

Waste Watch

Summer 2005

Newsletter of the Kern County Waste Management Department

Uncovered Loads Kern's Messy Problem

Throughout Kern County, pick-up trucks and open trailers carry uncovered loads of trash and debris to landfills, transfer stations and bin sites. Generally, most of the load makes it to the intended destination - but unfortunately not all.

The primary roads, to Kern's disposal sites, are littered with bags, boxes, wrappers, paper, greenwaste, cushions, clothing and other garbage that flew out of transporting vehicles. This blowing trash creates an unsightly mess, that everyone dislikes, but no one takes responsibility for.

The truth is: often the trash flies, unbeknownst to the driver, and Kern's messy problem breeds.

Residents, choosing to haul their own garbage, greenwaste and bulky items must cover and secure the trash - keeping it from falling out or blowing away. This isn't simply a nice idea, it's the law:

*"It is **UNLAWFUL** for any person to transport in or upon any vehicle of any type or description, over any public thoroughfare within the unincorporated area of the county, **ANY GARBAGE, MANURE, RUBBISH, TRASH** or otherwise is **COMPLETELY COVERED OR SECURED** in a manner **PREVENTING IT FROM FALLING OR BLOWING AWAY** from the transporting vehicle."*

*Kern County Ordinance
Section Code 8.28.110*

This segment of the Kern County Code - along with California Vehicle Code 23115 and California Penal Code 374.3 - specifies the requirement for covered trash loads. Fines of up to \$2500 can be imposed for violations of these state laws and local ordinances.

The time has come for compliance.

In keeping with the increased illegal dumping compliance measures, supported by the Kern County Board of Supervisors, the Kern County Waste Management Department is embarking on an educational campaign focusing on compliance of County Code 8.28.110.

The solution to the messy problem of "flying trash" is found in consistent covered loads. Canvas and plastic tarps, trash bags, trash can lids, rope and bungee cords are simple tools to help residents **COMPLETELY COVER** garbage and debris during transport.

Residents are also encouraged to put refuse in securely tied garbage bags - placing the bags inside the truck bed, trailer or trash cans. This simple act provides an additional layer of defense against flying trash.

The message to cover trash loads will continue at local disposal sites. Gate attendants will provide informational materials, in both English and Spanish, to facility users. According to Daphne Harley, Director of Kern County Waste Management, "We'll begin with education. It is our goal to provide the information and the tools to comply with the county ordinance. Our gate attendants come in contact with disposal site patrons every day - they are the perfect choice to help disseminate information."

Following the educational phase, law enforcement will be called upon to cite residents in non-compliance. "It is our hope that we can reach and teach residents to take full responsibility for their trash - from cradle to grave which, in this case, is a county disposal site," continued Harley.

It's simple: obey the law by covering your trash loads. It's a simple and effective way to help Keep Kern County Clean.



Mojave's New Addition

Mojave is home to a new, permanent Special Waste Facility for eastern Kern County. Housed at the Mojave Airport, the Kern County Special Waste Facility - Eastern Region is open the first Saturday of each month from 9 AM until Noon. Household hazardous waste and business hazardous waste is accepted for disposal at this location.

Lyn Beurmann, Waste Management Supervisor, beamed during the Grand Opening of the facility in May. "Although the county spear-headed the effort, we didn't do it alone. It has been a cooperative effort (with the Airport) from the beginning. I'm happy our doors are open."

Supervisor Don Maben, also in attendance, hailed the effort as a triumph for Eastern Kern. "I am pleased Waste Management sought to make the this facility a reality. Their initiative is a victory for residents from Ridgecrest to Rosamond – and everywhere in between."

Daphne Harley commended the hard work and collaboration necessary to make the Special Waste Facility happen. "This facility gives east Kern residents a convenient way to dispose of household hazardous waste. It is a great opportunity for the county to partner with the Mojave Airport on a project that serves the general public."

The new facility is located a half mile from the Kern County Fire Department and a quarter mile from Hall Ambulance. "Some household hazardous waste can be problematic, it is excellent to be located so close to essential emergency services in case something goes snap, crackle or pop," continued Harley.

In addition to the drop-off service, the facility boasts a "Stop and Shop". "On Saturdays of operation, residents may look through our Stop and Shop closet. It's filled with products that have never been opened, used, or tampered with. On any given day, a customer might find motor oil, paint, pesticides or pool chemicals. If they find it, and they need it, they may take it home," said Beurmann.

Household Hazardous Wastes are chemical products purchased for use in or around the home. Aerosol sprays, fluorescent light bulbs, paint and paint products, fertilizers, pesticides, household cleaners, automotive products, medications, pool and spa chemicals, auto and household batteries and other chemically-based household items are considered to be household hazardous waste.

Residents may bring in a maximum of 15 gallons, or 125 pounds of waste/material, per vehicle, per visit. The contents of any single container of waste/material may not exceed five gallons. Waste must not be mixed. Containers must be closed, labeled, and not leaking.

The Eastern Kern location currently accepts residential waste during the first Saturday of each month. Businesses generating less than 220 lbs. of hazardous waste per month must call 661.862.8922 to make an appointment or for additional disposal information.



Lyn Beurmann, 2nd District Supervisor Don Maben and Waste Management Specialist Gary Ray check out the Mojave Stop & Shop.

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

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

NOTE: All sites are closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, 4th of July, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEROES

Since January of 2005, 2nd District Supervisor Don Maben added a staff member devoted entirely to the task of illegal dumping clean-up. David Reed, a Tehachapi native, has not only assumed this position but has taken the job to heart.

In four months, this devoted staffer has cleared away more than 50 tons of illegally dumped trash from alleys, roadways, easements, farm fields and vacant lots. He has collected tires, refrigerators, washers, dryers, television sets as well as bags and bags of municipal waste.

David works well with Kern County Waste Management staff, Code Compliance employees and County contractors. His positive attitude and commitment to service is a shining example of County staff at their best. Good job David!

Bill Duncan , President and Owner of Ag Plastics Recycle, Inc. has developed a process in which discarded drip irrigation tapes and tubes are recycled into Linear Density Polyethylene (LLDPE) flakes and Medium Density Polyethylene (MDPE) flakes. The flakes are pelletized, by a major drip irrigation manufacturer, in its production process for the manufacturing of new drip lines.

Discarded drip irrigation tapes and tubes had been discarded in local landfills. This process is targeted to process 6,000 tons per year - supporting Kern County's recycling goals. We applaud Mr. Duncan for his ingenuity and tenacity in developing a new product from materials previously thrown away!



Daphne Harley

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

This issue of **WASTE WATCH** highlights a major problem in our county – the littering and illegal dumping of trash and bulky items. It's an ugly part of community behavior. It impacts property values, decreases quality of life, and cheapens the importance of social responsibility.

The control of this social blight is an objective of the Waste Management Department. While we have facilitated the clean-up of more than 1700 tons of trash in the past three years, and have developed award-winning school and community education programs – there is still more to do.

As I reflect on this countywide dilemma I have come to believe that the root cause of littering and illegal dumping is selfishness – a classic symptom of our “ME FIRST” society. When people drop their trash – the junk they don't want or can't use anymore – in an open field, vacant lot, or along the roadside, they send a powerful message to the rest of the community:

They don't care about the owner of the property. They don't care if a disposal site will take household waste at **NO COST**. They don't care about how their community looks – they only care that they have stuff to get rid of and, regardless of their reason for throwing it out the window or dumping it in a vacant lot, they don't care about anybody but themselves.

This behavior is embarrassing. It's a reflection on our society. It's a reflection on us.

I know that a small percentage of the population contributes to the problem. BUT every time we reach one of them and help change their behavior – we chip away at the root cause.

Waste Management is about to set up a proactive tarping program aimed at reducing litter blown from vehicles along road-sides. This effort to encourage “covered loads” is another step toward improving the image of our community. But we can't do it alone. We need help.

Help us educate residents. Let them know that all Kern County disposal sites accept household waste at no cost. Large items, including appliances, TV's and furniture are also accepted **FREE** and in most of metro Bakersfield, the garbage hauler will pick up the large bulky items monthly – **FREE!** Trash loads must be covered and open windows aren't trash cans.

Let them know how you feel – make it personal – because to thousands of residents it is personal. I know it is for me.

Illegal Dumping

Every year, people throw household trash, bulky waste & construction debris in alleys, on roads, and in farm fields.

Every month, volunteers clean up the mess.

Every week, someone gets caught and has to pay.

Every day - we're working to Keep Kern Clean.

But we still have
a long way to go.

Take household trash, bulky items & greenwaste
to any Kern County disposal site - FREE!

Illegal Dumping is an uninvited guest.
Do your part to **KEEP KERN CLEAN.**

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) 522-5376
TTY - ready (800) 735-2929
Web site: 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

California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB)

Sacramento (916) 341-6300
Web site www.ciwmb.ca.gov

California Materials & Exchange (Cal-MAX)

(877) 520-9703
Web site www.ciwmb.ca.gov/calmax

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