



A Public Agency

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

STAFF REPORT

To: SBWMA Board Members
From: Joe La Mariana, Executive Director
Date: September 28, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Subject: Executive Director’s Report

Staff and agency partners continue to be hard at work supporting a variety of projects, programs, and facility initiatives. Here are the highlights:

1. **RethinkWaste wins Outstanding School Recycling Program Award at annual California Resource Recovery Association (CRRRA) Conference**

CRRRA recognized RethinkWaste’s Environmental Education (EE) Team at its annual conference in Burlingame on August 14, 2023 as the recipient of the 2023 Outstanding School Recycling Program.

This award honors a school or an entity partnered with schools that have excelled in implementing programs and practices that promote waste reduction, reuse, recycling and/or compost at school campuses. We extend a warm thank you to CRRRA, our community and organizational partners, schools, students, custodians, Green Champions, and our own amazing Environmental Education Team for everyone’s joint efforts to support schools in their waste journeys! It’s great to see Environmental Education Program Manager Emi Hashizume, Environmental Education Associate Reyna Ocegüera and the EE Fellow team get acknowledged by our peers. This award is richly deserved!



RethinkWaste staff Reyna Ocegüera and Emi Hashizume (center) with CRRRA President Laura McKaughan (left) and CRRRA Executive Director Tracie Bills (right). Photo courtesy of California Resource Recovery Association.

More on the CRRRA Conference

The CRRRA annual conference is the premier solid waste and recycling industry conference in the western United States...some would say the entire country! This year over 800 attendees attended in-person to exchange ideas and program best practices, exchange resources and review new innovations through an exhibitor’s hall, attend numerous topic sessions, strategize on legislative/regulatory priorities, build our program and project toolkits and to expand our professional networks. Because this year’s conference was held right here in our agency’s service area at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Burlingame, RethinkWaste and

Recology were prominently featured as President's Circle-level sponsors and conference co-hosts. Among the Program highlights, Burlingame City Manager Lisa Goldman gave a dynamic and fun "Welcome to Burlingame" speech on Monday morning to kick off the conference and on Tuesday our very own 3X RethinkWaste Chair, Alicia Aguirre, gave an information-packed and thoughtful keynote speech on our agency's purpose and goals. I also had the privilege of introducing both speakers to hundreds of attendees at these respective plenary sessions. Our agency and local community really shined brightly during this conference. Well done ladies!!



(From L-R) RethinkWaste Board Chair Alicia Aguirre, Executive Director Joe La Mariana, Burlingame City Manager Lisa Goldman.

Photos courtesy of California Resource Recovery Association.

2. Contractor Updates:

a. Recology San Mateo County (Recology)

On August 14, John Zirelli started as the new General Manager of Recology San Mateo County. John was previously the General Manager for Recology South Bay and Mountain View since 2003. Prior to joining Recology, he worked in the waste and recycling industry for 27 years in San Mateo and Los Angeles Counties. Welcome home John!

b. South Bay Recycling (SBR) Operations

The SBR Transfer Station Manager is vacant and SBR is covering this management role with existing management staff. General Manager Phil Couchee and his SBR team continue to focus its operations to meet RethinkWaste goals. As a practical matter, this is challenging--and will probably become even more so--as we approach the December 31st expiration date of this Operating Agreement. Huge kudos to the SBR team for maintaining their professional focus during this important period of time. Phil and his team are truly a class act.

3. Administration & Finance:

a. FY 2024 Budget

Staff is currently working on the FY 2024 budget. The proposed draft budget will be presented first to the Finance Committee in October and later that month to the full Board.

b. Staffing Update

Starting August 1, Joanne Nghiem was promoted into the Associate Engineer position with the agency. This position was newly created for FY 2023 and had been vacant since January 1. As a prudent measure, I wanted to be sure that the workload warranted the hiring. I can now say with complete conviction, it most certainly does. Your promotion is well-earned Joanne!

In the last month, we are welcoming two new Fellows. On August 28 we welcomed our new Public Outreach Fellow Lina Pietrzyk who will be working with Joanna Rosales on outreach and communications and helping give tours of the Shoreway. On September 26 we will welcome new Environmental Education Fellow Ally Edwards who will be helping with the In-Schools Program and tours.

This summer we bid adieu to Environmental Education Fellows Jayden Hanan and Andy Zhang, which means we still have one Environmental Education Fellow position open. That recruitment will begin later this Fall.

c. Office Buildout Design Services RFP

At the conclusion of its June 2023 discussion, the Board authorized the Executive Director to make an offer to purchase an office space located at 1245 San Carlos Avenue, Suite E, in San Carlos. On August 21, 2023, staff issued an RFP for architectural, engineering and design services for the planning and design of the office space that provides adequate space for all SBWMA administrative functions and a large conference room to accommodate Board and TAC meetings along with some community environmental education sessions. Proposals were due on September 14, 2023, and five proposals were submitted. Staff recommends awarding the Professional Architectural and Engineering Consultant Services Agreement to Gelfand Partners Architects. More information about this contract is in agenda item 5C.

4. Committee Updates:

a. Finance Committee Meeting (August 29)

The Committee held a special meeting to review and discuss the proper facility insurance coverage premium deductible options and the financing package deal terms for the proposed SBWMA office acquisition.

b. Legislative Committee (August 28)

The Legislative Committee met to discuss current legislation and statuses, and the potential of a future climate bond for next year for funding towards SB 1383 implementation.

c. Pub Ed/Outreach Committee (no meeting held)

d. Technical Advisory Committee (September 14)

The TAC met to discuss this year's Recology and SBI Compensation Applications. The TAC also received a presentation from SCS Engineers featuring the significant body of work they completed to date on our member agency's behalf on outreach and technical assistance, waivers and route reviews

for Member Agencies in helping implement SB 1383. The SCS team has worked in close collaboration with Recology's Waste Zero team in achieving impressive results.

e. **Zero Waste Committee** (July 27)

The Committee met to discuss the EV Fleet Transition and CARB Rulings, MRF Phase II and the status of the Organics-to-Energy project.

5. **Collection and Recycling Program Support and Compliance:**

a. **SB 1383 - Contamination Monitoring Route Reviews**

Over the next few months, RethinkWaste staff will be managing the transition of SB 1383 compliance support services from SCS Engineers to Recology. These services include Outreach Technical Assistance, Waiver Reviews, and Route Review Contamination Monitoring. The SCS Engineers contract ends December 31, 2023 and will transition to Recology January 1, 2024. All teams want to ensure a smooth and continuous transition. RethinkWaste and Recology staff have a series of meetings scheduled throughout the Fall to scope and schedule these services. The first two of these meetings was held on August 1, 2023 and September 11, 2023 respectively. At the September 14, 2023 TAC Meeting, SCS Engineers presented a summary of their deliverables to date.

CalRecycle recently released another round of funding for the SB 1383 Local Assistance Grant program (FY 2022-23). This non-competitive grant program offers eligible entities a base grant award of \$75,000, with remaining funding distributed on a per capita basis. The grant deadline is November 15, 2023. RethinkWaste staff are discussing with the TAC a potential project list and the possibility of having RethinkWaste apply for grant funding on behalf of Member Agencies to support joint SB 1383 implementation.

More information is included in the informational items update on the Status of SB 1383 under agenda item 9E.

b. **Community Outreach and Environmental Education**

i. **Outreach Updates**

In collaboration with Recology, staff updated and refreshed the Bulky Item Collection brochure that describes how to schedule a bulky item collection, accepted items, and more information. Staff also revamped a Community Events Guide, which is meant for event organizers to incorporate effective resource management practices for their events in the service area. Reach out to staff if you'd like any of these printed outreach materials.

The proper sorting campaign is fully underway. Keep an eye out for the graphics on SamTrans buses (pictured on the right) throughout the RethinkWaste service area. Staff utilized data from the SB 1383 route reviews to inform the campaign sorting tips. Additional outreach deliverables are being promoted via digital and audio ads. All digital ads have been compiled and distributed to Member Agency staff to share across channels.



ii. **Community Events**

A Game, Puzzle, and Book Swap will be held in collaboration with the Burlingame Library on Saturday, September 23rd from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Community members are encouraged to bring any of these items that they're ready to part with and leave with a new-to-them game, puzzle, or book. Our annual Rethink Recycling Day will be held on Saturday, October 21st from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Shoreway Environmental Center. The event will feature document shredding for RethinkWaste residents (starting at 9 a.m.), tours of the Shoreway facility, a clothes mending clinic, kids crafting activity, and RethinkWaste's 2023 Poster Contest winner recognition.

iii. **Poster Contest Now Open!** (Closes October 6!)

As a creative form of environmental education, RethinkWaste encourages students to combine their artistic skills and think about the waste through the annual Poster Contest. For the first time, the contest has expanded to include two categories, Elementary School (3rd through 5th grade) and Middle School (6th through 8th grade). Submissions will be accepted until October 6th, 2023. For more information, visit rethinkwaste.org/postercontest or speak with staff!

iv. **In-Schools Program Update**

Since June, the Environmental Education (EE) Team has educated over three hundred students and teachers at Beresford Elementary School (San Mateo) and Franklin Elementary School (Burlingame). The team facilitated assemblies, class presentations, virtual presentations, and lunch bin monitoring to emphasize the importance of proper bin sorting and students' impact on their environment. In addition, the EE Manager presented to the full San Carlos School District Maintenance and Operations staff to provide information and reminders about custodial responsibilities related to waste management.

The EE Team continues to collaborate with the San Mateo County Office of Education by supporting the San Mateo County Office of Educations Summer Institute. The team provided information and presented about RethinkWaste's school services and Shoreway Tour offerings for teachers and educators to utilize.

v. **Shoreway Tours**

The Shoreway Tours Program remains in high demand. The team provided tours to large companies like Safeway and several groups from higher educational institutions like Standard University and Golden Gate University International Department. Three schools utilized and

more have scheduled the recently implemented split tour format, which can accommodate larger class sizes.

Resident and community member tour participation increased during the summer (June through September) – 93 public visitors toured Shoreway. Public tours (in-person and virtual) are still regularly hosted once a month, but additional in-person public tours were offered during July to open more opportunities for people on summer break.

The tours program team worked on all aspects of the tours experience by restructuring the tours script to include new safety procedures, implemented new physical visuals to display during in-person tours and incorporated new footage of glass and compost facilities into the virtual tour videos. The team also replanted the garden in the outdoor education area at Shoreway and repaired broken zippers on tour safety vests to exemplify “Reuse” and “Repair”!

6. Shoreway Operations, Capital Projects, and Contract Management

a. Underground Storage Tank (UST) Replacement Project

There were negotiations with the UST contractor on the volumes and cost for treating water coming from the project. After legal and technical consideration by staff, the agency has directed the contractor to proceed with the UST project and develop a plan for “dewatering” that details potential cost impacts. Staff will update the Board as this scope is better understood.

Respectfully submitted,



Joe La Mariana
Executive Director