



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
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SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

November 9, 2010

Ms. Lea Yamashita
California Air Resources Board
Sacramento, CA
lyamashi@arb.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Yamashita:

COMMENTS REGARDING DRAFT *AIR QUALITY GUIDANCE FOR SITING BIOREFINERIES IN CALIFORNIA* (RELEASED FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON OCTOBER 11, 2010)

The Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) would like to thank the Air Resources Board (ARB) for taking the initiative to develop the Draft Air Quality Guidance Document for Siting Biorefineries (Draft Guidance Document). The Task Force considers this a positive first step towards clarifying available options for mitigating mobile source emissions associated with biofuels production facilities in California, and we appreciate the opportunity to provide the following comments.

For over a decade, the Task Force, in partnership with Los Angeles County, has been an active supporter of biorefinery development in California. Utilizing residual materials such as municipal solid waste as feedstock for biofuels production has many benefits including reduced landfill dependence, renewable energy production, and job creation. The use of waste materials for biofuels production is also among the most effective ways to meet a variety of the State's most urgent environmental goals and policies, including the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32), the BioEnergy Action Plan, the Low Carbon Fuel Standard, and the Renewable Portfolio Standard among others.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, 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 (approximately one third of the California population). Consistent with these responsibilities and to ensure a coordinated, 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, waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

Clarity in regulations and consistency in definitions is critical to successful development of biorefineries in California. This Draft Guidance Document is useful as a starting point in conducting air quality evaluations for biorefineries, during site selection, air quality permitting, and identification of potential CEQA mitigation measures. This document will assist stakeholders in evaluating the relative air quality impacts of the various conversion technology options that are available for the biofuels addressed in this document. In light of the intended purpose of this document, we would like to offer the following specific comments:

1. We noted the Draft Guidance Document was developed in collaboration with an extensive working group with representatives of local air districts (10 members), environmental organizations (7 members), and potentially regulated businesses (4 members). However, we also noted that the group did not include any representatives from local government. Several jurisdictions throughout California, including the County of Los Angeles, are in the process of evaluating technologies capable of converting municipal solid waste, food waste, and green waste into biofuels and renewable energy. Through technology evaluations, siting assessment, and public outreach, these jurisdictions are very familiar with the issues surrounding biorefineries and would have been able to contribute positively to this working group. We would encourage working collaboratively with local jurisdictions as this process moves forward. Additionally, we respectfully request appointment of Mr. Mike Mohajer, a member of the Task Force, to the aforementioned working group.
2. The Draft Guidance Document defines the term biomass as “material of recent biological origin that can be converted to energy and other marketable products.” We believe this to be a robust and scientific definition of biomass; however, our concern is that it may conflict with more parochial definitions of biomass in the Public Resources Code (PRC). For example, PRC Section 40106 defines "biomass conversion" as the controlled combustion, when separated from other solid waste and used for producing electricity or heat, of the following materials: (1) agricultural crop residues; (2) bark, lawn, yard, and garden clippings; (3) leaves, silvicultural residue, and tree and brush pruning; (4) wood, wood chips, and wood waste; and (5) nonrecyclable pulp or nonrecyclable paper materials. We would encourage the ARB to take steps to ensure your definition avoids conflicts with State statutes and, where necessary, identify opportunities

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for legislation that would clarify definitions to ensure they are scientifically grounded, accurate, and reinforce the goals and policies adopted by the State. As discussed above, it is critical for definitions and standards to be clearly defined and achievable if the State's goals are to be met.

We appreciate your consideration of and response to our questions and comments. We look forward to working with you in realizing our mutual goal of a more sustainable California. Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,



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

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cc: Each Member of the California Air Resources Board
James Goldstene, California Air Resources Board
California State Association of Counties
League of California Cities
League of California Cities, Los Angeles County Division
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Each Member of the Alternative Technology Advisory Subcommittee