paperwork to Subcommittee next month. Ms. Landis asked how long they keep checking it to make sure that they can issue the surety bond. Mr. Coyle responded that once DOGGR witnesses the plugging of the wells and they are satisfied that the work was completed to their specification, they print out a report and release the surety bond to Republic.

Cell Construction

Mr. Truong provided an update on the SCL Cell Construction status. Regarding the CC-4 Stability Buttress Project, the project involves the construction of a stability buttress for the Cell CC-4 Part 3 fill area, which will construct a foundation for the landfill liner, drainage, and related containment systems. Republic began construction in April 2018 after receipt of Public Works' Conditional Approval Letter dated March 13, 2018. Near the end of October 2018, Republic submitted a design change package due to field conditions encountered. Since then, Public Works

has been in communication with Republic regarding the project. Currently, Public Works is reviewing Republic's most recent submittals.

Mr. Truong displayed a map for the Subcommittee, depicting the general locations of the Landfill's sequencing phasing from now to the estimated completion of the Landfill. Republic estimates CC-4 Part 3 to begin operations around October 2019; Phase CC-4 Parts 4 A, B and C are expected to begin operations in 2020 through 2022; and Phase CC-5 Parts 1 and 2 are expected to begin by 2023 and 2028, respectively.

Mr. Mohajer asked where the construction is beginning. Mr. Truong answered CC-4 and pointed to the area marked CC-4 on the map. Mr. Mohajer and Ms. Landis asked for a clear copy of the map to be emailed to them. Mr. Hunter asked where staff is getting those expected starting dates and Mr. Truong responded the dates are from Republic. Mr. Ruiz stated that staff could provide the information on expected starting dates that he is requesting. Mr. Ruiz also mentioned the sequencing plans that were approved some time ago are being revised and currently under review by Public Works. The proposed sequencing by the operator can change based on Public Works' review. Mr. Mohajer asked for a staff report on the cell construction location, starting dates, and capacity to be provided to the Subcommittee.

Update on Senate Bill 1383 Implementation

Ms. Robinson provided an [update](#) on the organic waste capacity planning requirements for counties under Assembly Bill 876 (AB 876) and Senate Bill 1383 (SB 1383), comparing the two capacity analysis for Los Angeles County.

Ms. Robinson compared the differences between the capacity planning requirements of AB 876 and SB 1383. AB 876 was signed into law in October 2015. The bill requires counties to submit in their electronic annual reports, the following information to CalRecycle beginning 2017:

- An estimate of the amount of organic waste that will be generated, which is now interpreted to mean disposed, within the County or region over a 15-year period;
- An estimate of the additional organic waste recycling facility capacity that will be needed to process that amount of waste; and
- Areas identified by the County as locations for new or expanded organic waste recycling facilities capable of safely meeting the additional need.

SB 1383 was signed into law in September 2016, does not explicitly spell out the capacity planning requirements for counties; however, the draft regulations provide

a glimpse into what those requirements will more than likely be. Similar to AB 876, SB 1383 regulations require counties, in coordination with cities and regional agencies located within the County, to include in their annual reports to CalRecycle:

- An estimate of the amount of all organic waste that will be disposed by the County and jurisdictions within the County;
- The amount of existing organic waste recycling facility infrastructure capacity, both in the county and out of the County, that is verifiably available to the County and jurisdictions located within the County; and
- An estimate of the amount of new or expanded organic waste recycling facility capacity that will be needed to in addition to the existing capacity, to process the disposed waste.

Ms. Landis asked about the percentage of organics because in looking at the Finding of Conformance (FOC) reports from of the landfills, the percentage of organics was at about 76 percent. Ms. Robinson responded that was correct based on Landfill Waste Characterization Study. The presentation is based on Statewide Characterization Study. In the regulations, CalRecycle states that a county must use either a waste characterization study performed by jurisdictions within the county, or state waste characterization study to determine the percentage of organics in the disposed waste stream. Ms. Landis added that CalRecycle had such a broad definition of organic waste in SB 1383 that is almost anything. Ms. Robinson continued that CalRecycle limits the amount of material that is used for the capacity planning analysis. Although the definition does include a broad range of materials, when infrastructure capacity is mentioned, specific materials are listed. Ms. Landis asked if they had a list of specific materials even though the law was written so loosely that anything can be organic. Ms. Robinson responded yes, and that Article 11 on infrastructure capacity planning states the materials on the right side of the column [on the slide] under the SB 1383 are the only materials that counties are required to plan for in their infrastructure planning estimates.

Mr. Ruiz pointed out a few details regarding the planning requirements. Under both bills, the County is required to estimate the amount organic waste that will be disposed according to the definition of organic waste in both bills. They need to identify the capacity that will be needed to manage that amount. It is not the capacity that is needed to manage 50 percent or 75 percent of that organic waste, but in fact all of it, and that applies to both AB 876 and SB 1383. Mr. Ruiz continued that the counties are required to identify and plan for the capacity to manage all of it. Mr. Mohajer added that there is much confusion with AB 876, SB 1383, and the implementing regulations of SB 1383, and added it is very important to know what definition of organic waste is being used in the discussion. Mr. Mohajer made a political suggestion from a public point of view where it is

written, that the amount of organic waste that will be disposed “by the County” should be changed to will be disposed “by jurisdictions in the County”. He mentioned the City of Los Angeles has four million in population and the County unincorporated area has one million. Therefore, it should be by jurisdiction. The County needs to be protected. This is not what CalRecycle is presenting, but it should be. Ms. Landis believes every jurisdiction must redo their plans respectively and then the County can review and approve. Mr. Mohajer stated the regulations the Task Force commented on have very specific requirements as to the information they must underline and provide to the County for the document to be put together. If the cities fail to provide it, then the County has to report it to CalRecycle and CalRecycle will impose significant penalties on the cities that have not provided the information. Ms. Landis agreed there is a problem.

Ms. Robinson’s presentation continued. The two bills vary in multiple factors, including the initial reporting date and the reporting period, as displayed on the table, as well as the materials the County is required to analyze for capacity planning purposes. Consistent with the current definition of organic waste, found in PRC Section 42649.8(c), AB 876 requires counties to analyze the recycling capacity for the following organic waste materials: food waste, green waste, landscape and pruning waste, nonhazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper waste that is mixed in with food waste. When we isolate these materials from the State’s waste characterization study, we find that approximately 40 percent of the disposal waste stream is organic waste as previously defined.

SB 1383, however, requires counties to include four additional organic waste material types in their capacity planning analysis. These materials are, paper products, printing and writing paper, digestate and biosolids. When these materials are factored in, the percentage that is considered organic waste increases to approximately 57 percent of the disposal waste stream. Ms. Robinson reiterated this was based on Statewide Waste Characterization Study.

Mr. Mohajer mentioned one item he believes is important and could help and be communicated to CalRecycle is that the word plastic is not mentioned in SB 1383. SB 1383 requires the State to reduce land disposal of organic waste, but plastics are not mentioned. Mr. Ruiz noted that SB 1383 establishes organic waste disposal targets and that there is a definition of organic waste in the draft regulations, which includes every living organism. The question that we need to ask CalRecycle is whether the 50 and 75 percent targets are based on that definition. If the regulations focus on these materials, which is a subset of organic waste, the efforts along with recycling of other organic materials not included here need to be taken to achieve the 50 and 75 percent reduction. Mr. Ruiz continued that if those two together remain a subset of the entire definition of organic waste that means the amount of diversion needing to be achieved for these materials has to be much higher to make up for those materials not being targeted. Ms. Landis had a specific question pertaining to the slide on the presentation under SB 1383

where it reads food, green waste, landscape and pruning waste, and wood. Because AB 876 reads non-hazardous wood waste, Ms. Landis asked if SB 1383 just reads wood waste. Ms. Robinson responded yes. Ms. Landis continued that means beetle-killed wood with beetles still in it and rotten wood with fungi. Mr. Mohajer commented the same concern in reviewing the approximate 167 pages of proposed regulations and their specificity. Mr. Mohajer's other concern is the definition and how plastics are not mentioned. However, the proposed regulations emphasize managing materials to reduce landfill disposal, but how is plastic managed if the state does not allow movement toward the development of conversion technologies (CT).

Mr. Ruiz commented that SB 1383 is focused on the reduction of methane from the atmosphere. The reason for removing organic waste from landfills is because they generate methane. The real objective is methane, as opposed to CO₂. Mr. Ruiz continued that the way the regulations are structured, they call managing material through conversion or through transformation "landfill disposal", indirectly, because anything that is not one of the approved categories is considered "landfill disposal". Mr. Mohajer commented that by this definition, the only way to manage plastics is through CT and that CalRecycle uses the word disposal, but also uses landfill disposal interchangeably throughout the entire document. Comments to CalRecycle reflect that they need to go through the entire proposed regulations and change accordingly. Ms. Landis added that calling "technology" "conversion technology" indicates that it is not disposal. Mr. Mohajer responded that despite that, if CalRecycle calls it disposal, then it is considered disposal. Ms. Robinson's presentation continued.

Staff performed an analysis on the amount of organic waste recycling facility capacity that would be needed to recycle the amount of organic waste that is projected to be disposed over the next 15 years using the AB 876 definition. The types of organic waste materials analyzed were: food waste, green waste, landscape and pruning waste, non-hazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper that is mixed with food waste.

The majority of this capacity is provided by chipping and grinding facilities, which is approximately 300,000 tons of the 550,000 tons. Composting facilities have a net available capacity of approximately 200,000 tons and the remaining is approximately 19,000 tons of capacity and that comes from anaerobic digestion facilities. We see that chipping and grinding facilities account for the majority of the net capacity that is available in Los Angeles County.

Ms. Robinson continued by displaying a table on her presentation which showed the latest data available from year 2018, and also showed projected values for years 2020, 2025 and 2033. The numbers showed the amount of additional capacity needed within the county to handle or recycle the organic waste under AB 876 definition.

Mr. Mohajer commented that the State contracted out a consultant to prepare the composting planning report. There was a report that came out and showed that Southern California has over 4 million tons of excess composting capacity. The Task Force shared its concerns with CalRecycle and they did nothing. He added that Ms. Robinson's report shows 3.8 million tons of projected organics disposal and therefore, the numbers would cancel each other out and the analysis should show that we do not need any additional capacity. Ms. Robinson responded that the 4 million tons reported is statewide, the Southern California region has about three million tons, not just Los Angeles County. Ms. Landis commented what needs to be done is that all jurisdictions need to work together.

Ms. Robinson continued by discussing what happens to the analysis when the four additional material types under SB 1383 are added to the equation. Under SB 1383, counties are required to take into account paper products, printing and writing paper, biosolids and digestate, which increases demand by nearly 2 million tons per year. She continued her presentation by showing the demand increasing and expressed that Los Angeles County needs a few million tons of capacity to meet the capacity demand. Ms. Robinson continued explaining that the analysis shows a continual shortfall in organic waste capacity over the next 15 years. Her last slide showed a bar graph that displayed the available capacity at local facilities within the County compared to the disposal tonnage of organic waste by material for 2018. Food waste was the largest disposal quantity at 1.9 million tons and had the least amount of available capacity at only 19,000 tons. She continued to explain that Los Angeles County falls short in all categories of organic waste according to the AB 876 definition.

Ms. Landis asked Mr. Shammas if the presentation corresponds with what they receive at their landfill. Mr. Shammas responded they get some food waste at the Joint Water Pollution Control Plant, but they actually slowed down the project because they have not been getting enough food waste, so it does seem that cities are not rushing to do it. Ms. Landis asked if they receive a lot of green waste at the landfill. Mr. Shammas responded they receive green waste for daily cover at Scholl and Calabasas Landfills, but that usage will end on January 1, 2020. Ms. Landis asked for Republic's opinion and Mr. Coyle responded that a lot of capacity is needed, and he does not believe cities will adopt the programs until they are forced to. There is a huge cost, which is probably driving the issue. Discussion ensued. Mr. Ruiz commented that the first target for SB 1383 is a 50 percent reduction from the 2014 disposal level by 2020. Under SB 1383, CalRecycle in consultation with the California Air Resources Board (CARB), is required to analyze the progress in the waste sector, state government, and local governments by July 1, 2020. If significant progress is not made, then CalRecycle may include incentives for additional requirements. Mr. Mohajer commented when the first draft of SB 1383 came out, everybody raised the issue because regulations mandated local government to purchase certain quantities of organic waste by-products. In response to the complaints by jurisdictions that it was too much,

and they could not manage it, the new requirement increased the requirement by 14 percent. Mr. Mohajer also commented that Orange County's plans are to develop composting operations at every operating and closed landfill that Orange County owns. That will be part of the compost market.

Biological Contamination of Organic Waste

Mr. Ley provided a verbal report of research requested by Ms. Landis regarding an incident in which several children contracted E. Coli infections after visiting a petting zoo at the San Diego County Fair and one child died. It was observed that woodchips were used as ground cover at this exhibit and it raised questions about the possibility of contamination of woodchips at processing facilities that are processing other organics such as food waste. Mr. Ley continued that they wanted to investigate 1) what the source of the E. Coli was for the incident, and 2) if there is a potential for organic waste end product such as woodchips from being contaminated at the point of processing; and additionally, how this may be impacted by the SB 1383 implementation that will result in an increase amount of organic waste processing.

Mr. Ley provided some background regarding E. Coli. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), E. Coli bacteria normally lives in the intestines of people and animals, and some strains of E. Coli are pathogenic and can cause illness outside the digestive track. These strains can live inside the digestive tracks of ruminant animals, including cattle, goats, and sheep. Some strains of E. Coli can survive in open environments and for as many as 90 days in soil.

Infections in humans start with the consumption of E. Coli from eating contaminated foods or through touching of the mouth with contaminated items.

According to the CDC, from 2010-2015, there were about 100 outbreaks of illness in people linked to animals in public settings with the most common being E. Coli.

Staff contacted Doctor Eric McDonald, Medical Director of San Diego County Health and Human Services to inquire about this incident. He told staff that technically this case is currently under investigation because samples taken from the animal and the petting zoo environment are still being analyzed. He did say that it is extremely unlikely that E. Coli came from woodchips, and he believes that it is most likely that E. Coli was contracted from the farm animals. Doctor McDonald also stated that it is common for woodchips to be placed at animal exhibits to aid in cleanup and to prevent the spread of E. Coli to the environment.

Staff spoke with the local LEA. Ms. Shikari Ota, Chief Environmental Health Specialist, from Los Angeles County Public Health regarding the potential

for contamination between different types of organic waste end products such as green material processed for ground cover and processing of other types of organic waste such as food waste at the point of processing.

Ms. Ota explained that the materials processed at chipping and grinding facilities come from tree trimmers and landscapers, so there is a very low possibility for contamination by food, manure or other materials that are not solely green waste. Additionally, she explained that the machines that chip and grind green waste are not compatible to process other types of organic waste such as food waste which could damage the machines and that inspection of the feedstock is performed prior to processing to prevent contamination and damage of equipment. Ms. Ota stated that per Title 14 of the CCR, Section 17862.1, any mulch/organic/compostable material that is land applied must meet pathogen and heavy metal requirements set by the State.

At the request of the Subcommittee Chair, staff also reached out to the California Department of Food and Agriculture to inquire on any concern with the potential for health risk associated with organic waste end products such as woodchips which may become contaminated at the point of processing and the increase in organic waste processing per the requirements of SB 1383. Mr. Ley continued that staff was told that their focus is on organic compost and ensuring compliance with those standards. Staff was referred to the State requirements and oversight by the LEA.

Mr. Ley stated that based on information gathered and understanding of the sources of E. Coli and how it is transmitted, staff believes that in this San Diego Petting Zoo incident, the most likely source of the E. Coli bacteria was from the farm animals at the exhibit.

Mr. Ley also stated that regarding the risk of contamination of organic waste end-products at the point of processing, this risk appears to be reduced due to the nature of the processing and need for different equipment to process different types of organic waste feed stocks such as green materials and food waste. Staff will continue to monitor the finding of the petting zoo incident and will continue to consider the possibility of contamination in organic waste end-products and how it can be impacted by the increased processing of organic waste due to SB 1383 implementation.

Mr. Mohajer requested a written copy of E. Coli report. Ms. Landis commented she is looking towards the point where all machinery used to grind up organic waste is going to be employed on waste it should not be and is also wondering if this is a forerunner of that. She also is not certain the Health Department realizes the extent of changes that will occur as jurisdictions try to come up with ways of handling all the organic waste. Ms. Landis also stated that it leaves a lot open to contamination.

Discussion of FOC Reports

Mr. Wibisono stated staff did not receive any FOC reports for this reporting period. Staff will provide Subcommittee with updates on the FOC reports at the next month's meeting.

Mr. Mohajer commented that at last month's meeting he was very specific the report submitted by Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL) had nothing to do with the report they have to submit as part of the FOC. CCL had the wrong report which was the submission of an outdated report, and Mr. Mohajer wants this noted in this month's minutes.

Mr. Ruiz noted that the new CUP that was issued in 2017, requests that the existing Waste Plan Conformance Agreement to be amended to incorporate the new requirements. However, that Agreement has not been finalized yet. Mr. Ruiz continued that the requirements in the Waste Plan Conformance Agreement should be still in effect. Therefore, staff is working with CCL for proper updates.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comment.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, August 15, 2019, at 11:00 a.m., in Conference Room D of Public Works Headquarters.