

Los Angeles County Public Works

Garbage Disposal Districts

PROPOSITION 218

Frequently Asked Questions



Who oversees waste management services in the unincorporated communities of Los Angeles County?

Los Angeles County Public Works oversees trash, recyclables, and organic waste collection and disposal for both residents and businesses in unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. These services are provided by private waste haulers contracted by Public Works, operating within seven Garbage Disposal Districts (GDDs). Public Works serves over **1 million people** in the County's unincorporated areas, which generates **2.8 million tons of waste annually**. Of the waste collected, 45% is organic waste and 67% is being diverted from landfills.

What are Garbage Disposal Districts and why are they important?

Garbage Disposal Districts are special assessment districts that provide waste collection and disposal services to both residents and businesses through the County's contract with private waste haulers. The GDDs are important because they help establish quality waste management services, increase accountability, improve customer service, and promote cleaner neighborhoods.

What other waste management services does Public Works provide for ratepayers in the County?

Public Works provides a range of waste management services designed to protect the public and the environment. In addition to trash, recyclables, and organic waste collection, Public Works provides illegal dumping cleanup and bulky item and electronic waste collection, including furniture, appliances, computers, TVs, and other electronic waste. To further promote sustainability, Public Works organizes free tire collection events and runs a complementary Mattress Recycling Program to help reduce landfill waste.

How do waste management services impact our community?

The average person in Los Angeles County generates 14.8 lbs. of waste each day. Sustainably managing solid waste is essential to protect public health, conserve natural resources, and combat climate change. Without well-maintained systems, there can be waste collection delays, environmental contamination, or inefficient use of landfills. An effective waste collection and disposal system allows Los Angeles County residents to live, travel, work, and play in a clean and sustainable environment.

Why does Public Works need to increase its fees for waste management services?

Public Works is pursuing a service fee increase in 2026 for two GDDs: Firestone and Mesa Heights. This increase is necessary to continue paying for essential waste collection and disposal services, comply with statewide regulations, and to keep pace with rising inflation. The proposed fees will enable Public Works to continue delivering safe and reliable waste management services to the community while supporting efforts to improve waste diversion, reduce landfill use, and decrease greenhouse gas emissions. Even with the proposed increase, Public Works' waste management service fees will remain among the lowest in the region.

Do service fee increases apply to renters?

If approved, the proposed service fee increases would affect all 26,223 parcels in the Firestone and Mesa Heights Districts. Although the fees for waste collection and disposal services are collected as part of the annual property taxes paid by property owners, it is likely that the cost will be passed on to renters.

Are there Senior Citizen or Low Volume Generator discounts available?

A 25% Senior Discount for additional services beyond the basic service is available to single family and duplex customers who meet the following criteria: head of household is 62 or older and either (a) qualifies for utility fee discounts based on financial need or (b) generates small amounts of waste and uses a 32-gallon cart for trash. Please call your waste hauler's customer service department for more information or to request this discount.

How does Public Works determine potential new service fees and who will be impacted?

Public Works conducted a Fee Study in 2025 to assess potential new fees that would cover the cost of waste collection and disposal services for the coming years for the two GDDs. The proposed service fee increases are designed to be cost-based and proportional, ensuring the overall costs are shared among all properties that benefit from the services. The proposed service fee cannot exceed the cost to Public Works to provide waste management services.

Can residents or businesses opt out of services, like organic waste collection, to reduce new fees?

No. As of January 1, 2022, California's SB 1383 mandate requires all residents and businesses to reduce organic waste by subscribing to organics collection and recycling programs, including green and food waste. This regulation reduces the amount of organic waste going to landfills.

Is there a public process for potential service fee increases?

Yes. In California, public agencies are required to follow the Proposition 218 process when pursuing service fee increases. This process requires public agencies to mail a public notice to every property owner within their service area when proposing a service fee increase. Additionally, Proposition 218 establishes a formal protest process for property owners and tenants if they wish to oppose the proposed fees. For parcels with multiple dwellings (e.g., more than one home), only one protest per parcel will be counted.

What is Proposition 218?

Proposition 218 is an initiative passed by California voters in November 1996, designed to allow greater public involvement in fee-setting processes for public agencies.

Proposition 218, also known as the "Right to Vote on Taxes Act", ensures transparency and provides opportunities for public input.

When will property owners receive a Proposition 218 Notice, and what does it include?

All property owners within the Firestone and Mesa Heights GDD service areas receiving waste management services will receive a Proposition 218 Notice from Public Works in spring 2026. The notice will detail the proposed service fee increase, the scheduled public hearing date, instructions for submitting a written protest, details for upcoming open houses, community meetings, and webinars, links to additional resources, and contact information for any questions or concerns.

What if Public Works receives a majority protest?

A majority protest occurs when more than 50% of the affected parcels within a GDD submit a written letter of protest, either from the property owner or the tenant. The service fee increase cannot be implemented if Public Works receives a majority protest.

What if Public Works does NOT receive a majority protest?

If a majority protest is not received, the County Board of Supervisors may approve the proposed service fee increase to fund the services specified in the notice, and the fee increase will take effect according to the specified timeline.

When would the potential service fee increase go into effect?

The potential service fee increase would go into effect beginning July 2026 and would be gradual over five years. It would be reflected as a line item on your property tax statement.

What will the new service fees be?

The proposed service fee increase was determined for Firestone and Mesa Heights GDDs through the 2025 Fee Study. The proposed service fee increase for your GDD will be listed on your Proposition 218 Notice. For more detailed information about the Fee Study and proposed service fees, visit: pw.lacounty.gov/go/Prop218-GDD.

Where can I learn more about the Garbage Disposal Districts and Proposition 218?



Public Works

Learn More About
Garbage Disposal
Districts



Proposition 218

Understanding
Local Changes

pw.lacounty.gov/go/Prop218-GDD

pw.lacounty.gov/go/Prop218



For additional questions and comments, please contact us at
GDDProp218@pw.lacounty.gov
(888) CLEAN-LA (253-2652)

For after-hours assistance, please contact Public Works'
24/7 dispatch line at **(800) 675-HELP (4357)**

