

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

November 21, 2024

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

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Basil Cantu, City of Long Beach Public Works
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens
Shikari Nakagawa-Ota, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health
Sam Shammass, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts
Jordan Sisson, California Waste and Recycling Association
Christopher Sheppard, Los Angeles County Public Works

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative

OTHERS PRESENT:

Larry Israel, South Coast Air Quality Management District
Nicole Ward, Waste Connections
Siya Araumi, Los Angeles County Public Works
Joe Bartolata, Los Angeles County Public Works
Alexander Castro, Los Angeles County Public Works
Anna Gov, Los Angeles County Public Works
Michael Harmon, Los Angeles County Public Works
Ramon Herman, Los Angeles County Public Works
Karlo Manalo, Los Angeles County Public Works
Aric Rodriguez, Los Angeles County Public Works
Erin Rowland, Long Beach Public Works
Carol Saucillo, Los Angeles County Public Works
Christopher Sheppard, Los Angeles County Public Works
Caleb Yun, Los Angeles County Public Works

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Christopher Sheppard called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 17, 2024, MEETING

Mr. Wayne Hunter made a motion to approve the October 17, 2024, minutes, and Mr. Basil Cantu seconded. Motion passed with one abstention.

III. CHIQUITA CANYON LANDFILL

Mr. Karlo Manalo, staff to the Task Force, reported on Chiquita Canyon Landfill's (CCL) Notices of Violations (NOVs):

- The Landfill Operator submitted their [Forty-Third Monthly Update](#), dated November 1, 2024, in accordance with the [April 19, 2021, Task Force letter](#) requirements and subsequent request for additional updates on NOVs issued and mitigation measures imposed by various regulatory agencies.
- CCL received 19 NOVs in October 2024 related to air quality from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) and received 19 NOVs in October 2024. In October 2023, CCL received 20 NOVs.
- As a result of the NOVs, CCL entered into a Stipulated Order for Abatement (SOA) with AQMD that was last modified on [November 13, 2024](#), to address and abate the odors resulting from the reaction at CCL through continuous implementation of mitigation measures in the SOA. The modified SOA will be shared with the Subcommittee once it becomes available. The next Stipulated Order Hearing is scheduled for February 2025.
- The Local Enforcement Agency (LEA), with recommendations from CalRecycle, required CCL in 2023 to implement mitigation measures to address the reaction and ongoing odors.
- On June 6, 2024, the LEA issued CCL a [Compliance Order](#) that alleges violations of site maintenance and gas monitoring and control, memorializes prior mitigation measures recommended by CalRecycle and LEA, and imposes additional related reporting requirements to CCL.
- CCL continues to implement the measures required by AQMD and the LEA, and is providing periodic reports to various regulatory agencies that are accessible through CCL's [odor mitigation website](#).
- On October 24, 2024, AQMD issued a [NOV](#) alleging that CCL failed to adhere to regulatory rules set forth by AQMD and State or Federal Law. CCL is currently investigating the alleged violations.

Mr. Hunter asked if there is any improvement in term of odor complaints. Since Mr. Manalo did not have that information, he suggested that question be deferred to AQMD.

Mr. Hunter asked if CCL is operating on a reduced tonnage. Mr. Manalo confirmed CCL reducing their tonnage since September 2024 to comply with the NOV they received from the County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning (Regional Planning). Mr. Manalo further informed that in accordance with the October report, CCL disposed about 90,000 tons for the month of October 2024, roughly averaging to 2,000 tons per day.

Mr. Larry Israel with AQMD provided additional information on odor complaints at CCL stating that AQMD received 19,000 odor complaints so far this year compared to 6,800 odor complaints last year. CCL has been averaging between 15 and 20 nuisance violations per month, which does not include violations issued for Title 5 permits, dust track out, flare equipment, or any of the equipment processes. For September 2024, there were 10 nuisance violations and for October 2024, there were 18 nuisance violations. Odor complaints have been averaging between 1,500 and 2,000 per month, which has been consistent through the year. For September and October 2024, there were 2,500 and 1,500 odor complaints, respectively, and in November 2024, CCL is up to about 450 odor complaints, but there have been significant weather condition changes including more winds from the north that may benefit the community. As of November 20, 2024, there are seven NOVs.

Mr. Sheppard asked if odors are categorized by AQMD. Mr. Israel stated he would need to go through each of the seven NOVs to verify this, but inspectors typically detect and categorize the odors that may be emanating from the landfill, such as reaction odor, trash odor, leachate, landfill gas, etc. AQMD staff is out in the community five days a week, and inspectors have been detecting more leachate- and reaction-type odors. Fresh trash odors in the working face have not been prevalent this entire year as in prior years.

Mr. Jordan Sisson stated that if the odors are not from fresh trash, then the reduction in average daily tonnage will not change the primary issue that the community is experiencing. Mr. Israel added that it will also not change if the reaction is ongoing and the collection system has not been fully installed in the reaction area, which is set to be completed by end of 2024. Mr. Israel further informed that the AQMD Hearing Board had a hearing on November 13, 2024, where he testified, and 15 new and/or modified conditions were adopted into the Modified SOA. The hearing will be continued in February 2025 and is open to public testimony.

With regards to the SOA, Mr. Sheppard indicated that his understanding was that the provisions negotiated no longer included the working face or tonnage limitations. Mr. Israel confirmed Mr. Sheppard's understanding.

Mr. Cantu asked if there was anything else contributing to the odors besides the weather since AQMD reported 450 odor complaints as opposed to the 2,500 and 1,500 odor complaints in September and October. Mr. Israel stated it is still too early to tell but suspects the weather as the contributor.

Update on Staff Analysis of Waste Management System

Mr. Lance Cervantes, staff to the Task Force, provided an [Overview of Waste Management System](#) in Los Angeles County (County), along with a map of the [2023 Los Angeles County Disposal from Transfer/Processing Facilities to Landfills](#), which was a follow-up to the discussion at the September Subcommittee meeting regarding CCL's tonnage reduction and its impacts to the County's solid waste management system.

Mr. Sheppard noted that Public Works (PW) staff is continuing to analyze the data for other tiers of transportation and hopes to provide a presentation at a future meeting. He also noted that today's overview was from 2023 data acquired from the Recycling and Disposal Reporting System (RDRS), which is a state reporting system. Mr. Sheppard anticipated by late spring or summer of next year of having a complete picture of the 2024 data, showing the outcome of tonnage distribution since the changes took effect at CCL.

Mr. Sam Shammas commented that the map showing tonnage received at the Puente Hills Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) at 119 tons per day is a little low since they receive anywhere from 800 to 1,000 tons per day. Mr. Cervantes responded that the numbers were from the RDRS, but that staff could double check.

Mr. Sisson noted the available capacity shown at the Waste Management and Republic Services (Republic) transfer stations, which have private negotiated rates and to see what customers pay, will be contingent on what those facilities want to charge to transfer there and to place at their respective landfills.

Mr. Shammas commented that there was no hyperlink on the agenda of the overview or map and asked if copies could be provided to the Task Force. Mr. Sheppard confirmed that they would be distributed.

IV. SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL

Mr. Michael Harmon, staff to the Task Force, provided the following updates for Sunshine Canyon Landfill (SCL):

Odor Complaints and Notices of Violation

- During the month of October 2024, 405 complaints were made to the AQMD hotline. Of those, 102 were classified as Trash, 192 were listed as No Field Response, 20 were listed as Landfill Gas Odors, and 91 were classified as None, which meant the inspector visited the site and did not detect any odor.
- Compared to September 2024, the number of complaints received for October 2024, increased from 179 to 405 complaints.
- Compared to October 2023, the number of complaints for October 2024 increased from 230 to 405 complaints.
- AQMD issued 11 NOVs related to odor for the month of October 2024.
- The total number of NOVs issued this calendar year is 57.

Additional information can be found in the [AQMD summary of odor complaints for October 2024](#).

Mr. Hunter invited Mr. Israel to speak and provide additional information regarding odors at SCL.

Mr. Israel confirmed 406 odor complaints for the month of October and to date for November, approximately 114 odor complaints. The AQMD issued five nuisance violations this year and have received approximately 2,076 complaints. The number of NOVs also exceeds last year's from 61 to 62. He added that inspectors are out at SCL responding to complaints five days a week and are primarily detecting trash odors in the morning between 7 a.m. and 10 a.m. Mr. Israel informed that three schools are being impacted by the odors including El Oro Way Elementary School, Bethlehem Lutheran Church Pre-School, and primarily the Van Gogh Charter School which for the last three or four weeks have complained about eight or nine times, resulting in nuisance violations. In the evening hours, inspectors are smelling landfill gas and not trash. Mr. Israel advised that AQMD is also pursuing an order for abatement, which would be the first time since 2016.

Mr. Sheppard asked if there were any factors contributing to the increased odors at SCL. Mr. Israel responded that the working face is an exposed area and that SCL will be moving into the new cell soon, which is a lot lower. He noted that wind conditions are also a factor.

Since 2016 was the last time complaint levels were this bad, Mr. Sheppard asked if there was any correlation between those high levels and where the work was being done in the landfill at that time. Mr. Israel believes that it was in 2016 that AQMD had SCL put in closure turf, which was the area of focus, and now they are putting in Posi-Shell.

Mr. Sisson commented that the information provided was very useful because it went beyond the number of complaints and violations and felt the information that is most helpful was depicting the types of odors, whether trash, landfill gas, or leachate. Mr. Israel responded that inspectors are trained on the specific types of odors. Mr. Hunter commented the benefits of having SCL-Community Advisory Committee (SCL-CAC) meetings every two months of which Mr. Israel attends and appreciates the charts that AQMD provides with information on the odors. He also mentioned that SCL is the largest landfill in Los Angeles County and at the last SCL-CAC meeting, it was noted that October was the worst month ever for odors, as well as being the worst year ever for odors. Concerns were brought up about SCL potentially receiving more trash since it is the closest landfill to CCL, who must reduce their tonnage. Discussion ensued.

Third Quarter Vegetation Update

Republic submitted their [Third Quarter 2024 Vegetation Project Status Report](#) for SCL, dated October 31, 2024.

The County Biologist agrees that the recommendation to add irrigation must be taken with caution as a last option, stating that vegetation stress and dormancy during the summer and fall months is normal for native species. They should not be watered during dormancy as they can be killed. Additional water may promote non-native species growth.

Update on Alternative Daily Cover Pilot Project

PW approved the ADC on August 7, 2024, which commenced on August 10, 2024, to last a one-year duration. At the end of the one year, there will be an evaluation to determine whether to continue the ADC, which is the use of Enviro-Cover, on weekends. The ADC will allow SCL to cover over the weekend in lieu of six-inch of soil cover.

During the month of September 2024, Republic reported no observations of fires, vectors, or blowing litter at the working face related to the use of the ADC material. On September 9, 2024, a minor scavenging by birds was reported. In response,

the Landfill Operator stationed employees at the working face of the landfill on weekends.

During the month of October 2024, Republic reported no observations of fires, vectors, or blowing litter at the working face related to the use of the ADC material. However, on October 19 and 26, 2024, high winds were reported blowing open one panel of ADC material. In response, the Landfill Operator started placing additional soil or Enviro-Cover panels to ensure the Enviro-Cover can endure high wind days.

Assessment of Odor Issues by Independent Consultant

On October 21, 2024, Regional Planning submitted their [final report](#) on mitigation measures to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, as instructed on April 9, 2024.

At the November 14, 2024, SCL-CAC meeting, AQMD informed that Republic had fully implemented the recommended mitigation measures except for the drainage plan and cell sequencing plan noted in the report.

Backup Generator

SCL's Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Condition No. 83 states that the permittee shall provide access to backup generator for emergency use in case of a prolonged power outage at the facility to prevent the migration or emission of landfill gas unless such a use is otherwise prohibited by AQMD due to air quality concerns. Republic confirmed that the facility owns and maintains an 800-kilowatt emergency generator on-site and can bring in rental generators as-needed during power outages.

Mr. Hunter asked if Republic submitted a written report on the ADC to PW as required, which he also requested at the September and October Subcommittee meetings. Mr. Harmon responded that Republic submits reports to PW and that his ADC update came directly from Republic's report.

Mr. Hunter commented about the report from the LEA that was submitted assessing the odors, remediation actions, and Republic's implementation schedule, but did not see anything from PW and asked for a copy. Mr. Harmon responded that staff could reach out to the LEA for an update on the status. Mr. Hunter confirmed the LEA did have a document with a chart, but it was impossible to read and wanted to make certain that PW was receiving the same information.

Mr. Hunter asked why Republic did not use backup generators when Southern California Edison cut their power back in October. Mr. Harmon responded that staff could follow-up with Republic.

Mr. Hunter asked if there had been a replacement for Ms. Betsey Landis on the Vegetation Group with her extensive background. Mr. Harmon responded that there are a few experts that are part of the group including Regional Planning's County Biologist, UltraSystems' biologist, and a third-party biologist from the Landfill Operator.

V. FINDING OF CONFORMANCE

Mr. Cameron Jones, staff to the Task Force, provided the update on the [Finding of Conformance Waste Characterization Studies and Quarterly Reports](#) for various landfills.

Mr. Sisson asked what factors may have impacted the increase of organics at both CCL and SCL. Mr. Jones did not know. Mr. Sheppard suggested this may be something staff could look into.

Mr. Hunter shared his concern about SCL being the largest landfill but doing the minimum amount of sampling at 40 loads with other landfills doing 30 loads. Mr. Sheppard explained that 30 loads is a visual inspection and 25 loads at smaller facilities, are a more detailed 200-pound sample. SCL is doing 40, 200-pound samples compared to other facilities doing 25, 200-pound samples. Sampling amounts are based on State guidelines. Mr. Sheppard's understanding is that those guidelines are set up where the amount of samples established are to be a statistically relevant sample size regardless of the total tonnage received at the facilities. That was also Mr. Shammas' understanding, and that CalRecycle's guidelines represents the sample, based on their studies.

VI. DECEMBER SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Mr. Sisson made a motion to recommend not meeting in December but deferring it to the Task Force. Mr. Hunter seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:18 p.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 16, 2025, at 11 a.m.