

# Monterey waste management GM to retire



William Merry

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Marina >> After 28 years with the Monterey Regional Waste Management District, General Manager William Merry is retiring, effective May 28.

Named to the top post on Dec. 1, 2004, Merry helped change the district's Marina landfill from a dumping ground to a nationally recognized recycle and reuse facility.

"I'm happy for him personally," said Jeff Lindenthal, energy programs director for the district, who has worked with Merry for nine years. "Professionally he has led the district through a period of time where the industry has shifted from disposal to diversion."

Merry, 66, was hired by the district in 1982 as assistant general manager and assistant engineer. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin, he was happy to get the job as there was a recession in the Midwest and jobs were few. He had experience working for a solid-waste management firm and brought that knowledge to the job. He is only the third general manager in the district's 63-year history.

When Merry came on board the Marina landfill was just that — a place to fill up with waste. Now it is at the forefront of the recycling, reuse industry.

"The thing that I'm most satisfied about is to have served this community ..." Merry said. "It's been very gratifying working here and to have the support of the community in the things that we do."

Among the innovations Merry has shepherded through during his 28 years are:

- Establishment of the Last Chance Mercantile store, where usable items are sold to the public. The program has grown from a once-a-quarter auction to a store that brings in more than \$700,000 annually to the district and employs 10 people.
- An improved materials recovery facility is in the works that will save millions of tons of waste from the landfill.
- A program to collect and dispose of hazardous household materials.

The district board is expected to name Merry's replacement at its May 15 meeting at district offices.