

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2020

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Via Zoom

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. MRWMD Staff, TAC Members, Franchise Haulers

Jurisdictions: Chair Mike Niccum (PBCSD), Co-Chair Ted Terrasas (Monterey), Brian McMinn (Marina), Agnes Martelet (Carmel), Caleb Schneider (Pacific Grove), Karina Alcalá (Monterey County), Mandy Brooks (SVR)

Haulers: Jimmy Moreseco (GreenWaste Recovery), Emily Hanson (GWR), Sara Treat (GWR) Kristin Skromme (Waste Management), Tom Parola (Monterey Disposal)

District: Tim Flanagan, Zoe Shoats, David Ramirez, Angela Goebel

HF&H: Dave Hilton, Dave Hilton

1. Recycling Characterization Results – presentation by David Ramirez

- Conducted by SCS Engineers on single-stream materials between July-August 2020
- 150-pound samples are hand sorted into different material categories
- Contamination rates went up this year for every jurisdiction, for all materials there was an increase from 22% last year to 30% this year
- Haulers are noticing more residential and less commercial recyclables due to COVID shelter-in-place (residential recycling is typically more contaminated)
- Sort indicated a 10% decrease in inbound glass, but output of glass at MRF consistent (may be possible glass is embedded in contamination, but equipment is still able to recover it)
- MRF has maintained a consistent residue output levels for past two years (35% in 2019, 34% in 2020)

Due to this being an unusual year, the District will be recommending to the Board to keep the contamination fees the same. As background to this fee, when the National Sword policies hit in 2018, there was an embedded payment of \$40/ton that was credited towards disposal for GreenWaste Recovery (GWR) jurisdictions. The District did not charge for single-stream processing. When the contamination fee was added in 2019, the first 10% of contamination was built into the processing rate. Anything above 10% was charged at the disposal rate, raising the net charge to about \$47/ton, which GWR passes on to the rate payers.

Mike Niccum asked about the statistical accuracy of the study because the MRF system is finding the same residue levels as past years. David Ramirez mentioned that SCS did take a statistically relevant number of samples, and there is a plus and minus confidence level of accuracy. Emily Hanson said that a hand sort will see different results than the MRF residue levels, and that means the District is doing a good job sorting materials.

Agnes Martelet asked about the cause of increased contamination. David Ramirez says we are speculating, but with COVID and people staying at home, people could need more garbage service and are throwing the bags in the recycling cart. They may also be doing home and pantry cleanouts, since SCS observed full jars of food in the recycling.

2. District Updates to Food Waste Acceptance Criteria

Angela Goebel mentioned the District and Keith Day have updated their food waste acceptance criteria. For the accepted compostable food ware must be certified by BPI-certified or CMA-W (Compost Manufacturing Alliance -Windrow). The language to accept “ASTM” items is being removed – this is the international standard that certification bodies use, but not a certification entity itself. This should not result in much of a change for customers. There might be a few new items customers can put in the program, such as the Aardvark paper straws that are certified compostable under CMA-W.

The District also accepting paper coffee filters and tea bags, but no other paper products except for those that are certified compostable. The District acknowledges that food-soiled paper is abundant and that it will be considered an organic to remove from the landfill under SB 1383. The District will work with Keith Day and look at this category, since all fiber items will need to be diverted under SB 1383.

The District will be updating the organicstoenergy.org and whatgoeswhere.info websites to reflect these changes, and this information will be emailed to the haulers.

Sara Treat gave feedback that if program acceptance guidance is changing too often, these changes mean that print or digital collateral need to be updated. If the program guidelines can be kept the same or updated less periodically that would be helpful. As clarification, depending on the scope of the change, the District expects that older outreach materials could be phased out over time for small updates to acceptance standards. The District will review its process for updating programs and notifying haulers and can work in-tandem on a case-by-case basis with haulers to determine if an immediate update to collateral is needed or not.

3. Discuss responsibilities of major areas of SB 1383: who will do what? And form subgroups:

- **Edible Food Recovery**
- **Contamination Monitoring/CalRecycle Reporting/Enforcement**
- **Collection Programs/Education and Outreach**
- **Ordinances and Permitting (CALGreen and MWEL0)**

Rob Hilton thinks the Collection Programs will be the most intensive area to wrestle with, including decisions for the number and color of carts. A lot of the other areas will flow out of those decisions, such as Education and Outreach. Edible Food Recovery can be working in parallel. Ordinances and Permitting will come at the end. Collection Programs/Education and Outreach and Edible Food Recovery subgroups should get started first. The other subgroups can follow, and the city attorneys can be pulled in about city code and ordinance updates. Each hauler should be represented in the Collection Programs subgroup.

Mandy Brooks said SVR just completed all their SB 1383 planning documents, which includes edible food recovery. The Food Bank is moving forward with an application for a food waste prevention grant. Abby Beane, who formally worked for the Offset Project, is helping them. Mandy is trying to meet with Melissa, the Food Bank’s executive director, but they are really overwhelmed. Their work has quadrupled with COVID. The timing to talk with them about edible food recovery is horrendous because they are in the middle of a crisis. They most likely will want to partner.

Rob Hilton is hearing that from food banks throughout the state, but there are more food distribution groups working with churches, etc., that are coming out of the woodwork to assist during COVID. Mandy is trying to gather information about local food pantries and quantity of prepared foods that could be recovered as edible food, but the latter of which may not be the best timing to assess because the economic activity has changed with the pandemic. She is trying to assess the gaps in current services that will be necessary to implement edible food recovery programs, as well as the resources that will be needed.

Ted Terrasas said it makes sense to partner with the Food Bank because they have refrigerated trucks and already are familiar with food safety laws. We should conduct a gap analysis just with edible food. Step one is gathering information about existing systems, what kind of volume capacity exists, and how many additional trucks or staff will be needed. Rob Hilton said the infrastructure should be the same County-wide, but we should identify our Tier 1 and 2 customers. The Food Bank’s definition of edible food recovery is most likely different than our solid waste perspective. Their priorities are around food insecurity and wholesome healthy food distribution. Second Harvest is also a potential partner. Mike Niccum said we could also partner with SVR on the issue.

Brian McMinn said we should firm up the groups and choose chairs of the subcommittees. Rob Hilton said HF&H can help form the subcommittee’s agendas. Zoe Shoats will send out a list of the subgroups to finalize (current sign-ups are included below). Rob Hilton recommended meeting every other week, so that in February we are ready to start drafting amendments.

SB 1383 Subgroups			
Edible Food Recovery	Contamination monitoring/ CalRecycle Reporting/ Enforcement	Collection Programs/ Education & Outreach	Ordinances & Permitting (CALGreen/Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance [MWEL0])
Tim Flanagan- MRWMD Ted Terrasas - Monterey Karina Alcalá - County Chuck Pooler - Sand City Mandy Brooks -SVR	Angela Goebel - MRWMD Brian McMinn - Marina Agnes Martelet -Carmel Tom Parola - Monterey Disposal GWR (TBD) - Jimmy to assign Liz Hall - WM	Zoe Shoats - MRWMD Angela Goebel - MRWMD Mike Niccum - Pebble Beach Lesley Milton - Seaside Rob Durham - County Karina Alcalá - County Caleb Schneider - Pacific Grove Tom Parola - Monterey Disposal Jimmy Moresco - GWR Kristin Scromme - WM Janna Faulk - SVR	<p>This group will be determined at a later date as the group's responsibilities will come later.</p> <p>Expressed interest: Lesley Milton</p>

To be assigned: Jeff Hoyne - Del Rey Oaks

Rob Hilton said that all the city attorneys should be made aware that amendments will need to be made in the near future. Agnes Martelet said we need to create a presentation and an update to council. Tim Flanagan said Pacific Grove’s council has asked for a presentation in February. The District can plan for presentations to all councils if that is wanted, as well as the Monterey County Hospitality Association (MCHA) and chambers of commerce, since it will impact businesses. Ted Terrasas agreed that we need to move quickly with the subgroups to bring some progress back to the overall group.

Caleb Schneider asked if it’s better to have an individual presentation to each council, or with the era of Zoom, we can invite multiple councils at once to ask questions. Rob Hilton said there would be a Brown Act issue with that. In the procurement process for a new hauler, there was a public notice for the meeting and different councils were invited. The District could host one meeting overviews SB 1383 and then visit individual councils. Caleb Schneider said council members could act as panelists and the public could be invited to comment. Tim suggested Ted and Brian could ask their city managers and attorneys about this approach. Ted said that this meeting would be to create greater awareness around the issues versus make a decision.

Mandy Brooks said they gave a roadshow about SB 1383, and they were going to coordinate with the District, Rob Hilton, and the County to do the same thing on the County level. Mandy suggested partnering with the District to present to the County Board of Supervisors. Ashley Paulsworth from the County will be joining the next TAC meeting (she will also be added to TAC email list).

4. Hauler Issues and Comments

Jimmy Moresco asked when the District would have a solid answer about commingling residential food waste with yard waste. Tim Flanagan said the District is already engaging Keith Day about this. The District would like to conduct pilot projects as part of the Collection Programs/Education and Outreach subgroup, and the TAC should invite Keith Day to join this group.

Tim hopes that the TAC will be planning the collection pilot projects in the first quarter of 2021, and the District can ask for an answer from Keith by February or March. For pilot projects, the TAC will be asking: What will we take in the program? How do we notice customers? Do we give customers kitchen pails? Do we do educate with cart or door tags?

Jimmy Moresco is not seeing cost savings with this new program, and most likely a cost increase. The haulers are going to be asking customers to do more and he has concern about it. Rob Hilton recommended doing pilots before summertime, since Monterey County has summer visitors and there would be more odor complaints. He recommended working towards identifying routes and working with Keith Day to have a program launch by February or March. The piloting of the education system will take the most work.

Jimmy Moresco said he has concern with the odor of the carts when food scraps are added to the yard waste, and customers will want cart swaps more often. Mandy agreed there is an “ick factor” with the food waste, and a previous HF&H presentation showed giving biobags to customers reduced the “ick factor” and that huge anti-contamination campaign will be important even before the program rolls out. Rob said it would be good to have the haulers involved because some cities have less landscaping, and it may increase the “ick factor” of the food. Tom said they don’t have locking carts locally, but haulers might add it as an additional service. Rob Hilton said there are gravity locking carts, but it is \$150 a cart versus a standard \$60. Tom showed an example Lokbin example. Caleb asked if the lid could just be heavier, and Tom said that was an ADA issue. Tom said keeping the carts further apart can work because racoons stand on one container to open the other. Tom said there shouldn’t be a higher level of vermin because we’re just moving material from one cart to the other.

Agnes asked about when we should have our education and outreach materials if we are doing a pilot project in February or March. Angela said there are a lot of resources out there for education materials that we can replicate from other cities, and later on we can get a local graphic designer and refine them. The District will be updating the organicstoenery.org and whatgoeswhere.info websites to reflect these changes.

Kristin Skromme said they have been doing some education about contamination and avoiding overages in November for their Smart Truck program, which will be launching December 1. Kristin said they would appreciate as much notice as possible to standardize their outreach materials.

Next Steps

- Bi-weekly subgroup meetings
- Research and discuss grants
- Plan budgets for 2021/22
- Begin negotiations with contactors and utilize tool kits for permitting (CalGreen) and procurement
- Develop model ordinances (CalRecycle wants contracts and model ordinances to be in place by 1/22)
- Conduct pilot programs for commingled food scraps and yard trimmings to see if material is clean enough for composting
- Program Implementation: carts/bins should be ordered, since manufacturers are anticipating high demand

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be December 9 from 9-11am. We will extend the TAC meeting schedule to continue meeting on the second Wednesday of each month throughout 2021. Subgroups should meet before our December meeting.

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Minutes by Angela Goebel