

COUNCIL POLICY

SUBJECT: SOLID WASTE RECYCLING
POLICY NO.: 900-06
EFFECTIVE DATE: September 21, 1987

BACKGROUND:

The City of San Diego is fast approaching a crisis situation in the area of landfill disposal capacity. As the result of a 40% increase in the per capita solid waste generation rate and continuing increases in population, San Diego's landfill capacity is being exhausted at a much faster rate than was anticipated. Additionally, public resistance to the expansion of existing landfills or to the siting of new landfills and resource recovery facilities is adding to the difficulty in resolving the crisis. The need for landfills as part of the City's solid waste system will continue for the foreseeable future. Therefore it is necessary to optimize the use of our remaining disposal capacity by reserving that capacity only for the disposal of materials for which there are no viable disposal alternatives and by seeking new disposal alternatives.

The recycling of solid wastes through source separation and mechanical separation programs offers the potential for diverting significant amounts of wastes from landfill disposal. Additionally, recycling programs can be implemented in less time and at a lower capital cost than traditional solid waste management facilities. However, it is important to recognize that recycling, by itself, cannot dispose of the City's entire wastestream and does not eliminate the need for other disposal technologies and programs.

Recycling should play an increasingly important role in the City's overall solid waste management strategy since it can divert materials from landfill disposal, conserve energy and natural resources, preserve open space and create employment opportunities. In developing a recycling policy, it is important to consider the limitations on recycling caused by fluctuating markets, changes in wastestream composition and changes in recycling technology. Therefore, it is essential that the City's recycling program balances materials recovery goals with cost effectiveness and the long term viability of the program within the City's overall solid waste management strategy.

PURPOSE:

Because of the many benefits which can be derived from an effective recycling program, it is important that a strong "recycling ethic" be developed and supported by City planners, administrators, elected officials and the general public. The purpose of this policy is to express the City's commitment to recycling as an integral part of the City's comprehensive solid waste management strategy and to provide guidance to the City Manager and the City's operating departments in the development and implementation of a City-wide recycling program.

POLICY:

To the extent that a significant portion of the solid wastes currently disposed of in the City's landfill are not truly "wastes", but are actually recoverable resources; it is the policy of the City Council that the City's solid waste management system shall include a comprehensive recycling component to

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optimize the recovery and reuse of these materials. The City's impact on the recycling of solid wastes varies with the degree of its involvement in recycling activities. The policy of the City in these areas is as follows:

A. Recycling Goal

It is the policy of the City that a comprehensive recycling program be developed and implemented with the goal of recycling a minimum of 25% of the solid wastes generated in the City of San Diego, exclusive of demolition materials, by July 1, 1992.

B. Recycling Implementation Plan

To achieve the 25% recycling goal, an action plan shall be developed in the following areas:

1. Public Education

The degree of success in recycling programs, as measured by the level of participation and the amount of materials recycled, is directly proportional to the quantity and quality of recycling information disseminated to the public. It is the policy of the City to actively promote the dissemination of recycling information to the citizens of the City as well as to provide incentives to encourage the implementation of and participation in recycling programs.

2. Public Convenience

It is the policy of the City that the convenience of the public in participating in recycling programs be taken into consideration in the design of City recycling programs, and that efforts be made to:

- a. Permit community recycling collection operations in most zoning districts of the City, subject to conditions to insure compatibility with surrounding land uses.
- b. Permit recycling processing operations in most commercial and industrial zones, subject to conditions to insure compatibility with surrounding land uses.

3. Market Development

It is the policy of the City to encourage the development of stable markets for traditional and non-traditional recycled materials by establishing guidelines for the purchase of materials and supplies by the City which consider factors in addition to initial cost in evaluating products manufactured from secondary materials.

4. Recycling Programs

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It is the policy of the City to encourage the initiation, expansion and development of recycling programs in cooperation with other governmental agencies and the private sector which include, but are not limited to:

- a. Residential curb-side source separated collection
- b. Buy back and donation recycling centers
- c. Salvaging operation
- d. Composting
- e. Commercial/industrial recycling programs
- f. Centralized mechanical separation systems

Materials within the wastestream that are to be targeted for recycling to the extent technically, economically and environmentally feasible shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. All classes of paper fibers
- b. Glass
- c. Ferrous and non-ferrous metals
- d. Plastics
- e. Household and commercial goods
- f. Construction and demolition materials
- g. Plant debris and landscaping materials
- h. Inert materials such as pavement, rocks and tires

5. Recycling Economics

It is the policy of the City to consider recycling programs as alternatives to existing solid waste management and disposal programs, and as such recycling programs shall not be expected to be operated solely on revenues generated from the sale of recovered materials. In evaluating the costs of recycling programs, consideration shall be given to the quantities of materials diverted from landfill disposal and the marginal costs of traditional collection and disposal methods.

C. Legislation

It is the policy of the City to support State and Federal legislation that encourages recycling, removes barriers to recycling, provides funding for local recycling programs, or promotes waste reduction. At the same time, the City will oppose legislation which would reduce local control and autonomy in dealing effectively with its responsibilities for solid waste management.

D. Relationship to Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Program

While recycling is an important element in the City's waste management strategy, it is important to recognize that recycling will not eliminate the need for other environmentally safe and economically sound disposal technologies, facilities and programs in the comprehensive program for the management and disposal of San Diego's solid wastes.

E. Recycling Program Review

Council will review the City's progress in the implementation of the recycling programs and the achievement of recycling goals identified in this policy on an annual basis to determine if the percentage of materials recycled can be increased or the implementation schedule accelerated.

HISTORY:

Added by Resolution R-269290 09/21/1987