



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
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GAIL FARBER
CHAIR

July 13, 2009

Mr. Curt Barry, Editor
INSIDE Cal/EPA
717 K Street, Suite 503
Sacramento, CA 95814-2736

Dear Mr. Barry:

**COMMENTS REGARDING JUNE 5, 2009, ARTICLE ENTITLED “ACTIVISTS
BATTLE BILL DEFINING WASTE-TO-ENERGY AS RENEWABLE”**

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) I would like to comment on your recent article in Inside Cal/EPA regarding Assembly Bill 222 (Adams/Ma). Members of the Task Force were concerned the article was drafted without an opportunity to include perspectives from the bill’s sponsors, supporters, authors or co-authors.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939, as amended), the Task Force is responsible for coordinating the development of all major solid waste planning documents prepared for the County of Los Angeles (County) 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, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, the City of Los Angeles, the waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

We noticed in reading the June 5, 2009, article regarding AB 222 that the perspectives shared were strictly from opponents of the measure. We would like to highlight three important provisions regarding AB 222 that appeared to be overlooked in your article:

1. All solid waste treated by a biorefinery, as defined in AB 222, must be pre-processed to remove, to the maximum extent feasible, all recyclable materials prior to the conversion process.
2. AB 222 states that a jurisdiction may not count solid waste sent to a biorefinery as disposal reduction for purposes of meeting the AB 939 50 percent diversion mandate. If future changes in the law require diversion levels above 50 percent, waste sent to a biorefinery may be counted as disposal reduction only if the jurisdiction, to the maximum extent feasible, has first removed all recyclable materials from the diverted waste and then, only for the portion of the waste above 50 percent.
3. Biorefineries, as defined in AB 222, must meet or exceed all standards set by the State Air Resources Board, local air pollution control districts, or local air quality management districts regarding air contaminants or emissions (including greenhouse gases); and meet or exceed standards set by the State Water Resources Control Board or regional water quality control boards regarding discharges to surface or ground waters of the state.

The Task Force, along with California Energy Commission, California State Association of Counties, League of California Cities, Regional Council Rural Counties, and over 80 local governments, environmental organizations, labor groups, and businesses support AB 222 because it would provide a pathway for the development of conversion technologies in California. AB 222 is also consistent with the Waxman-Markey Legislation, "American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009" which provides for development of renewable energy sources, including conversion technologies. The Waxman-Markley Legislation recently approved by the House and is currently under consideration by the U.S. Senate. Conversion technologies are thermal (non-incineration), biological, and chemical processes capable of converting post-recycled residual solid waste into useful products, renewable energy, and biofuels. California sends over 40 million tons of post-recycled residual solid waste to landfills every year. Conversion technologies have the potential to reduce that amount while producing useful products and creating green-collar jobs.

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We appreciate your consideration of our comments and would be happy to provide an additional perspective regarding the issue of conversion technologies and provide more information regarding our support for AB 222. If you should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,

Margaret Clark

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 Anthony Adams
Assembly Member Fiona Ma
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Each Member of the Alternative Technology Advisory Subcommittee