

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Supervisors continue to discuss countywide mandatory garbage collection

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Mandated trash removal may soon become a reality in Amador County.

It was announced by Public Works staff last Tuesday, Sept. 21, at the Amador County Board of Supervisors meeting that Amador County is one of the few counties throughout California that does not have mandatory garbage service collection. The board and Public Works is now in the process of implementing a plan that would fit the needs of the citizens in the county and meet state regulations at the same time.

"The state is not slowing down when it comes to waste management," District Three Supervisor Richard Vinson said.

"The state is asking counties to adopt efforts and the public is demanding more recycling. There are far more demands and requests today than we can provide. We are not sure what items to tackle first," Deputy Director of Public Works Larry Peterson said. "Some items

can't be in landfills and there is illegal dumping statewide so how do we deal with it?"

The county is surrounded by natural beauty and in some places it is accompanied by garbage, Peterson said.

"The landfill on Buena Vista Road has reached its capacity and when the board evaluated the decision to expand it or close it, it took the option to close it. It will still take garbage but the garbage will now be taken to somewhere else," County Administrative Officer Patrick Blacklock said.

"As we looked at the services requested by residents and businesses in the context of these state requirements, it was clear that we have more to do than we are doing and if we did all the things that the county residents want, it will cost more to implement than the funding allows. The tipping fees and collection fees are complex as are the solid and liquid waste management needs of the county, which include illegal dumping control, cleanup and littering, just to name a few of the more commonly heard problems," Direc-

tor of Public Works Roderick Schuler said in a letter to the supervisors.

Public works is requesting that the county consider enlisting a waste management planning consultant to help prepare a 10 year master plan, Schuler said in a staff memo.

"The state regulatory agency is taking an interest. There is a trend in other counties to going toward mandatory garbage service collection," Blacklock said.

It is proposed that there will be different levels in service, reductions of service, management requests for reductions and self hauling available. All customers will get recycling options and will be able to choose from a 32, 64 or 96 gallon garbage can, Peterson said.

"Other counties implemented mandatory garbage collection back in the 80s or 90s. The waste management goals are safe handling of solid waste, reduce illegal dumping, keep costs low, increase recycling and diversion," Jim McHargue, Public Works Program Manager for Waste Management, said.

The Public Works Agency's Waste Management Department has had to deal with compliance issues over the last year relating to requirements to start a 50 percent diversion rate for waste, Schuler said.

Anything diverted from being used in a landfill is diversion and recycling is a component of diversion. Recycling is modifying a component that is used as a raw material for a new purpose, McHargue said.

The positive effects of waste management in the county are that it will increase recycling, revenue for the department and with effective programs, there should be less nuisance complaints and a cleaner community. The negatives are that there will need to be management and enforcement requiring more staff and service reductions, McHargue said.

"We have to make sure the goals of the state are met as well as the expectations of the public. The board agreed to go to the next step in helping us prepare a master plan. The plan will be implemented next year," Blacklock said.

A request for proposals draft

presented to the board for discussion stated that the services and goals achievable for the rate would include free garbage collection at all county-government offices, revenue that covers all waste management department operations including the post closure maintenance costs for the Buena Vista Landfill. It also will include the county's hazardous household waste collection

and disposal program costs are covered and are expanded to include two up-country events a year. All residents will receive bulk goods curbside pickup no less than three times a year, curbside used oil and filter pickup will be on a routine schedule, curbside recycle and green waste service and sewage collection, treatment and disposal planning will be required.