

Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

February 20, 2025

Los Angeles County Public Works
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, California

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Margaret Clark, League of California Cities
Eddie De La Riva, League of California Cities
Jeff Farano, Sr., Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries
Jim Smith, Teamster Local 396, City of Los Angeles
Jordan R. Sisson, California Waste and Recycling Association

COMMITTEE MEMBERS REPRESENTED BY OTHERS:

Robert Ferrante, rep by Sam Shammass, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts
Barbara Ferrer, rep by Shikari Nakagawa-Ota, Los Angeles County Public Health
Wayne Nastri, rep by Phillip Crabbe III, South Coast Air Quality Management District
Mark Pestrella, rep by Miki Esposito, Los Angeles County Public Works
Barbara Romero, rep by Ron Milo, City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation

COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Jorgel Chavez, League of California Cities
Eric Lopez, Long Beach Public Works
Rafael Prieto, City of Los Angeles

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jonathan Brazile, Office of County Counsel Los Angeles County
Adylene Gonzalez, California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle)
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens
Charles Darensbourg, Los Angeles County Public Works
Perla Gomez, Los Angeles County Public Works
Anna Gov, Los Angeles County Public Works
Cameron Jones, Los Angeles County Public Works
Karlo Manalo, Los Angeles County Public Works
Shawntelle Phillips, Los Angeles County Public Works
Joy Pipkin, Los Angeles County Public Works
Carol Saucillo, Los Angeles County Public Works
Lusine Shrivastava, Los Angeles County Public Works
Emiko Thompson, Los Angeles County Public Works
Kawsar Vazifdar, Los Angeles County Public Works
Caleb Yun, Los Angeles County Public Works

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 1:03 p.m. by Ms. Miki Esposito who served as Chair, representing Director Mark Pestrella.

Ms. Esposito announced the recent passing of former Task Force member, Ms. Betsey Landis, who served nearly 30 years as an Environmental Representative. Ms. Esposito also announced the retirement of Mr. Mike Mohajer who served over 20 years as a Public Representative on the Task Force.

II. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 21, 2024, MINUTES

Mr. Eddie De La Riva made a motion to approve the November 21, 2024, minutes as amended, and Mr. Jordan Sisson seconded. Motion passed with one abstention.

III. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The following was reported by Mr. Charles Darensbourg:

- On January 10, 2025, Governor Newsom released his 2025-26 budget proposal. Lawmakers must pass a budget by June 15, 2025, deadline to ensure the July 1, 2025, start of the new Fiscal Year.
- The \$229 billion budget proposal builds upon the multi-year framework outlined by the Governor in 2024.

The last day to introduce bills was on February 21, 2025. A [Legislative Table](#) was provided. Newly introduced Assembly Bills (AB) and Senate Bill (SB) not on the table included:

- SB 501 (Allen) - Household Hazardous Waste Producer Responsibility Act.
- AB 864 (Ward) - Hazardous waste: solar photovoltaic modules.
- AB 762 (Irwin, Wilson) - Disposable, battery-embedded vapor inhalation device: prohibition.

Motion was made by Mr. Sisson and seconded by Ms. Margaret Clark to have the following bills agendized at next month's Task Force meeting:

- AB 436 (Ransom) - Composting facilities: zoning.
- SB 45 (Padilla) - Recycling: beverage containers: tethered plastic caps.
- SB 404 (Caballero) - Hazardous materials: metal shredding facilities.

Motion passed unanimously with 10 voting yes (Mr. Sisson, Ms. Clark, Mr. Phillip Crabb III, Mr. De La Riva, Mr. Jeff Farano, Ms. Esposito, Mr. Ron Milo, Ms. Shikari Nakagawa-Ota, Mr. Sam Shammass, and Mr. Jim Smith).

In reference to AB 70, Ms. Clark asked if there were any problems that would ruin the definition of pyrolysis. She recalled there was an issue that prevented a similar bill from being enrolled last year. Mr. Darenbourg indicated that the bill introduced last year not only defined pyrolysis and included language about hydrogen and biomethane, but he believed the issue last year was the last-minute changes in the bill. Mr. Darenbourg could not recall the bill number but explained that pyrolysis is very similar to gasification and that pyrolysis is still considered transformation, which is mixed with incineration. Ms. Clark asked for PW staff to keep watch on AB 70 for any amendments.

Ms. Clark asked if bottle caps must be removed when plastic bottles are being recycled or do they go through the same process. Mr. Ron Milo stated that the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation is encouraging residents to keep the caps on the bottles. He stated visiting a bottle recycler who used a floating system to manually remove the bottle caps since they go through a different process. Mr. Milo noted inclination to support for the concept of tethered plastic caps. However, a consideration may be to have the same material used for bottles and caps so they can be recycled together. Discussion ensued.

IV. REPORT FROM THE PUBLIC EDUCATION AND INFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE (PEIS)

Ms. Joy Pipkin reported the following from the PEIS meeting:

The Subcommittee reviewed three articles to be published in the spring issue of the Inside Solid Waste Newsletter (ISW). The winter issue of the ISW is anticipated to be published within the next couple of weeks. The next Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for May 15, 2025.

Ms. Esposito asked how often the ISW is published. Ms. Pipkin confirmed it is published quarterly.

V. REPORT FROM THE ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE (ATAS)

Ms. Kawsar Vazifdar reported the following from the ATAS meeting:

Sevana Bioenergy provided an [overview and update](#) on the Rialto Bioenergy Facility in San Bernardino County. The presentation included re-start, recent improvements, and their current approach to the market for renewable natural gas. Tetra Tech provided an update on conversion technology (CT) project development and reported that they:

- Submitted a workplan based on the finalized Countywide Siting Evaluation Report for the development of anaerobic digestion (AD) and/or thermal CT facilities within Los Angeles County. This initial site assessment identified areas across the County with high development feasibility based on established siting criteria. Next steps include further evaluation of parcels identified as part of the initial site assessment.
- Submitted to Public Works for review a Phase 2 evaluation of three closed landfill sites, which evaluates the limit of waste and surrounding utilities for the potential development of AD and/or thermal CT facilities.

Staff provided an update on upcoming CT events and conferences that may be found in the [Conversion Technology Newsletter](#).

VI. REPORT FROM THE FACILITY AND PLAN REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE (FPRS)

Ms. Emiko Thompson reported the following from the FPRS meeting:

Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL)

- In January 2025, CCL received 3 Notices of Violation (NOVs) from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) related to air quality compared to 9 NOVs received in December 2024.
- CCL continues to be under a Stipulated Order for Abatement (SOA) that was modified November 2024.
- The next AQMD Hearing for the SOA is in April 2025.
- In December 2024, CCL submitted a letter to the County providing notice that they would be closing its active waste disposal operations effective January 1, 2025.
- CCL will continue to manage the landfill, including addressing the elevated temperature landfill event, and closure and post-closure activities.

Sunshine Canyon Landfill (SCL)

- In January 2025, there were 118 odor complaints and 3 NOVs, compared to 85 odor complaints received in December 2024.

2025 Disaster Event Debris Removal Efforts

- Prior to rebuild, the large volume of fire debris must be removed from fire burned areas in two phases.
- Phase 1 - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was assigned by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to remove and dispose hazardous materials from properties impacted by the fires.
- Phase 2 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will remove non-hazardous materials such as ash and structures damaged by the fires. The materials will be taken to lined Class III landfills that are permitted to accept disaster debris.
- Motion passed for County Sanitation District to provide a report within the next couple of months with criteria on potentially utilizing waste-by-rail disposal to Mesquite Landfill.

Finding of Conformance

- CCL Fourth Quarter 2024 Monitoring Report specified that CCL disposed of approximately 201,000 tons, and compared to the Third Quarter 2024, the disposal tonnage decreased.
- SCL Fourth Quarter 2024 Monitoring Report specified that SCL disposed of approximately 654,000 tons, and compared to the Third Quarter 2024, the disposal tonnage increased.

Mr. Wayde Hunter, with the North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens, stated there was also discussion at the Subcommittee meeting regarding fire-related debris being taken to SCL. SCL requested a waiver to increase tonnage by 20 percent and to extend the hours of operation, which was brought to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) on Tuesday, February 18, 2025. Mr. Hunter noted that SCL's odor issues were two and a half times worse than the other 15 landfills combined, excluding CCL's odor issues lately. He mentioned the open lawsuit against SCL and noted that Ms. Thompson informed it could not be discussed at the Subcommittee meeting due to potential lawsuits.

Ms. Clark shared her concerns of household hazardous waste (HHW) material from burned down homes, such as appliances and metals, and how HHW would be sorted and determined there are no toxins being taken to nearby landfills. As an example, the San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority (WQA), of which she helped formed and has served for over 30 years, was concerned in the 1990s that pollution was going into the San Garbriel Basin's groundwater. The WQA worked for many years on getting the responsible parties who polluted the groundwater to pay, which they paid in 1997 due to polluting the groundwater. Ms. Esposito reiterated that debris removal is in two phases. Phase 1, completed by the EPA,

which addresses Ms. Clark's concerns about toxins. Phase 2, by USACE, being more benign where the material may go to lined Class III landfills. Ms. Esposito asked Ms. Thompson to repeat Phase 1 and 2 requirements.

After Ms. Thompson's detailed description, Ms. Clark asked how the EPA and USACE are making certain to remove all asbestos as she shared her reservations about their reliability. Ms. Esposito responded that there are experts who work on the fires and that the important thing is for the process to be done safely and appropriately in accordance with the law.

Mr. Sisson commented he has encountered many people wanting to know where to go for a good repository of information, and according to PW staff, the <http://recovery.lacounty.gov> website is the best source for information.

Mr. Hunter commented that the debris is burrito-wrapped. The USACE takes the material wrapped to the landfill, but the problem is how each landfill handles the material received because he felt it should go to a Class I landfill for hazardous waste instead of acquiring a waiver through the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) to dispose hazardous material at a Class III landfill that has a history of odor problems. After addressing his many concerns, Mr. Hunter informed that he sent a few letters to the Task Force including:

- [Letter to the Task Force dated February 5, 2025](#)
- [Letter to South Coast Air Quality Management District dated February 5, 2025](#)
- [Letter to the Board dated February 16, 2025](#)
- [Letter to the Board dated February 23, 2025](#)

Ms. Shikari Nakagawa-Ota clarified that the approval was not a waiver, but rather a General Order issued by the Water Board. She explained that in the General Order, they have a list of landfills with the composite liner and a leachate collection system that will allow disaster-related debris. Ms. Clark asked what the composite liner was made of. Ms. Nakagawa-Ota referred Ms. Clark to the General Order for the detailed definition. Mr. Shammass also clarified that this is not a special waiver but rather a standing order allowing landfills to take in the material. Ms. Clark asked if the composite liner is leakproof. Ms. Esposito responded that PW staff could provide her with e-mail addresses to SCL and the Water Board so she may direct her technical questions to them.

Mr. Smith asked if the Board had already approved landfills receiving the fire debris. Ms. Esposito responded that the Board item was continued and would be heard next week. Because of concerns by Task Force members, Mr. Smith asked what items were within the Task Force's purview in order to recommend a position

or to weigh in on the issue since the Task Force is an advisory board. Mr. Sisson commented that the request is for allowances for landfills within the permitting jurisdiction of the County. Mr. Sisson, who represents the California Waste and Recycling Association, noted that they submitted their comments and recommended that respective counterparts can submit comments as well. Mr. Smith asked again what the Task Force could do, and is allowed to do. Mr. Sisson's belief is that one of the Task Force's responsibilities is the Countywide Siting Element (CSE) and its compliance, and now with the unprecedented natural disaster at such a grand scale, questions the effects to the CSE compliance. Mr. Sisson did not know how this situation implicates what the Task Force can do or what is under the Task Force's purview.

Mr. Smith asked when this item would be brought back to the Board. Ms. Esposito responded at next week's Board meeting the question will be brought up, which is the Board's decision and was not within the Task Force's purview to make that decision and question if it was even under the Task Force's purview to opine on the issue, which may be a legal question. Ms. Esposito believed that the Task Force may need to explore their legislative authority, mission, and purpose. Mr. Smith believed that this Task Force meeting would be the time to express concerns since the Board meeting is next week. Ms. Esposito noted that each Task Force member may share their respective concerns in their individual roles.

To add clarity to the issue, Ms. Nakagawa-Ota noted that the County through its Conditional Use Permit and the Local Enforcement Agency's (LEA) authority have a term called an emergency waiver, which is related to operating criteria. Even though landfills may not receive emergency waivers approved by the County or the LEA, it does not stop Class III landfills listed in the General Order from receiving fire disaster debris. An emergency waiver is in place as part of the solution because at every stage of the debris removal and disposal, which is from the cleanup process to the hauler, has strict protocols for everyone to follow. Instead of wasting time with making modifications to permits, the Water Board issued the General Order that could be activated immediately following a proclamation of a state of emergency.

Ms. Esposito asked Mr. Jonathan Brazile of County Counsel if the Task Force had any authority to share their concerns to the Board since Task Force recommendations for legislation goes to the Chief Executive Office Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations. Mr. Brazile's strongest thought was that the Task Force could write a letter, but he needed to find out if it is contrary to internal policies.

Discussion ensued on what was a feasible way to get Task Force concerns to the Board.

A motion was made by Ms. Clark and seconded by Mr. Smith to have PW staff relay Task Force concerns to the Board next Tuesday regarding expanding tonnage acceptance for fire debris at landfills and its impacts to communities and the safety of the debris material, including air and water quality. The motion also requested staff to provide description of EPA, USACE, and FEMA protocols to ensure Phase 1 material is properly disposed of and how it is segregated from Phase 2 so that the community is protected from the impact of debris disposal at local landfills.

Motion passed unanimously with nine voting yes (Ms. Clark, Mr. Smith, Mr. De La Riva, Mr. Farano, Ms. Esposito, Mr. Milo, Ms. Nakagawa-Ota, Mr. Shammas, and Mr. Sisson). Mr. Crabbe left the meeting early.

VII. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF DRAFT TASK FORCE BYLAWS

Due to the absence of Ms. Erin Rowland, Ad Hoc Committee Chair, a motion was made by Mr. Sisson and seconded by Ms. Clark to postpone this item to next month. Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. CALRECYCLE UPDATE

Ms. Adylene Gonzalez provided an [update](#) to the Task Force.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Hunter brought up concerns regarding fire debris disposal such as the necessary paperwork for Phase 2 of fire debris cleanup that indicates debris has been inspected. The North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens wrote letters to the Board asking where all the information is located once it has been collected and how the public may access the information. Mr. Hunter also shared his concern that there was no consideration on the impacts to the landfills themselves.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:47 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, March 20, 2025, at 1 p.m.