

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
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Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 11/21/02
Department Name: Public Works
Department No.: 054
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Placement: Departmental
Estimate Time: 30 minutes
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Phillip M. Demery, Director
Public Works Department

STAFF CONTACT: Mark Schleich, Deputy Director, ext 3603
Leslie Wells, Program Manager, ext 3611

SUBJECT: Proposed Santa Barbara County Commercial and Multi-Family Recycling Program
All Supervisorial Districts

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Approve proposed commercial and multi-family recycling programs for Santa Barbara County.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendation is primarily aligned with Goal No. 2 – Ensure Public Health and Safety and Provide Essential Infrastructure

Executive Summary and Discussion:

Process Background

On October 15, 2002, your Board directed staff to return prior to December 17, 2002 with a specific plan for expanding the County's commercial and multi-family recycling programs. Beginning in September, preliminary meetings were held with the franchised solid waste collectors, and representatives from the Environmental Defense Center, Surfrider, and the City of Santa Barbara to discuss the potential options for expanding the commercial and multi-family recycling programs offered in the unincorporated area. Based on feedback from these meetings, a number of program proposals were made to your Board in October including the need for more time to prepare a comprehensive program. Your Board approved the programs proposed for immediate implementation and directed staff to return in December with a broader ranging program. Beginning in October, the stakeholders group was expanded and the following entities had representatives at a minimum of one of the three meetings that were subsequently held:

- Santa Barbara Rental Property Association,
- Santa Barbara Chamber of Commerce,
- Santa Maria Chamber of Commerce,
- Environmental Defense Center,
- Surfrider Foundation,
- Community Environmental Council,
- franchised solid waste collectors, and
- the City of Santa Barbara.

Participation from this group was excellent and staff is highly appreciative of the valuable input these entities brought to the discussions as well as their ongoing participation. The following proposal was generated by this group and submitted to your Board with complete support from each participating entity.

Proposal Background

In the past, commercial recycling programs have included all solid waste collection customers that subscribe to bin collection of trash. Under this definition, businesses and multi-family dwelling units have been put into the same category. There is an understanding that the waste streams from businesses and multi-family dwelling units are significantly different as well as other variables that must be considered when preparing a collection system. There was agreement among the stakeholders group that because the business and multi-family customers are so different, separate collection systems should be created for each.

Historically, many businesses have recycled cardboard in a bin separately from trash. Since 1997, businesses have been offered the commingled collection of all the materials collected from single-family residences. These materials include newspapers, magazines, junk mail, office paper, cardboard and paperboard (cereal boxes), glass, aluminum, tin and plastic (#s 1 and 2) containers. The County and the solid waste collectors have made every attempt to make businesses aware of this program including advertisements, inserts in association newsletters, and presentations at various business groups. Hundreds of businesses have subscribed to this program but the large majority has not. Because of this lack of participation and the community's desire to divert as much recyclable material from the landfill as possible, the following presents a more aggressive approach towards commercial recycling.

Structure

In this proposal, separate programs have been developed for businesses and multi-family dwelling units. An important premise to be aware of when considering this proposal is that businesses and multi-family complexes have the potential to lower their costs for solid waste collection by actively participating in the proposed program. For example, if a business currently pays \$100 a month for the collection of trash, the cost to collect the same quantity of recyclables is typically 40% less or \$60 a month. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the program will cost the businesses or multi-family complexes more to participate if they use the program effectively and are able to reduce the level of trash service they receive. Additionally, assuming that participation in the program is significant and a measurable amount of waste that is generated by the businesses and multi-family complexes are recyclable, it is estimated that the program will divert an additional 10,000 tons yielding an increased diversion level of 3%, thus increasing the County's current diversion rate of 59% to 62%. This is equivalent to three weeks of disposal at Tajiguas per year.

Business Recycling

The waste stream from businesses varies greatly. Because of this variety, it is more difficult to determine the appropriate level of recycling service. Due to this variation, the stakeholders group has proposed a Disposal Ban on any of the materials currently collected in the residential program (not including green waste). A disposal ban is essentially the same as mandatory recycling of specific commodities. In order to comply with the ban, businesses will have three options: 1) contact their service provider to determine the appropriate level of recycling service, 2) contact a recycler that does not charge for service (typically collectors of paper and cardboard), and 3) self-haul recyclables to drop-off facilities. Specific rates for commingled carts and bins as well as green waste containers, based on collection criteria, will be developed and the service provider will offer both commingled carts as well as commingled bins based upon the businesses needs.

Multi-Family Dwelling Units

The waste stream from multi-family dwelling units is residential waste. It is known that tenants generate the same spectrum of recyclables (other than green waste) as residents of single-family homes. A concern of property managers is a lack of space, loss of parking, and a concern of the collectors and processors is contamination of the recyclables with trash. Based on past experience, it has been found that larger recycling carts are easier to site and they are distinct from trash bins so contamination has been less. As a result, the program will be based on recycling carts that are serviced from the backyard (the customer will not be required to bring the container to the curb).

A representative sort of sample multi-family waste will be conducted and an assumption will be made regarding what percentage of waste that is generated will be included in the program. Based on the sort results, a generic basic service level will be created. For example, for every 3 cubic yards of trash service, a site will be assessed the cost for and given three 90 gallon recycling carts. The cost for this level of service will be built into the trash service rate. Recycling service beyond this level will be available for an additional charge including the collection of green waste. All complexes will pay for recycling service because it will be built into their trash service rate even if they choose not to participate in the program, as has been implemented in the program for single family homes.

Compliance and Enforcement

Businesses

In order to ensure compliance with the disposal ban there will have to be a significant amount of enforcement. The best place to enforce the ban is at the site of generation. The County will set up a protocol, in coordination with the service providers, on how to audit the businesses as well as enforce noncompliance. There was less interest among the stakeholders in fining for noncompliance and more interest in non-collection of waste at sites that are not complying with the ban until those sites comply.

A feasible system of enforcement would include: giving a driver a list of the businesses that will be audited on a route each day (driver would get out of truck and check a specified bin for recyclables) and if a specified amount of recyclables were found (specific percentage to be established by County and service providers to ensure uniform enforcement), would note the location and phone it into the collector's office where office staff would call the customer directly and inform them of the noncompliance and ensure that appropriate service levels were available, that they were aware of the specified materials that could be recycled, and warned that if the business was not willing to comply it would be subject to a significant surcharge or face non-collection of waste.

Exemptions to the program would be offered but the business owner would have to identify unreasonable hardship by participating in the program and the exemption would have to be approved by the County.

Multi-Family Dwelling Units

Because the cost for recycling service will be built into the trash rate and the solid waste service providers will provide a level of recycling service that is set by a formula, a smaller degree of enforcement will be required for this program. County staff will need to follow-up with the service providers to ensure the delivery of the containers and make follow-up visits to these sites to ensure that the containers are being properly utilized but a strict enforcement policy may not be necessary. The need for future enforcement will be assessed once the program is implemented.

Public Education and Outreach

Businesses

Beginning five months prior to the implementation of the disposal ban, presentations will be made to business associations to explain the various aspects of the program. Feedback received from these presentations will be reviewed and any necessary changes will be made prior to implementation. Two months before initiation of the program, the service provider, in coordination with the County, will send letters to the affected community explaining the program, what resources are available, and encouraging businesses to sign up for recycling service prior to the initiation of the program. Both service provider and County staff will be available to visit customer sites in order to answer any questions regarding siting and quantity of recycling containers that will be necessary. When the containers are delivered, flyers will be delivered further indicating the materials that can be recycled and the resources available to them to implement the program.

Multi-Family Dwelling Units

Similar to the business outreach program, five months prior to the implementation of the program, presentations will be made to property management associations explaining the upcoming program. In addition, information will be provided that could be included in association newsletters. Prior to the delivery of the collection containers located outside as well as the delivery of internal containers (if the property management is interested in these), door hangers will be hung on each resident's door describing the upcoming program and what materials are acceptable. In addition, sample text for tenant newsletters and flyers will be given to property managers illustrating how to participate in the program prior to implementation as well as with the delivery of the containers and for future move-ins. All information for multi-family tenants will be bilingual.

Overall Education

One month prior to the implementation of the program and two months following the implementation of the program, advertisements and information on Public Access Television will be run espousing Santa Barbara County's goal to not bury recyclables in order to preserve resources as well as save landfill space. Reference will be made specifically to a stepped up recycling effort by the business and multi-family communities and that new programs are being implemented to target these groups.

Timeline

December 10	Proposed program will be presented to the Board of Supervisors
January/February	If approved, conduct outreach explaining the program to the business and multi-family communities
January/February	Conduct outreach to other jurisdictions within the County encouraging their participation in the program
February	Conduct sort of multi-family waste
April	Procure containers for program Develop flyers and door hangers for distribution Develop general education campaign
May	Send out letters to businesses spelling out the program and encouraging enlistment
June	Start airing general education campaign
July	Roll-out multi-family program Continue implementation of business program
August	Follow-up with business customers who do not have service and begin tagging containers.

Mandates and Service Levels:

Service levels could potentially increase through participation in the proposed programs.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

There will be no increase in staff or resource costs to the Solid Waste & Utilities Division incurred by these proposed programs. The Division receives state funding for recycling education and the purchase of recycling containers. There will be an overall net reduction in revenue for the Division. If the goals of the program are fully achieved (3% increase in landfill diversion) the net fiscal impact to the Solid Waste Enterprise Fund could be \$240,000 annually. It is anticipated that it would take up to two years to fully implement these programs. This reduction can be addressed through a combination of revenue increases and cost reductions. In addition, these costs are offset by the landfill capacity savings of three weeks per year. If the City of Santa Barbara implements a similar program, the financial impact will be greater.

Special Instructions:

Please provide copies of the Minute Order to the Solid Waste & Utilities Division, attention Georgia Navarro and Leslie Wells.