



Solid Waste Local Enforcement Agency

Frequently Asked Questions

Proposed New Solid Waste Facility Permit for Valencia Greenery

General Permitting Questions

Q. Who is the Orange County Solid Waste Local Enforcement Agency (LEA)?

A. The Orange County Health Care Agency (OCHCA) Environmental Health Division is the Solid Waste Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) in Orange County designated by the Orange County Board of Supervisors and certified by the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) which delegates authority to enforce state solid waste laws and regulations.

Q. What does the LEA do?

A. The LEA enforces state solid waste regulations for active and closed landfills, transfer-processing facilities, green waste operations, and limited volume transfer operations by:

- Issuing permits with limits/conditions pertaining to solid waste handling, processing and storage
- Conducting routine inspections
- Investigating complaints
- Issuing Enforcement Orders when needed
- Coordinating with other regulatory agencies
- Providing regulatory assistance

Q. What is the permit process for a new solid waste facility permit (SWFP)?

A. Below are the steps the LEA takes on receipt of an application package for a new SWFP:

1. The LEA has 30 days from receipt, to consider the application as complete and correct
2. If complete, the LEA accepts the application and notifies CalRecycle and the Regional Water Quality Control Board within five (5) days
3. Within 60 days of receipt of the application, the LEA must conduct a public informational meeting to receive public input on the proposed new permit
4. Within 60 days of accepting the application and after the informational meeting, the LEA prepares and submits to CalRecycle the proposed new permit along with the public's comments from the informational meeting and the LEA's response
5. CalRecycle staff will conduct a pre-permit inspection of the facility
6. CalRecycle will consider proposed new permit as an agenda item during their public meeting
7. CalRecycle will either concur or object to the LEA's issuing of the proposed new SWFP and send a letter to the LEA
8. The LEA will issue a new signed permit to the operator if and when CalRecycle concurs with the permit

Q. When will the LEA forward the proposed new permit to CalRecycle?

A. The LEA will prepare a new SWFP and forward it to CalRecycle for concurrence by July 23, 2023, or shortly thereafter.

Q. When will CalRecycle consider the proposed new permit?

A. The proposed new facility permit will be on the CalRecycle's public monthly meeting agenda to be conducted between August – September 2023 timeframe. For more information about CalRecycle's public meeting details, please contact the LEA Supervising Hazardous Materials Specialist, Shyamala Rajagopal at (714) 433-6270 or by e-mail at srajagopal@ochca.com.

Q. How can I submit comments on the proposed new permit?

A. If you have questions after reviewing the above information or would like to make an appointment to review the SWFP application package, please contact the Environmental Health office via phone at (714) 433-6000 or by email at ehhealth@ochca.com. If you would like to comment on the proposed permit action, you may do so at the meeting or send your written comments by US mail to OCHCA, Environmental Health Division, 1241 E. Dyer Road, Suite 120, Santa Ana, CA 92705, Attn.: Solid Waste – LEA or via email to Shyamala Rajagopal, srajagopal@ochca.com or to Jennifer Nguyen, Hazardous Materials Specialist, jnguyen2@ochca.com by July 14, 2023.

Q. Whom do I contact regarding an odor complaint at Valencia Greenery?

A. If you have an odor complaint to report, you can submit an online complaint to Orange County Waste & Recycling (OCWR) at <http://ocwrnsp.ocgov.com/Complaint/Create?LandfillId=7>. You can also contact the Solid Waste LEA Complaint Hotline, (714) 433-6404 or submit an online complaint at the HCA's Env. Health website, <http://www.ochealthinfo.com/eh/home/complaints>.

Q. How often are solid waste facilities/operations inspected by the LEA?

A. Active landfills, transfer-processing facilities, and green waste facilities with full or registration permits are inspected monthly by the LEA. Other greenwaste operations, limited volume transfer operations, and closed landfills are inspected either quarterly or yearly. Valencia Greenery will be inspected monthly as it is a full SWFP.

Q. Do the new SWFP require California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis?

A. The CEQA analysis must be done before a SWFP application can be accepted. OCWR, as the operator, prepared an Initial Study and processed a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the proposed facility in 2022. OCWR held a virtual public meeting of the proposed project to the nearby communities on March 2, 2022, followed by the County Board of Supervisors certifying the MND for Valencia Greenery in June 2022.

Q. Where can I obtain a copy of the Solid Waste regulations?

A. You can review and download State Solid Waste regulations (Titles 14 and Title 27 of California Code of Regulations) from the CalRecycle website <http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/>

Specific Project Questions

Q. Why is Valencia Greenery composting being proposed at Olinda Alpha Landfill?

A. CalRecycle has adopted new regulations throughout California that aim to keep organic waste out of landfills and instead recover it as a resource. Until 2019, Olinda landfill received greenwaste that came from residential curbside bins from various cities within Orange County. Waste haulers processed this greenwaste (chipped & ground) and brought it to the landfill. In addition to tarps, the processed green material (PGM) was used as an alternative daily cover (ADC) in place of clean soil to cover the daily refuse at the landfill. However, starting January 2020, PGM used as ADC was no longer counted as diversion credits due to AB1594. Therefore, greenwaste coming into the landfill is being proposed to compost along with food waste, saving landfill space and creating a viable product that can be used later. Further, converting organic waste into compost that comes from residential curbside pickups will also assist Orange County unincorporated areas and cities in meeting state mandates for recycling of organic waste materials as per SB1383.

Q. What is the proposed project?

A. The proposed composting operation consists of two phases. In Phase 1A, operations will consist of a series of green waste piles called “windrows” arranged in rows in an open area. The size of each windrow will be about 100 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 12 feet high. The piles will be turned, watered, and monitored for temperature to facilitate the natural process to decompose until the material is nutrient rich compost. The entire composting process takes about 5 months to complete. This includes about 12 weeks of active composting phase where the piles are turned/watered and about 8 weeks of curing phase where the compost stabilizes to a finished product. In Phase 1B, the operations will consist of an automated system that blows air into the compost pile, which is covered with a synthetic cover during the composting phase. This system called “covered aerated static pile” is arranged in rows and managed in a controlled environment.

Q. What is the proposed size and capacity of the Valencia Greenery facility?

A. The proposed Valencia Greenery is located over a portion on the northeast side within the landfill on a surface that consists of crushed asphalt and concrete. The facility covers about 14.1 acres and can receive a maximum of 228 tons/day of feedstock materials.

Q. What are some protocols followed at the facility to minimize odors?

A. For Valencia Greenery, as per their Odor Impact Minimization Plan (OIMP), a few methods to minimize odors include feedstock management, moisture control, and rejecting odorous loads. The OIMP is included in the Report of Composting Site Information (RCSI) document prepared for Valencia Greenery composting operations that identifies operating procedures and design considerations to minimize odors which will be checked by LEA as part of monthly inspections.

Q. Will the composting operation generate more truck traffic?

A. Valencia Greenery, at maximum capacity of 228 tons/day, is anticipated to generate approximately 12 two-way truck trips per day, with these trucks taking finished compost. The net effect for the traffic counts for green waste arriving to the facility is negligible since the overall volume of feedstock is the same or less material than previously accepted at the landfill.