

LOS ANGELES COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS

Mesa Heights Garbage Disposal District for the Communities of Ladera Heights and View Park/Windsor Hills

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Waste and Recycling Collection Service Provider

Q: Who provides waste and recycling services in my community?

Los Angeles County Public Works provides waste and recycling collection services to residents and businesses in the communities of Ladera Heights and View Park/Windsor Hills through Universal Waste Systems, Inc., a private waste hauler under contract with the County.

Q: Who do I contact with questions or concerns regarding my service?

Customers should contact Los Angeles County Public Works at (888) CLEAN LA for questions or concerns regarding their services or to provide feedback regarding their waste hauling services. To schedule a bulky item, pick up, discuss billing questions, or adjust their service, customers can contact Universal Waste Systems, Inc., at (800) 631-7016.

Garbage Disposal Districts

Q: What is a Garbage Disposal District?

A Garbage Disposal District (GDD) is an area within unincorporated Los Angeles County where trash, recycling, green waste collection, and other services are provided to residential and commercial properties by a private waste hauler under contract with the County. The cost of basic service is assessed as a fee included in the annual property tax bill.

Bidding Process

Q: Why is there a need for a new waste-hauling contract?

The waste hauling contract to provide trash and recycling collection services to the communities of Ladera Heights and View Park/Windsor Hills will expire at the end of December 2023. To ensure a fair process and provide the best rates and services, a

competitive bid solicitation process was conducted by the County to select a waste hauler to provide services to your community. The new contract will take effect in January 2024.

Q: How was the waste hauler selected?

The County utilizes a competitive process in selecting a waste hauler. Invitations are sent to all permitted waste haulers to submit bids. The bidder with the lowest price is recommended to be awarded the contract.

Q: Are we allowed to select a different waste hauler?

No, the waste hauling contract is an exclusive contract. Universal Waste Systems, Inc., is the exclusive hauler authorized to provide residential and commercial trash collection services to the communities of Ladera Heights and View Park/Windsor Hills. Waste haulers can offer more competitive pricing when they have a set number of customers, as it guarantees consistent quantities.

Q: What do I do if I am not currently using Universal Waste Systems, Inc., for waste and recycling services?

Contact Universal Waste Systems, Inc., at (800) 631-7016 to set up service. We recommend discontinuing any extra waste and recycling services from other waste haulers to prevent duplicate service charges.

Q: How can we view the documents relating to the solicitation process?

Documents associated with this solicitation may be requested through the Public Records Request process by contacting Mr. Tommy Lau at (626) 458-7114 or dpwprrs@pw.lacounty.gov.

Plastic Trash Carts and Metal Dumpsters

Q: How is the level of service determined?

Refuse units and the amount charged are based on the land use codes assigned to the property by the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor. One refuse unit is considered basic service, which applies to a single-family home.

The land use codes are available on the Assessor's website at <http://portal.assessor.lacounty.gov>. You may also contact Public Works at (888) 253-2652 for assistance in determining the service level.

Q: How many carts are included in Basic Service for my single-family home?

Single-family customers receive basic service based on a “one-refuse unit” allotment. Basic Service for one refuse unit includes three 96-gallon carts: one for trash, one for recyclables, and one for organic/green waste. Additional carts beyond these three carts are subject to a fee.

Q: How many carts/dumpsters are included in Basic Service for my multi-family property?

Basic Service for one refuse unit includes one set of three 96-gallon carts per unit: one for trash, one for recyclables, and one for organic/green waste. For multi-family properties, refuse unit allotment is based on the number of units per property. For example, a 5-unit apartment complex is assigned 5 refuse units.

Q: How many carts/dumpsters are included in Basic Service for my business?

Basic Service includes one set of three 96-gallon carts (one for trash, one for recyclables, and one for organic/green waste) per refuse unit. Three 96-gallon carts are equivalent to 1.5 cubic yards; therefore, a six-refuse unit allotment would provide 6 sets of 3 carts or three 3-cubic yard dumpsters.

Q: Are we getting new carts?

With a focus on sustainability, the waste hauler will only replace carts that are broken or damaged but will clean the carts in the initial year of the new contract (one time). In the following years, on an annual basis, the waste hauler will clean the organic/green waste containers.

Q: Are we getting the same number and same-sized carts?

Customers with basic service will receive the same number and size carts (one 96-gallon trash, one 96-gallon recyclable, and one 96-gallon organic/green waste).

Under the new contract, additional carts beyond basic service are available for a fee. For example, customers who currently have 6 carts (two trash, two recyclables, and two organic/green waste) will have to pay an extra monthly fee for each of the additional trash, recyclables, and green waste carts if they choose to keep that service level.

Contact Universal Waste Systems, Inc., at (800) 631-7016 to make changes to your service level.

Q: Why is there an extra monthly fee for additional trash, recyclables, and organic/green waste carts?

Price increases in the solid waste industry over the last few years have been driven by changes stemming from new regulations and market conditions. The cost to process green waste has increased by over 400 percent since the previous contract was executed in 2014.

Setting the basic service level to three carts keeps rates down. This empowers residents to manage their expenses by evaluating whether they still need the same number and size of carts, with the option to lower their costs by reducing the number of additional carts. Reducing the amount of waste generated is a good way to eliminate the need for additional carts. Visit CleanLA.com or call (888) CLEAN LA for resources on how to compost organic waste and reduce waste generation at home.

Customers who currently have extra green and blue carts and wish to adjust their service should contact Universal Waste Systems, Inc., at (800) 631-7016 to update their account. When considering the level of service needed, please note the additional on-call services available to handle fluctuations in waste generation, as described in the “Additional Services” section of this FAQ.

Q: Is there an option to downsize to smaller-sized carts?

Yes, 32-gallon and 64-gallon carts are available upon request; however, there is no discount for using a smaller-size cart. For each cart type, you can request any combination of carts totaling up to 96 gallons at no additional charge. For example, you can have one 32-gallon plus one 64-gallon cart in place of the one 96-gallon cart.

Q: Do I need to place additional carts out for removal on service day?

Yes, additional carts no longer needed will be removed on your regular collection day once arrangements have been made with the waste hauler.

Q: I have extra carts, but I don't want to pay for the extra services, what should I do?

Contact Universal Waste Systems, Inc., to adjust your service level to the appropriate level, and they will come to pick up any extra carts that you don't want.

Organic Waste Collection

Q: Why do I need to separate my organic waste?

When organic waste ends up in landfills it slowly decomposes over time. This produces methane gas, a climate super pollutant 80 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

One of the best ways to make an impact in the fight against climate change is by minimizing the generation of organic waste and handling it appropriately. This involves diverting organic waste away from landfills and instead, placing it in the designated green cart for recycling.

Q: Are plastic bags containing food waste allowed in the organic/green waste cart?

Yes, plastic bags containing food waste are allowed in the organic/green waste cart, but the preferred method is to place food waste straight into the organic/green waste cart. Hard plastic containers are not allowed.

Q: Will you provide a small container to collect food waste inside the house?

Yes, a kitchen pail will be provided to assist in separating and transporting food waste from the kitchen to the large, green, organic waste cart. There is no need to request a pail, one will be delivered to you.

Additional Services

Q: What additional services are included in the basic 3-cart service level?

The following additional services are available to all customers at no additional charge:

- Weekly collection of bulky items and electronic waste (scheduling is strongly recommended)
- Excess bagged trash collection up to 4 times per year (upon request).
- Excess bagged/bundled green waste collection up to 4 times per year (upon request).
- Graffiti removal from carts and dumpsters
- Christmas Tree Curbside Collection
- Annual curbside clean-up event for bulky items and electronic waste
- Two mulch/compost giveaway and shredding events per year
- Roll-out of carts for qualifying elderly and/or disabled customers, upon request.
- Collection and disposal of abandoned waste found in alleys and public rights-of-way.
- Four free sharps containers for needles per year, provided upon request.
- Reusable clothing pickup
- Kitchen Pail for organic waste

Q: Is roll-out service available if I am unable to bring the carts to the street myself?

Yes, roll-out service is available, and it is at no additional charge for elderly or disabled customers, who certify with Universal Waste Systems, Inc., that there is no able-bodied individual in the household who can move the carts to the curb.

Q: How do we report illegal dumping?

Public Works provides multiple options for residents to report illegal dumping – through the (888) CLEAN LA hotline, e-mailing dumping@pw.lacounty.gov, "The Works" App, and through the Public Works website: <https://pw.lacounty.gov/contact/>.

Billing

Q. How do I pay for trash, recycling, and green waste collection services?

All property owners in the district are enrolled for basic services and assessed a fee on their annual property tax bill. Please note that the district does not provide service fee reimbursements to property owners who choose not to receive services from the district's hauler.

Q. What if I need to request services beyond those included with my property tax fee?

Additional services, beyond those allotted to the property based on the land use code are available upon request by contacting Universal Waste Systems, Inc. Additional services will be billed and payable directly to Universal Waste Systems, Inc.

Q: When do we receive our first bill from Universal Waste Systems, Inc., for additional services?

Universal Waste Systems, Inc., bills quarterly and in advance of services. As such, your first bill will cover services from January through March.

Q: How do I qualify for a Senior Discount for additional services?

A Senior Discount of 25 percent will be given to residents who meet the following criteria:

1. Head of household, elderly (62 or older), and
2. Who either (a) qualify for utility rate discounts based on financial need or (b) generate small amounts of trash and use a 32-gallon trash cart.