



DONALD L. WOLFE
CHAIRMAN

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE, ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331
P.O. BOX 1460, ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460
www.lacountyiswmf.org

April 22, 2005

TO: All City Mayors in Los Angeles County

Dear Mayor:

**CALIFORNIA INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT BOARD
CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
LETTER OF SUPPORT REQUESTED**

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force, I am writing to you to request your support for conversion technologies. On March 15, 2005, the California Integrated Waste Management Board unanimously adopted a comprehensive report regarding the status of conversion technologies and how they can be further developed. Conversion technologies are state-of-the-art technologies capable of converting residual solid waste (waste that remains after all recyclables have been removed) into marketable products, including renewable clean energy. Over 130 of these facilities exist in Europe and Japan.

The Report, entitled *Conversion Technology Report to the Legislature*, was prepared by the University of California at Davis, University of California at Riverside and others (under contract with the Waste Board) in response to a request from the State Legislature in 2002 at an expense of \$1.5 million in taxpayer funds. Ultimately, the Report concluded that conversion technologies "can result in substantial environmental benefits for California," including reducing our dependence on landfill disposal, increasing production of renewable energy to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, and reducing green house gas emissions, all while complementing California' recycling infrastructure and complying with strict environmental safeguards.

As you may know, for many years, the Task Force has been a strong advocate of conversion technologies. In addition to the array of environmental benefits described above, conversion technologies would have a number of tangible local benefits, including the capacity to:

- Produce clean fuels, which promotes greater energy independence from foreign oil
- Create locally generated green renewable energy source that insulates local jurisdictions from unexpected price spikes or shifts in supply
- Create professional, high level, long term "green" jobs

April 22, 2005

Page 2

Ultimately, conversion technologies would bring us closer to a “zero waste” sustainable environment where the waste that cannot be recycled is not buried or burned but rather converted into useful products or renewable clean energy. That’s why over the years a growing list of public and private organizations, agencies, and advocacy groups, have joined in our efforts, including the League of California Cities, the California State Association of Counties, the Southern California Association of Governments, the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, the County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, Riverside County, Orange County, Ventura County, Santa Barbara County, the Solid Waste Association of North America, and many others.

The Waste Board’s unanimous adoption of the Report on March 15, 2005, represented a major positive step towards understanding, promoting, and developing conversion technologies. Unfortunately, after intense political pressure from certain key members of the State legislature (Senators Alan Lowenthal and Sheila Kuehl, and Assemblymember Loni Hancock) and special interest groups opposed to any type of conversion technologies, the Waste Board at its April 19, 2005, meeting “reconsidered” the adopted Report and voted to remove from the Report any recommendations or information not *specifically* required in the 2002 legislation. This includes practical recommendations for the Legislature to consider providing diversion credit as a way to invigorate the development of conversion technologies and to properly define these technologies based on sound science and their environmental benefits and impacts (relative to other solid waste management options). In addition, an independent comparison of conversion technologies with recycling and composting may also be removed from the Report (impartial information which is critical to public policy and decision makers considering whether to develop these technologies and how to assess them).

The Waste Board will be considering the revised Report at their next meeting on May 11, 2005, and the good news is that they will be conducting their meeting close by -- at Anaheim City Hall. Thus, we respectfully request your City inform the Waste Board of its support for the March 15, 2005, version of the Report and request that it not remove the impartial and necessary recommendations to further develop conversion technologies. This issue is at a critical juncture that could make or break conversion technologies in California for years to come. Public testimony at this meeting could also help tip the balance in favor of getting the truth out regarding the tremendous potential of conversion technologies to revolutionize the way we manage solid waste in the future. If your City cannot attend the Waste Board meeting, attached for your consideration is a sample letter you may wish to send to the Waste Board regarding their proposed May 11, 2005 action.

On a parallel front, the Task Force, the County of Los Angeles and many other jurisdictions and organizations including, but not limited to, the League of California Cities and the County Supervisors Association of California, are working with the Legislature to pass a bill (Assembly Bill 1090) to reprioritize the waste management hierarchy to include conversion technologies, redefine these technologies more accurately, and allow jurisdictions that utilize conversion

April 22, 2005

Page 3

technology facilities to obtain diversion credit for keeping the waste from being disposed. This important Bill has also found widespread support and we will continue to keep your City informed regarding this Bill as the process unfolds.

We thank you for your consideration of this request. Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,



Michael Miller, Vice-Chair
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force and
Councilmember, City of West Covina

CS:pa

P:/../Task Force Ltr to Cities Re CT

Enc.

cc: Each Member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Each City Recycling Coordinator

_____, 2005

Ms. Rosario Marin, Chair
California Integrated Waste Management Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95812-4025

Dear Ms. Marin:

CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

The City of _____ would like to extend our appreciation for the California Integrated Waste Management Board's recent efforts regarding the analysis and development of conversion technologies which culminated with the preparation of the Report entitled *Conversion Technology Report to the Legislature*. The subject Report, as unanimously adopted on March 15, 2005, by your Board, was the result of extensive efforts by the Board and numerous stakeholders to assess the current state of conversion technologies in the State and to ascertain the best course of action regarding future study and development of these technologies.

We believe the Report as approved on March 15, being itself a summary of the Waste Board's two technical conversion technology studies (the Evaluation of Conversion Technology Processes and Products and the Life Cycle and Market Impact), was well represented by the Waste Board's Resolution 2005-78. The Report helped place these important technologies in proper perspective, gave public policy and decision makers the information they needed to make informed decisions, and recommended a number of sound and impartial improvements the Legislature could move forward with in the immediate future to help these technologies, already prevalent in Europe and Japan, get off the ground here in California.

That is why we were disappointed to learn that you recently voted to rescind Resolution 2005-78 and remove significant portions of the Report. We believe the findings and recommendations contained in the Report, as adopted on March 15, are critical for the Legislature and other decision-makers (including cities) to conduct an impartial and authoritative assessment of these emerging technologies. Therefore we strongly urge the Waste Board retain all of the information in the report as well as the recommendations that were made based on the Report's findings, and continue to do all you can to assist the development of these important technologies.

_____, 2005
Page 2

Should you have any questions, please contact _____.

Sincerely,

Mayor, City of _____

cc: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
Senate President Pro-Tem
Speaker of the Assembly
Each Member of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Each Member of the Senate Environmental Quality Committee
Each Member of the California Integrated Waste Management Board
Each Member of the Los Angeles County State Legislative Delegation
Each Member of the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors
League of California Cities
Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force