

GETTING TO ZERO

Dan Nore | 25th Street

News Flash 8/27/2010 - San Francisco achieves 77% landfill diversion rates, surpassing the goal of 75% landfill diversion by 2010 and setting a national recycling rate record as the highest of any city in the United States. Having beat their 75% goal, San Francisco is now scheming to get to zero waste by 2020. So what is the Del Mar community trash profile and what waste reduction goals should Del Mar establish? How close to zero can we go?

generation. Reduced remodeling and new construction generated less demolition and construction waste. Slower commercial activity and vacant space means less trash. Finally, I think there is growing community awareness of the importance of recycling and a change in our purchasing habits.

Del Mar needs to establish a solid waste reduction goal that reflects community activity separate from the Fairgrounds. Separating out the Fairgrounds leaves us with 7,135 tons of trash in 2009, or 8.5 daily pounds per resident. An average of 2009 activity for eight coastal cities suggests that 5.5 pounds is a reasonable goal.

We can negotiate a new waste management contract that has "Pay-As-You-Throw" rate structure and performance clauses for achieving solid waste reduction goals. We can update our solid waste ordinance and include enforceable Construction and Demolition provisions. We can collaborate with Del Mar businesses and implement a flexible commercial recycling program that accommodates our unique village constraints.

Finally, we can catch-up with leaders such as San Francisco and the Fairgrounds. San Francisco residents generate only 3 pounds of trash per day and have a zero waste goal. Composting is an integral component of their programs and zero waste goals. Let's lend a community voice to support regional community composting and innovative waste to energy programs. □

See our website for additional material:
www.delmarsandpiper.org

WASTE WASTE DISPOSAL

WHAT IS THE MEASURE?
The average number of pounds of solid waste per capita disposed of each day in San Diego County. This number includes waste that is brought to landfills, incinerated and exported, and reflects both residential and commercial waste.

HOW ARE WE DOING?
From 2008-2009, San Diego County residents reduced waste by approximately 1 pound per person per day, although the region's average waste disposal is still above California's. The slowing of the economy had a significant impact on the reduction of personal and commercial waste, especially construction and demolition materials. The City of San Diego recently started accepting more plastic items in recycling bins, which will divert more waste. New demolition and construction recycling ordinances implemented in some jurisdictions will also have a positive effect as the economy recovers. However, a significant amount of food waste and other organic materials still enter the waste stream.

AVG WASTE PER CAPITA PER DAY
CA STATE & SAN DIEGO COUNTY

The California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) reported that Del Mar sent 8,807 tons of solid waste to local landfills in 2009. This translates to 10.5 pounds of trash per resident per day. Using CalRecycle data and population targets, Del Mar can boast a 74% landfill diversion rate for 2009. Great accomplishment for a small city but I think we can and should do more as a community.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Excessive waste generation requires more landfills, which are difficult to site due to environmental, neighborhood and political concerns, and contributes to greenhouse gas emissions.
- Recycling leads to reduced waste and better stewardship of our limited natural resources.
- Diverted organic waste could be used to produce electricity, biofuels, mulch and other valuable products.
- There are new green job opportunities in waste reduction, recycling and processing.

Multiple factors allowed Del Mar to achieve this stellar landfill diversion rate. First, this is one instance where Del Mar has benefited from our close attachment to the Fairgrounds. CalRecycle statistics include Fairgrounds solid waste activities in our community totals. The Fairgrounds has an award-winning solid waste program that includes: bans on non-recyclable materials; aggressive recycling programs; and composting of organic materials. The 22nd DAA Board of Directors has officially embraced a goal of "zero waste."

The weak economy also led to a decrease in solid waste

