



# Waste Watch

Summer 2009

Newsletter of the Kern County Waste Management Department

## Doug Landon Comes Full Circle

It's appropriate that recycling programs, visually represented by the familiar recycling arrow configuration, are operated by the Kern County Waste Management Department because that agency's new Director has come **full circle** to take over at the helm of this important County department.

Doug Landon was handed the reins in March of 2009. A veteran county employee, clocking in at more than 28 years, Doug once held the position of Solid Waste Manager for the Public Works Department. With 14 employees and 14 landfills then, Solid Waste was the predecessor to the Waste Management Department of today.

While the depth of responsibility has changed since the 1980's, the ultimate goal remains the same: to effectively utilize landfill resources. To that end, the department oversees all permitting, siting, design and development elements of waste disposal as well as operational management for the county's 7 landfills, 5 transfer stations and 4 bin sites. Waste Management also oversees recycling and educational programs.

To achieve desired outcomes, Doug maintains an open-door and open-mind policy with his capable staff. "The future of waste disposal is zero waste. While that is an ambitious goal, I have some of the best and brightest minds working on the problem. We tackle the topic of trash with an eye to future technologies," said Landon

He cautions residents to understand that waste management doesn't end when they throw something away. The correct disposal method will depend upon what was actually tossed. "We have programs to handle electronic waste, household hazardous waste, construction and demolition waste, municipal waste, green waste, medical waste and tires. We recycle when we can, and bury only what we have to. A glimpse at the future will have us converting municipal waste to energy - now that's exciting."

While Doug believes government must lead solid waste policies, he is quick to add that private enterprise is an integral part of the solution. "We can't bury our head in the sand. It's more important than ever to stay ahead of the curve, to examine new and better ways to get the job done. We need to continually evaluate our methods of doing business, with an eye toward innovation and collaboration."

With the economic decline all around us, the department's revenues have also gone down. According to Landon, "There is less trash being thrown away. Less waste means a smaller bottom line. That said, simply because there is less waste doesn't mean we have fewer costs. We still have mandated programs to run whether we have two computer monitors ... or 200 to get rid of. We continue to review how we do business. Like other County Departments, we are holding open vacancies, delaying capital projects and trying to find better, more economic ways to provide service."

It's a challenge that Waste Management is confidently moving forward to meet.





The television set is a household staple in most homes. With the switch to digital TV, there is still a lot of confusion. At the Waste Management Department we have viewed the transition with an eye toward proper disposal. As it turns out, most residents can keep their existing set - updating it if and when they like. The following Q and A should address any questions still remaining.

**If I have an older analog TV, can I use it in the age of high definition television?**

Yes. A digital-to-analog converter box will allow you to continue using your existing TV to watch over-the-air digital broadcasts. In addition, analog sets should continue to work if connected to a subscription service such as cable or satellite. Analog sets will also work with gaming consoles, VCRs, DVD players and similar products.

The digital-to-analog converter box, much like your cable box, will allow you to receive a picture but it won't be able to show high-definition pictures or give you access to other digital services. Local TV stations have temporary use of a second, separate channel so that they can transition from analog broadcasting to digital.

Congress set June 12, 2009 as the final deadline for terminating analog broadcasts. Since that date has come and gone, full-power U.S. TV stations have already stopped broadcasting on analog airwaves and have begun broadcasting only in digital. Analog sets equipped with a converter box will display the digital broadcasts, but not in full digital quality.

**Converter Box Coupon Program**

To help consumers with the DTV transition, the Government established the Digital-to-Analog Converter Box Coupon Program. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), a part of the Department of Commerce, administers this program. Between January 1, 2008, and July 31, 2009, all U.S. households can request up to two coupons, worth \$40 each, to be used toward the purchase of up to two, digital-to-analog converter boxes. The coupons may only be used for eligible converter boxes sold at participating consumer electronics retailers, and must be used at the time of purchase. (Please note that these coupons will expire 90 days after mailing). The converter boxes sell from \$40 to \$70 each. This is a one-time cost.

For more information on the Digital-to-Analog Converter Box Coupon Program, visit [www.dtv2009.gov](http://www.dtv2009.gov), or call 1-888-388-2009 (voice) or 1-877-530-2634 (TTY).

Remember, if and when you choose to get rid of your old television set, dispose of it properly. DO NOT toss it in your curbside trash container. Check the recycling guide in your AT&T Yellow Pages telephone book, under Electronic Waste, and you'll find all the information you need to know to dispose of it properly.



**For Your Information**

**Local Landfill Locations & Hours:**

**Bena Landfill**

17 miles east of Bakersfield, off Hwy. 58, at Tower Line Road  
**Open Daily:** 8 am to 4 pm

**Boron Landfill**

1/2 mile south of Boron, at 11400 Boron Avenue  
**Open: Sun, Mon, Tues & Thurs:** 12 pm to 4 pm  
**Sat:** 8 am to 4 pm  
**Closed: Wednesday and Friday**

**Mojave-Rosamond Landfill**

5 miles south of Mojave, 1 mile east of Hwy. 14, at 400 Silver Queen Road  
**Open: Sun, Wed and Fri:** 8 am to noon  
**Mon and Sat:** 8 am to 4 pm  
**Closed: Tues and Thurs**

**Ridgecrest Landfill**

5 miles southwest of Ridgecrest, 3301 Bowman Road  
**Open Daily:** 8 am to 4 pm

**Shafter-Wasco Landfill**

8 miles west of Shafter, off Lerdo Hwy. 1 mile north of Scofield Ave at 16721 Scofield Ave  
**Open Daily** Sun: 10 am to 2 pm  
Mon - Sat: 8 am to 4 pm

**Taft Landfill**

4 miles north of Taft, 1 mile north of Hwy. 119, at 13351 Elk Hills Rd.  
**Open: Sun, Mon, Wed, Fri and Sat**  
Sun: noon to 4 pm  
Mon, Wed, Fri & Sat: 8 am to 4 pm  
**Closed: Tues and Thurs**

**Tehachapi Landfill**

12001 Tehachapi Blvd., Tehachapi  
**Open: Sun, Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat**  
Mon, Wed, Fri and Sat: 8 am to 4 pm  
Sun: 8 am to 12 pm  
**Closed: Tues and Thurs**

**Kern County Special Waste Facilities:**

**Metro Bakersfield Facility**

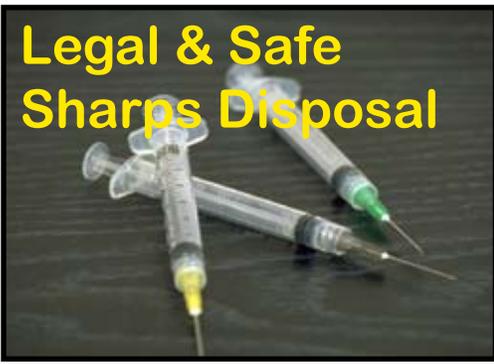
4951 Standard Street, Bakersfield  
Thursday - Saturday  
8AM until 4 PM

**Mojave Facility**

17035 Fynnin Street at the Mojave Airport  
1st Saturday of every month  
9:00 Am until NOON

**NOTE: All county sites are closed on the following holidays:**  
New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, 4th of July, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

## Legal & Safe Sharps Disposal



Improper disposal of home-generated sharps (needles, syringes and lancets) can injure children, home health care providers, pets and sanitation workers. In California, tossing a sharp into the trash can is against the law. Furthermore, the dangers of "getting stuck" include pain at the injection site and the possibility of disease.

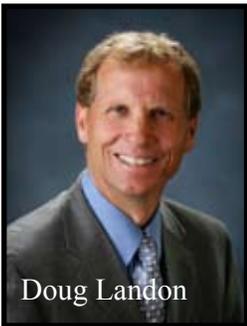
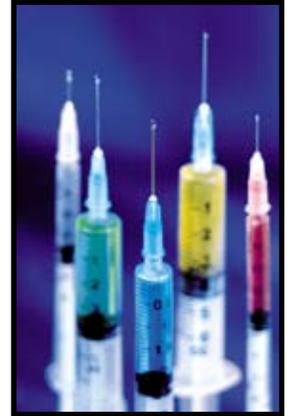
New amendments to the California Health and Safety Code require special handling and disposal for home-generated sharps. To help residents with this "sticky problem", the Kern County Waste Management Department has developed an easy, safe way to get rid of sharps.

Free "BIOHAZARD" rigid plastic sharps containers are available at the Special Waste Facility at 4951 Standard Street in Bakersfield and at the East Kern Special Waste Facility, 17035 Finin Street in Mojave (at the Mojave Airport).

The containers are specifically designed for ease and safety of disposal. When the container is full, residents can bring it back to the Special Waste Facility for proper and convenient disposal. Sharps will NOT BE ACCEPTED in liquid bleach or detergent bottles, coffee cans, milk jugs, glass containers or soda bottles. The program is for home-generated sharps only - no businesses.

During fiscal year 2007 - 2008, more than 78,500 POUNDS OF SHARPS were reported and collected for disposal in California alone! That equates to millions of needles, syringes and lancets being safely discarded.

To learn how you can participate in the Sharps Program or to check out the days and hours of operation at the Special Waste Facilities, call: (661) 862-8922.



Doug Landon

## DIRECTOR'S CORNER

After more than 100 days in the Director's chair, I am left with an even greater respect for the staff within the Waste Management Department. At every level of the organization, they have proven themselves capable, responsive and intentional when tackling the challenges of waste disposal and recycling.

It is a universal mind-set to "solve problems" that lays as the foundation of the department's success. Overall, the County's Waste Management system is strong and the organization is healthy. I applaud the leadership of former Director Daphne Harley for assembling such a team of professionals.

As we look forward, the new challenges of trash disposal and recycling will require the same innovative spirit as has been displayed in years past. We will need to use all of the tools in our toolbox to tackle future mandates and emerging technologies. The three "R's" will remain a vital component, green waste diversion will continue to be standard practice, landfill disposal will become our "end-game" rather than the "only" game as was the case just a few short years ago.

The future will shift our focus to energy production as we discover cleaner and better ways to convert waste to energy. The opportunities are limitless, the potential benefits to taxpayers are great. It is truly a great time to be in the business of trash.

With this potential comes the challenge of paying the bills. Innovation costs money. The department's current funding mechanism is disposal-based. (The more trash thrown in the landfill, the greater the department's bottom line.) With diversion on the rise, department revenues are on the decline. The future challenge will be to produce an end-product marketable to both businesses and consumers. The funding stream may look different, but the foundation will still be trash.

Before making advancements in diversion, we'll continue to brace ourselves against the impacts of the current economic downturn. The department has tightened its belt in all areas - just short of closing facilities and terminating programs. Our goal is to have as small an impact on services as possible. We'll continue to balance revenues with services to provide the very best to our residents.

We can't do it alone. It will take the best and brightest minds to get us from here to there. Public-Private Partnerships will take on new meaning as we work together to make "green" things happen.

Please join us on this E-Ticket ride toward "Zero-Waste Disposal". It'll be worth more than the price of admission.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doug Landon". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.



This book is packed with more than just telephone numbers!

The at&t Real Yellow Pages is packed with everything you need to know about Kern County waste recycling and disposal.

Look for the **Recycling Guide** green & white tab and put the world of trash recycling and disposal at your fingertips.

*"Where can I take tires?"* It's in there.

*"What about appliances?"* It's in there.

*"Does anyone take old paint?"*

It's in the **Kern County Recycling Guide.**

The at&t Real Yellow Pages  
Your questions - answered.



## Contact Us:

Kern County Recycling Hotline:  
(661) 862-8979

Kern County Waste Management Department  
Local: (661) 862-8900  
Toll-free: (800) 552-KERN (option6)  
(800) 552-5376  
TTY - ready: (800) 735-2929  
Web site: [www.co.kern.ca.us/wmd](http://www.co.kern.ca.us/wmd)

City of Bakersfield Solid Waste Division  
Local: (661) 326-3114  
(Mount Vernon Green Waste Facility  
& Metro Bakersfield Drop-Off Recycling Centers)  
Web site: [www.ci.bakersfield.ca.us](http://www.ci.bakersfield.ca.us)

California Integrated Waste Management Board  
Sacramento: (916) 341-6300  
Web site: [www.ciwmb.ca.gov](http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov)

California Materials & Exchange (Cal-MAX)  
(877) 520-9703  
Web site: [www.ciwmb.ca.gov/calmax](http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/calmax)

The 2009 Telephone Book Recycling Program saved more than 45 tons of telephone books from being buried in local landfills. That's EXTREME Recycling!



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