



Questions & Answers
Roadmap 2020 Stakeholder Meeting
April 30, 2020



Question/Comment	Answer
Can you describe the impacts to landfills, their daily limits, and lifespan, if affected?	With the reduction of commercial activity and more people staying home, there has been a shift in tonnages from commercial to residential waste. There has been otherwise little to no impact on landfill operations in Los Angeles County.
Are E-Waste Collections still being operated?	Los Angeles County Household Hazardous Waste/Electronic Waste Program collection services are currently suspended until further notice. However, other jurisdictions may be providing electronic waste collection services.
Can you talk more about conversion technology and is there any emphasis on manufacturer responsibility to use materials that can be recycled?	The County's Conversion Technology Program was developed to promote the use of state-of-the-art technologies capable of converting post-recycled solid waste into useful products, such as green fuels and renewable energy, in an environmentally beneficial way. These technologies may be thermal, chemical, biological, mechanical, or a combination of processes, but do not include incineration (waste combustion). The County's Waste Management Paradigm emphasizes waste prevention and producer responsibility followed by reuse, recycling, conversion/composting, waste-to-energy, and finally landfilling.
To meet these waste goals, can our County limit crummy packaging that is not easily recyclable?	On October 15, 2019, the Board adopted a motion directing the Chief Sustainability Office (CSO) in coordination with Public Works and other County departments to contract with researchers at University California Los Angeles to complete a report addressing management of single-use plastic food serviceware waste in the County. The motion also requires the CSO, Public Works, and other County departments to engage stakeholders and use results of the study to draft a recommended ordinance that would reduce the use of single-use plastics in the unincorporated portions of the County and ensure that materials used for disposable products are recyclable or compostable. The ordinance is currently under development.
What percentage of haulers in Los Angeles County have ceased separating recyclables from landfill waste? Are any of the haulers storing recyclables? Are all local MRFs operating? If not, what percentage of MRFs are presently not operating?	<p>Out of an abundance of caution to safeguard the health and safety of the public and sanitation workers, some facilities that process collected recyclables have suspended operations temporarily based on their ability to adhere to the Safer at Home social/physical distancing order. As a result, there is insufficient capacity to process all collected recyclables in the County. To address this, on a case by case basis, the County is allowing some contracted waste haulers that service the County unincorporated areas to dispose of recyclables and green/organic waste at landfills temporarily, if recycling facilities are unable to process the material.</p> <p>Based on phone surveys conducted through the end of April, approximately 60% of the MRFs and C&D processing facilities in Los Angeles County that responded have modified their operations or suspended processing of all or certain recyclables.</p>

<p>How will the updated Roadmap feed into the County's sustainability plan?</p>	<p>The County's Sustainability Plan contains a section on waste management that includes many of the same goals from the County's Roadmap to a Sustainable Waste Management Future, as well as a few new ones. Part of the effort of updating the Roadmap will also include aligning with the goals and targets of the Sustainability Plan.</p>
<p>Is the County able to directly invest in the local recycling infrastructure?</p>	<p>The County does not currently provide funding directly for recycling infrastructure; however, the County does manage the Recycling Market Development Zone program. This program provides business and technical assistance, product marketing, and financial assistance to businesses that manufacture a recycled-content product or process materials for recycling. Manufacturing or processing must occur within the Recycling Market Development Zone (RMDZ). For more information on the RMDZ Program visit the webpage at: https://pw.lacounty.gov/epd/rmdz/.</p> <p>The County has also sponsored legislation, Assembly Bill 2612 (Maienschein) to provide funding for traditional recycling and organics recycling infrastructure. The bill is still moving through the legislative process; however, due to impacts of COVID-19, it is uncertain if funding will be available.</p> <p>The County is also exploring a grant program for Conversion Technologies to help projects get developed in Los Angeles County. More information on this new program will be available in the coming year.</p>
<p>Gov. Newsom is now allowing plastic bags again in grocery stores, due to fears of reusable bags carrying COVID-19. Has the reusable program, specifically the Bring Your Own Container messaging changed since COVID-19? If not, is it going to change?</p>	<p>We encourage residents to continue to use reusable items instead of single-use items when safe and appropriate to do so. Reusable items are safe if cleaned regularly and stored properly.</p>
<p>Given that waste facilities can be a significant source of industrial stormwater pollution, how is the County ensuring the facilities it contracts with are in compliance with their permits and operating in a manner to minimize environmental harms?</p>	<p>Los Angeles County Public Works implements the Industrial/Commercial Facilities Program required by the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Municipal Permit in the unincorporated areas. This Program is enforced under the Los Angeles County Code to track, educate, inspect, and to ensure compliance at critical sources of stormwater pollution. Landfills, Material Recovery Facilities, transfer stations, and related operations are included within this Program.</p> <p>If you have additional questions on the County's Industrial/Commercial Facilities Program, you may contact Tim Smith, Senior Civil Engineer, Environmental Programs Division, at (626) 458-3511 or by e-mail at tsmith@pw.lacounty.gov.</p>
<p>Has there been any evidence that containers can carry the virus?</p>	<p>Recent studies have shown that the virus is primarily spread via person-to-person contact, and that there is a low likelihood of spread via contact with surfaces. Please contact County Public Health for more information and guidance at http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/</p>

<p>Are there any bills at state level proposing to assess a recycling tax on corporations to help fund the necessary infrastructure?</p>	<p>Many bills at the State level have been converted to deal with the impacts of COVID-19. The California Recycling and Plastic Pollution Reduction Act of 2020 is a ballot initiative for a tax on producers of single-use plastic packaging to pay for recycling and recycling infrastructure, which is collecting signatures to go on the 2022 ballot.</p> <p>The initiative requires California Department of Resources and Recovery to adopt regulations reducing plastic waste, including to: (1) require that single-use plastic packaging, containers, and utensils be reusable, recyclable, or compostable, and to reduce such waste by 25% by 2030; (2) prohibit polystyrene container use by food vendors; and (3) tax producers of single-use plastic packaging, containers, or utensils, and allocate revenues for recycling and environmental programs, including local water supply protection.</p>
<p>Are HHW events allowed to move forward in LA County now with COVID-19 safety practices in place?</p>	<p>Due to the pandemic, temporary Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)/Electronic Waste (E-Waste) events have been cancelled and all permanent centers are closed. We are asking residents to store their HHW/E-Waste items in a secure container in a safe location until events resume. We will resume service adhering to Public Health guidelines when safe to do so for staff and residents. Updates on when HHW/E-Waste events will resume will be made available on CleanLA.com.</p>
<p>Will this presentation be distributed?</p>	<p>The meeting summary, webinar video and question and answer sessions will be available on RoadmapLA.com.</p>
<p>We need Extended Producer Responsibility instead of hoping China will buy our trash or making the County pay to find something to do with all the single-use plastic waste.</p>	<p>The County's Waste Management Paradigm emphasizes waste prevention and producer responsibility. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a big part of the strategy to reduce hard to handle waste like HHW. The County will continue to push for both State and local EPR efforts to place more responsibility on producers for handling the end-of-life processing of their products.</p>
<p>Polystyrene food ware has been regulated/banned in over 100 jurisdictions in California. The County has been talking about this for many years, but has done nothing. Why is that? Something to do with the lobbying influence of DART Container Corporation?</p>	<p>On October 15, 2019, the Board adopted a motion directing the County Sustainability Office (CSO) in coordination with Public Works and other County departments to contract with researchers at University California Los Angeles to complete a report addressing management of single-use plastic food serviceware waste in the County. The motion also requires the CSO, Public Works, and other County departments to engage stakeholders and use results of the study to draft a recommended ordinance that would reduce the use of single-use plastics in the unincorporated portions of the County and ensure that materials used for disposable products are recyclable or compostable. The ordinance is currently under development.</p>
<p>Where is EPR in this plan? The County can pass its own EPR ordinances especially for HHW products which I understand is costing over \$5M a year for the county to try to manage correctly. Simply expanding government funded collection does not drive source reduction.</p>	<p>The County's Waste Management Paradigm emphasizes waste prevention and producer responsibility. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a big part of the strategy to reduce hard to handle waste like Household Hazardous Waste (HHW). The County will continue to push for both State and local EPR efforts to place more responsibility on producers for handling the end-of-life processing of their products.</p>

How will you reconcile the two? 1) diminishing markets 2) increased diversion requirement. The plan calls for updating the 2005 C&D Ordinance. You acknowledged the markets are collapsing for various reasons and yet the proposal is to increase the diversion requirements to 70% for mixed C&D and 100% for other listed materials (primarily inerts and organics).

The County still believes that there is a great opportunity to continue to increase diversion goals for C&D and that there are a lot of local markets for inert debris and soils, which are too heavy to ship overseas. Despite challenges in the recycling market, the County is moving forward with updating the ordinance.

Before COVID-19, the Roadmap was an ambitious guiding document. For the past years, the County has focused its efforts towards reaching its very aggressive recycling goals for all materials. The Roadmap itself was an attempt to identify the mechanisms, the strategies, and the initiatives that would get us to those goals. This pandemic is going to make achieving the County's goals much more difficult; however, part of this will require more investment at the local and State level. We will strive to secure federal assistance and federal investments as well. In the meantime, the County will work towards developing a local recycling infrastructure for organics diversions and manufacturing.