



R-18

Memorandum

To: Mayor and City Council

March 18, 2008

From: Bonnie Lowenthal, Vice Mayor, First District *BL*
Suja Lowenthal, Second District *SL*
Gary DeLong, Third District *GD*

Subject: Multi-Family Dwelling Recycling

REQUESTED ACTION:

Request the City Manager to develop new requirements for permitted private refuse haulers to ensure that all multi-family residential units have the same access to recycling as do residential units serviced by the City.

Request the recommended requirements be brought back to the City Council in 60 days for review.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Currently all single family and multi-family residents (up to 10 units) are serviced by the City and provided the opportunity to participate in the Residential Recycling Program. That amounts to approximately 116,000 residential customers and 6,000 businesses with curbside pick-up of refuse and recycling. The City contracts with Waste Management, Inc. for the collection of recyclable materials. Waste Management takes the recyclables to Potential Industries, a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in Wilmington, where they are sorted and prepared for the market place. However, residents living in multi-family units not serviced by the City often find that the private hauler servicing their building is unwilling or unable to make recycling services available.

Public Resources Code section 41780, enacted by AB 939 (Sher)--the Integrated Waste Management Act (Chapter 1095, Statutes of 1989)--requires every city and county in the state to divert from landfill at least 50 percent of the waste generated within their jurisdiction. The Legislature amended this statute in 2000, requiring jurisdictions to sustain their waste diversion efforts into the future. The City of Long Beach has achieved an overall diversion rate of 66% (2005), and the City was recognized by Sustainlane, an independent sustainability organization that conducts surveys and research throughout the country, as tied for #1 in solid waste diversion practices among the 50 largest cities in the US. However, larger multi-family residential dwellings without recycling services represent a great opportunity to increase our diversion rate, reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and our impact on the environment.

To ensure equal availability of recycling for all residents of Long Beach, we are requesting that City Manager and appropriate staff work with the City's permitted private haulers and other interested parties to develop regulations and policies that result in a standardized recycling program for all multi-family unit residents.