

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

February 20, 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
Emiko Thompson, Los Angeles County Public Works

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jonathan Braile, county of Los Angeles Office of the County Counsel
Sharon Bronson, Republic Services
Eugene Tseng, UCLA Solid Waste Program
Anna Gov, Los Angeles County Public Works
Michael Harmon, Los Angeles County Public Works
Cameron Jones, Los Angeles County Public Works
Karlo Manalo, Los Angeles County Public Works
Dave Nguyen, Los Angeles County Public Works
Carol Saucillo, Los Angeles County Public Works
Caleb Yun, Los Angeles County Public Works

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Emiko Thompson called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 21, 2024, MEETING

Mr. Wayne Hunter made a motion to approve the November 21, 2024, minutes, and Mr. Sam Shammass seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

III. CHIQUITA CANYON LANDFILL

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

- The Landfill Operator submitted their [Forty-Fifth Monthly Update](#), dated January 31, 2025, 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 3 NOVs in January 2025 and 9 NOVs in December 2024 related to air quality from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD).
- 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. Once available, the modified SOA will be shared with the Subcommittee. The Stipulated Order Hearing was rescheduled from February 5, 2025, to April 16, 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 [December 31, 2024](#), CCL submitted a letter to Los Angeles County (County) providing notice that the landfill would be closing its active waste disposal operations effective January 1, 2025.

Mr. Jordan Sisson asked how much disposal capacity remained at CCL now that it is closed. Mr. Manalo did not have that information available but indicated that staff could look into the matter and noted that the Conditional Use Permit allowed disposal until 2047.

Mr. Sisson asked if the summary of odor complaint charts provided to the Subcommittee were prepared by Public Works (PW) staff or by AQMD. Mr. Manalo answered it was prepared by AQMD. Mr. Hunter added that AQMD posts their summary of odor complaints regularly on their website and previously asked

Mr. Larry Israel with AQMD if a similar chart could be provided for CCL. Mr. Israel was going to inquire with AQMD but was not in attendance at today's Subcommittee meeting. Mr. Manalo stated that PW staff would follow up with Mr. Israel.

IV. SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL

Mr. Michael Harmon, staff to the Task Force, provided an [update on the odor complaints from AQMD for January 2025](#) at Sunshine Canyon Landfill (SCL):

Odor Complaints and Notices of Violation

- During the month of January 2025, 118 complaints were made to the AQMD hotline. Of those, 31 were classified as Trash, 26 were listed as No Field Response, 1 was listed as Landfill Gas Odor, and 60 were classified as None, which meant the inspector visited the site and did not detect any odor.
- Compared to December 2024, the number of complaints received for January 2025, increased from 85 to 118 complaints.
- Compared to January 2024, the number of complaints for January 2025, decreased from 204 to 118 complaints.
- AQMD issued 3 NOVs related to odor for the month of January 2025.
- The total number of NOVs issued this calendar year is 3.

Mr. Hunter brought up his concerns about the waiver that SCL requested for fire debris related waste being accepted, which is a 20 percent increase in tonnage in addition to extending the landfill's operating hours in the morning and evening. He indicated that it was Item 29 on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) agenda for February 18, 2025, with over 500 comments sent to the Board opposing both Calabasas Landfill and SCL receiving the fire-debris waste. Mr. Hunter submitted copies of letters to be disseminated to the Task Force that were written by the North Valley Coalition of Concerns Citizens to the [AQMD on February 5, 2025](#), and to the [Board on February 16, 2025](#), and indicated it was incomprehensible why the increase of waste would be allowed to be taken to an area that was a public nuisance and that tonnage should be decreased due to the continuous odor problem. Mr. Hunter continued to share his concerns.

Ms. Sisson mentioned that on the summary of odor complaints, he grouped six major events where there were many odor complaints within an hour or so from similar streets and asked if the callers were from the same residents or multiple residents along those respective streets. Mr. Harmon noted that he did not have the answer since the summary of odor complaints chart is issued by AQMD. Subsequently, Mr. Sisson asked staff to inquire with AQMD since he will ask the question next month. He also stated many odor complaints on January 6, 2025,

but according to the report, there were no odors detected by inspectors who went out to investigate, determining that odor complaints versus NOVs are not necessarily always the same.

Mr. Hunter explained that the number of NOVs was low due to high winds, sometimes exceeding 100 mph, and usually the odors from the landfill are transferred in three to four mph winds. The higher the winds, the lower the odors. Mr. Hunter also informed that odor complaints are generally from multiple homes and many times are the same homes that keep calling because they happen to be in the sweet spot of the landfill. Discussion of the odors affecting nearby communities ensued.

V. 2025 DISASTER EVENT DEBRIS REMOVAL EFFORTS

Mr. Harmon reported on the effort to remove fire debris from the community affected by the January fire event.

The devastation of the fires resulted in huge volumes of fire debris to be removed immediately to reduce immediate threats to public safety. As a result, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) were tasked to remove debris from properties in separate phases.

Phase 1

Fire debris removal began on January 26, 2025, to remove household hazardous waste (HHW) from the Palisades and Eaton Fires affected areas. The EPA organized a team of experts to inspect impacted properties and remove HHW materials that may pose a threat to human health, animals, and the environment to be disposed at landfills that are certified to take such material.

Phase 2

The USACE is to remove non-hazardous fire debris such as ash and structures damaged by the fires. Such material will be taken to lined landfills that can accept disaster-related debris under State law. The USACE will also identify and remove any HHW material encountered during the debris removal process and will dispose at landfills that are certified to take such material.

Mr. Sisson asked what platform the public can use to acquire information. Mr. Harmon responded the <http://recovery.lacounty.gov> website. Mr. Sisson asked if it was the best repository of information. Mr. Harmon replied yes.

Mr. Sisson asked if Phase 1, which is for HHW, was going to be completed at the end of the month and if the process was on pace. Mr. Harmon responded that the Phase 1 debris removal is taking place and whatever is deferred from the Phase 1 process, will be picked up during Phase 2. He confirmed Phase 1 is over 50 percent complete. Mr. Hunter understood that on February 11, 2025, Phase 2 disposal had begun and asked if that was correct. Ms. Thompson did not recall if Phase 2 started on February 11, 2025, but did confirm that Phase 2 had begun and reiterated that <http://recovery.lacounty.gov> was the best source of information that will include the status of phases.

Mr. Sisson's understanding of Phase 2 is that residents can sign up for ground clearing, which would also require right of entry forms, but asked if there was a sign off process that verifies Phase 1 material has been removed and Phase 2 can begin. Mr. Harmon responded there is a resource from the EPA that will show a placard placed on a property once Phase 1 has been completed for that property. Mr. Sisson asked if once a placard is on a property, that meant there was no HHW material on that property. Mr. Harmon responded it is the record of the inspection from the EPA.

With many concerns being raised about a park in Altadena being used as a staging ground for Phase 2, Mr. Sisson asked if it was strictly Phase 2 material. He is hearing from the public that they do not know if it is Phase 1 or 2 material. Mr. Hunter shared his concerns about the waste stream and does not believe that Phase 2 material is not hazardous, which is why a waiver is needed to dispose the material at a Class III landfill. Ms. Shikari Nakagawa-Ota clarified that under the general order issued by the [Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board](#) in 2020, ash and fire debris may be accepted at a Class III landfills with a composite liner and leachate collection system. Landfills may accept disaster-related debris as defined in the order without getting a waiver. Emergency waivers are for the operational components. The emergency waiver that the LEA has ordered is for extending the operating hours and increasing the tonnage received. It is a coordinated effort to speed up the debris removal and rebuilding process following the proclamation of the State emergency that has been activated in which each respective agency, under their purview, is completing those processes.

Mr. Hunter continued with his concerns of fire debris being taken to Class III landfills and stated, for the record, that SCL took in Woolsey Canyon fire debris, as confirmed with his discussion with SCL management.

Mr. Sisson asked if those opting into Phase 2, must be in the burn scar or could they be adjacent to it, and asked if the information could be found on the website. Ms. Thompson responded that there is an extensive [FAQ](#) section on the website.

Ms. Thompson also commented that although the EPA is generally tasked with the removal of HHW material, but if it is determined that there are structural issues that preclude EPA's safety, then the USACE will take on that effort accompanied by Phase 2. She also advised that because of the likelihood of litigation, only items that are publicly available will be discussed in the meeting. Therefore, refraining from discussing other aspects of debris removal and where it is going to.

VI. FINDING OF CONFORMANCE

Mr. Manalo provided the update on the [Finding of Conformance Fourth Quarter 2024 Monitoring Reports](#) for various landfills.

Mr. Sisson noticed the correlation between the reduction at CCL and the increase at SCL. He also mentioned the significant reduction in the Fourth Quarter last year in anticipation of the closure of CCL and asked if the trend would likely continue, in addition to the substantial amount of tonnage that the fire debris will cause. Mr. Manalo responded that it was likely to continue because of the closure of CCL and that PW staff would continue to monitor.

Mr. Sisson mentioned other Subcommittee members had comments about PW's Board Motion related to the wasteshed restriction waiver and site operation recommendations on landfills the County has permitted jurisdiction over. Mr. Sisson also noted supporting PW's position and that they should seek similar waivers and allowances at other facilities, and that there should be contingency plans. He added that if there continues to be a lack of capacity in existing facilities that may have more tonnage capacity but continue to cause nuisance to nearby residents, these issues must still be solved. A potential solution would be to utilize Mesquite Landfill (Mesquite) to provide some relief. Ms. Thompson commented that many things came to surface because of the 2025 wildfires, one of which was having disposal options available near and far.

Mr. Hunter asked what the County was doing to facilitate the waste-by-rail to Mesquite. Mr. Shammass clarified that the rail was completed and ready to go, which would be used by Union Pacific trains. Mr. Hunter asked why rail access was not being used to bring waste to Mesquite. Mr. Shammass responded that due to higher cost for utilizing the waste-by-rail option at Mesquite, Sanitation Districts would require a long-term commitment before considering allowing the use of Mesquite for disposal of waste.

Mr. Sisson made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Basil Cantu for County Sanitation District to provide a one-page update to the Subcommittee in the next

two months with the requirements, including timeframe and costs, for using railway disposal and truck exemption to Mesquite. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:59 p.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for March 20, 2025, at 11 a.m.