



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.lacountyiswmtf.org

June 25, 2015

The Honorable Bob Wieckowski, Chair
Senate Committee on Environmental Quality
State Capitol, Room 2205
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Wieckowski:

**ASSEMBLY BILL 1045 – OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED
ORGANIC WASTE: COMPOSTING**

The Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) has reviewed the Assembly Bill 1045 as amended on April 20, 2015, and due to the concerns listed below has voted to take an **opposed unless amended** position on the bill. Among other things, this bill would require the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), in coordination with the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle), to develop and implement policies with the aim of diverting organic waste from landfills by promoting the use of compostable organic waste as feedstock for compost. The bill would also require CalRecycle, in coordination with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and the State Water Resources Control Board, to advance a policy designed to streamline the permitting and regulation of composting facilities while protecting air and water quality.

Pursuant to the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Assembly Bill 939 [AB 939], as amended) and Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code, the Task Force is responsible for coordinating the development of all major solid waste planning documents prepared for the County of Los Angeles and the 88 cities in Los Angeles County with a combined population in excess of ten million. Consistent with these responsibilities and to ensure a coordinated and cost-effective and environmentally sound solid waste management system in Los Angeles County, the Task Force also addresses issues impacting the system on a countywide basis. The Task Force membership includes representatives of the League of California Cities-Los Angeles County Division, County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, City of Los Angeles, the waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

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The Task Force recognizes the broad, long-term challenge the State has undertaken in shifting organic waste from landfill disposal and managing this material in a more environmentally tenable manner. The Task Force has historically supported measures that would provide local jurisdictions increased flexibility in regards to solid waste management options including, but not limited to, compostable organic waste. With the enactment of Assembly Bill 341 (Chesbro, 2011), CalRecycle is tasked with the extraordinary challenge of ensuring source reducing, recycling, or composting 75 percent of all solid waste from landfills. As compostable organic material comprises approximately one third of the State's aggregate waste stream, the priority to permitting regulated facilities with the capability and capacity to process this material is as prescient as it is urgent. AB 1045 stands to advance this aim through streamlining the permitting and regulation of composting facilities.

However, the Task Force has significant concerns regarding the absence of meaningful detail in the bill's language concerning health and safety among its principal objectives, notably as it would pertain to containing odors and managing liquid discharge runoff. The Task Force firmly holds that while protecting air and water quality are core priorities in legislation pertaining to waste facilities, public health and safety should remain the single most critical requirement contained in policy designed to streamline waste facility permitting. AB 1045 also raises Task Force concerns over the apparent lack of local government and community involvement. The Task Force has long held the position that local government and affected communities should be consulted in the policy decisions pertaining to the environmental impact of any waste facility, but particularly those policies poised to advance the permitting of facilities outside of the normally more layered regulatory process.

If amended to include a more salient priority for these items, AB 1045 would likely stand as legislation the Task Force would be more inclined to support. For the foregoing reasons, the Task Force **opposes AB 1045 unless amended**. Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at MikeMohajer@yahoo.com or at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,



Margaret Clark, Vice-Chair
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force and
Mayor, City of Rosemead

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cc: Assembly Member Jacqui Irwin
Each member of the Senate Committee on Environmental Quality
California State Association of Counties
League of California Cities, Los Angeles County Division
Each member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Westside Cities Council of Governments
Each City Mayor and City Manager in the County of Los Angeles
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force