



Memorandum

MONTEREY REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

DATE: November 16, 2020

Reviewed by:  Date: 11/25/2020
General Manager

TO: General Manager

FROM: Angela Goebel, Public Education and Outreach Specialist

SUBJECT: Report on Illegal Dumping and Litter Abatement Task Force Meeting of October 15, 2020

The Illegal Dumping and Litter Abatement Task Force (IDLATF) is a working group comprised of members from local government, solid waste haulers, law enforcement, business leaders, and members of the public, whose goal is to reduce illegal dumping and litter in Monterey County. The IDALTF meets quarterly on the third Thursday of the month from 10-11am and has been meeting virtually since the pandemic began. In August 2020, the IDALTF established subcommittees that began meeting monthly in between the larger quarterly meetings. The subcommittees include Governance, Enforcement, and Education and Outreach. I began attending for the District in June following Kimberle Herring's retirement, and I am attending the Education and Outreach subcommittee meetings. The IDALTF meeting of October 15th included a presentation on each of the subcommittees' established goals and progress.

The Governance subcommittee's goals are to partner with other jurisdictions, identify collective resources, identify data available on illegal dumping and impacts, provide standards for data collection, and identify available funding sources. Updating and promoting the KeepMontereyCountyClean.org website falls under the collective resources and available data. The District has paid for and maintained the website and litter reports since its creation. Starting in November, litter reports are being sent from the website directly to the County. The group will be investigating how to best share the cost and responsibility of the website moving forward.

The Enforcement subcommittee is focusing on identifying funding sources, identifying model cases and impediments to successful prosecution, identifying successful deterrents and enforcement options, investigating surveillance tools, and promoting interagency cooperation between California Highway Patrol, the County District Attorney, local Public Works, Caltrans, and Sheriffs.

The Education and Outreach subcommittee is prioritizing increasing voucher program participation, integrating community based social marketing, conducting farm work outreach, increasing K-12 engagement, expanding the IDALTF media footprint, and promoting cleanup events.

I mentioned the increased litter along Highway 1 between Carmel-by-the-Sea and Monterey that Debbie Hale and Robert Horn brought to the District's attention. Highway litter is a county-wide problem that has been worse during the pandemic. Maria Ferdin from the County said that they had just entered into a contract with Smith and Enright to clean up hot spots in Big Sur and rural rights of way starting this December. Maria Hale from Supervisor Phillip's office also attended for the first time because their office receives so many calls about illegal dumping. I plan to bring this topic to the Education and Outreach

subcommittee as well to ensure “Cover Your Load” messaging is included in the group’s outreach and Bulky Item Pickups are promoted to reduce individual loads from being driven to the landfill.

COVID-19 has exacerbated the problem because there have been less litter pickups. Either paid organizations (like the District’s former partner Hope Services) have been unable to fulfill their highway cleaning contracts, or volunteer groups are not cleaning as usual due to social distancing. Waste Management has not been able to do their centralized clean out events, although they were scheduled to conduct a trial on October 17 and 18th where a bin would be dropped in Castroville and monitored by one staff person until it was full.

Garin Road was also brought up for discussion. It is a chronic dump site in North County that runs east-west near Pajaro River between Lewis Rd and Hall Road. It is rural, wooded, and has a low local population. There has been a large buildup of litter and trash from homeless encampments. The County’s Public Works Department was able to clean the highway rights of way on 7/22/20 and 8/11/20, but they are not able to clean the private parcels owned by Elkhorn Slough Foundation. The Foundation has been constrained by a lack of funding to conduct cleanups and the ongoing nature of the problem. Furthermore, when the Sheriff has asked the homeless to leave, they move about 100 feet. Further measures being considered are putting up signage, installing a fence, and cutting back vegetation. The group agreed we should involve someone from homeless advocacy services to join our meetings to discuss front end solutions.