

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



FROM: Waste Management Department

SUBMITTAL DATE:
December 7, 2006

SUBJECT: Esperanza Fire Debris Disposal Update

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board:

1. Receive and file the status report on the disposal of fire related debris from the Esperanza fire;
2. Authorize the use of Waste Management Enterprise Funds for enhanced waste inspection/hazardous waste clearances and General Fund monies for private property asbestos abatement; and
3. Authorize the Department to issue a Request for Quotes to determine more precise costs related to asbestos waste abatement.

BACKGROUND: As the Board is aware, the recent Esperanza fire has caused considerable loss of life and property and, in its wake, left approximately 38 homes and outbuildings destroyed that require debris removal. During the Board meeting in which disposal fee waivers were approved, the Department was tasked with providing the Board an update on cleanup efforts, particularly with regard to concerns related to asbestos and hazardous materials.
(Cont'd)




 Hans Kernkamp, General Manager-Chief Engineer

FINANCIAL DATA	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$0	In Current Year Budget:	Yes
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$0	Budget Adjustment:	No
	Annual Net County Cost:	-0-	For Fiscal Year:	FY2006/07

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Waste Management Enterprise Funds and General Fund	Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Requires 4/5 Vote	<input type="checkbox"/>

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

County Executive Office Signature 

Dept's Recomm.: Consent Policy
 Per Exec. Ofc.: Consent Policy

500P DEC -1 6W 5:30
 RECEIVED RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Prev. Agn. Ref.: 11/14/06 - 3.27 | **District:** All | **Agenda Number:**

12.2

Per the recommendations within the attached report, the Department has undertaken the following activities:

1. Provided focused Hazardous Waste Inspections on all loads delivered from the Esperanza Fire to the Lamb Canyon landfill.
2. Scheduled a Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection event in the Poppet Flats area.
3. Coordinated private property clearances for hazardous materials and asbestos waste onsite by the Department of Environmental Health – Hazardous Materials Division and the Public Health Department – Office of Industrial Hygiene.
4. Researched preliminary costs related to asbestos waste abatement and drafted a formal Request for Quotes (RFQ) to better define the costs. The RFQ will not be issued until asbestos survey results are completed. The Department believes the abatement costs will be much lower than preliminary estimates, since only a small percentage of properties will require abatement and more detailed site information will be available upon completion of the surveys.
5. Recommended the use of Waste Management Enterprise for enhanced waste inspection/hazardous waste clearances and General Fund monies for private property asbestos abatement in an effort to protect the public health and environment while allowing cleanup activities to continue.

In the interest of being as protective as possible of the public health and environment, the Department is coordinating private property hazardous waste clearances, as many agencies and volunteer organizations have converged on the area with the best intentions, but with limited training in that regard.

This report is intended to provide the Board with an opportunity to solicit staff input and provide formal direction on current efforts and any of the recommendations made by the Department. The Department will provide detailed cost information from the RFQ to the Executive Office for inclusion within the Mid-Year Budget Report to make any necessary budget adjustments for the use of General Fund monies.

HWK:jrm

Attachment

STATUS REPORT – DISPOSAL OF ESPERANZA FIRE DEBRIS

December 7, 2006

Background

On November 7, 2006, the Board authorized the Waste Management Department (Department) to waive disposal fees for Class III waste associated with the tragic Esperanza fire in order to assist victims with the cleanup. On November 14, 2006, the Board also approved the use of 3rd District and 5th District funds to supplement the 50% reduced bin cost provided by the franchise hauler in the area, Waste Management of the Inland Empire (WMIE), effectively providing bin service to the fire victims for free.

During the Board meeting of November 7, 2006, the Department expressed the concern that although limited waivers may be able to be obtained from the regulatory agencies, residents and the Board needed to understand that the landfill would not be able to accept hazardous waste or asbestos, and that the Department would be inspecting for and rejecting those materials. The Board then directed the Department to report back on how best to address handling of those materials.

Efforts to Date

Immediately upon notification of waste loads arriving at the Department's Lamb Canyon landfill facility (11/7/06), staff dedicated a separate disposal pad and Hazardous Waste Inspector to screen for hazardous materials and asbestos. Although the Department's Waste Inspection Program allows for random load checks, efforts are typically focused more on targeting commercial rolloff boxes and suspicious loads. Given the confusion that often surrounds such disaster events, the Department felt it prudent to inspect every load of fire debris to insure that significant quantities of hazardous wastes or asbestos were not delivered by accident or by those taking advantage of this tragic event. In addition to focused Hazardous Waste Inspections, the Department began wetting down each load to mitigate the potential for fire and airborne particulate matter.

On November 10, 2006 a significant quantity of hazardous waste (upwards of 100 items) was discovered under an unburned load of waste (allegedly from the fire cleanup) in an apparent attempt to disguise it. As is consistent with established policy, the Department forwarded this on to the District Attorney's Environmental Crimes Task Force (Task Force) for direction and possible cost recovery. This incident is pending further investigation.

No asbestos waste has been found to date at the landfill. However, given the difficulty with this waste constituent in general, staff had been working on new procedures for screening of this material prior to the fires (a large amount of rolloff bins and self-haul customers deliver construction and demolition material, which may contain asbestos). As part of that effort, prior discussions with the South Coast Air Quality Management (SCAQMD) staff had indicated that their expectations were for the Department to utilize the existing asbestos recognition training

and request a copy of the asbestos clearance survey if suspect material is encountered during waste load inspection. If it is discovered that an asbestos survey had not been performed for the suspect load, the area inspector for SCAQMD would be summoned and the load would then be tested. If testing indicated a positive result for asbestos, Department staff would hold the load for proper disposal and the customer would be referred to the Task Force for investigation and cost recovery from the responsible party. This procedure was recently implemented and is being utilized to screen Esperanza fire debris loads. It has been the Department's experience that given the airborne exposure threat that would result from further disturbance of any verified material, the Task Force typically directs the Department to wet the material and immediately bury it on site.

In light of the Board's request on the cost for properly managing these wastes from the fire area, the Department solicited quotes from private consulting firms and from the Public Health Department – Office of Industrial Hygiene (OIH) for asbestos surveys of the private property structures that would meet with SCAQMD requirements. The County may decide that this service should be provided to property owners to avoid unfortunate situations in which waste loads are screened and determined to be in conflict with the Department's waste inspection program and a Task Force incident generated. To that end, the Department has coordinated with the Department of Environmental Health – Hazardous Materials Division (HazMat) and OIH to provide a hazardous waste clearance procedure to insure that hazardous waste and asbestos exposure threats are minimized to the public. Those inspections commenced on November 17, 2006 with HazMat and on November 27, 2006 with OIH. As each property is visited a Right of Entry is obtained from each property owner to allow multiple County agencies and contractors access until January 31st, 2007 so that any follow-up remedial measures may be performed (hazardous waste removal, asbestos surveys, asbestos abatement if necessary, metals removal, etc.).

The Department sought and received quotes for the consulting service to perform asbestos surveys on all of the estimated properties; the quotes range from \$15,289.80 to \$21,225.00. Upon discussion with OIH, it was discovered that they could perform the same surveys in a timely and more coordinated manner with other County departments for a cost of \$20,000. Preliminary asbestos abatement costs at the properties, if found through the onsite survey screening process as required by SCAQMD, ranged from \$170,000 to \$380,000, assuming the worst case that all of the properties would need to be abated. An additional \$17,600 (estimated) would be required to provide the necessary third party Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) related to the asbestos abatement efforts. Given the large variance in preliminary costs for asbestos abatement, the Department intends to issue a more detailed RFQ based upon the results of OIH surveys (once completed) to better define those costs. This will allow the details for each site that tests positive to be included in the RFQ, affording the contractor the ability to bid with less uncertainties and on less properties, resulting in better pricing. As of December 6, 2006, OIH reports that 17 properties have been tested and of those tested, 5 are pending results, 10 have been negative, while only 2 have been positive.

Costs for handling household and commercial quantities of hazardous materials other than asbestos are estimated to be lower and handled either through existing roundup events, a special event or through HazMat inspections. The Department has incorporated an estimated dollar amount to handle the increased material from the HazMat inspections and in the event a responsible party cannot be determined if illegal dumping of these materials occurs (as noted above). This contingency amount should be sufficient to address those concerns, as the Department expects efficiencies of scale to be provided by consolidation of these materials.

Ongoing Efforts

1. The Waste Management Department will continue to provide focused Hazardous Waste Inspection on all loads delivered from the Esperanza fire.
2. The Waste Management Department will schedule a special Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection event in the Poppet Flats area to allow fire victims to easily and properly dispose of items that can not be accepted at the landfill (tentatively scheduled for December 16, 2006 at the Poppet Flats Fire Station). The estimated cost for this unplanned event (with contingencies outlined above) in the amount of \$10,000 and will be funded by the Department under the HHW program.
3. Private properties will continue to be cleared for hazardous materials and asbestos onsite by HazMat and OIH. The cost associated with the private property clearances (\$20,000 for asbestos surveys) will also be borne by the Department.
4. The Department will issue a Request for Quotes (RFQ) to determine more precise costs related to the proper disposal of asbestos wastes, once surveys are complete. Based upon preliminary research of the date each property was built and the small percentage of properties testing positive so far, the Department believes that costs lower than the initial \$170,000 to \$380,000 estimates can be obtained, given they were based upon all properties with no preliminary screening. Based on the asbestos test results to date, the Department estimates that the asbestos abatement costs could be less than \$25,000. In an effort to remediate the asbestos health and environmental hazard as quickly as possible, the Department recommends that the Board approve the use of General Fund monies for asbestos abatement. Based on the time necessary to complete the surveys, and issue and award the RFQ, staff estimates that it would take approximately five weeks before abatement can begin. Should the actual RFQ bids exceed \$25,000, the Department would work with the Executive Office to apprise the Board of the increased costs in the Mid-Year Budget Report before awarding the contract.

The following table summarizes the costs:

Item	Cost
Poppet Flats HHW Collection Event	\$10,000
Asbestos Surveys/Clearances	\$20,000
Asbestos Abatement Contract	\$20,000
Asbestos Abatement QA/QC	\$5,000
Total Costs	\$55,000