



A Public Agency

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

STAFF REPORT

To: RethinkWaste Board Members
From: Joe La Mariana, Executive Director
Date: November 20, 2025 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. Administration & Finance:

a. Staffing Updates

RethinkWaste is currently recruiting for the open **Outreach and Communications Manager** position, with recruitment closing on Wednesday, December 3 at 4 p.m. More information about the position requirements and how to apply is on our website at: rethinkwaste.org/jobs

b. RethinkWaste Administrative Office---Conference Room Glass Doors/Exit Issue

Due to recent Board concerns expressed about our ability to quickly open these doors from inside to exit, I've addressed this issue with the Project Architect and General Contractor. The architect's statement below indicate this room conforms within current building and fire codes:

"The current condition is fully code compliant because a room of this size and type is designated for up to 40 occupants. A room of 49 or fewer occupants only requires one exit, which this has. The point I'd like to make is the accordion doors could just as well be a fixed wall and this design would still be fully code compliant" (Austen Dilberto, Gelfand Partners Architects, Managing Partner).

Mr. Dilberto also advised me that the illuminated "Exit" sign was installed on the ceiling at the request of the City of San Carlos' Building Inspector so we cannot remove this sign without their authorization. I am re-engaging with them on this point because this has caused some genuine Catch-22 angst for Board Members and Staff. Wish me luck!

Regarding the door operation, staff has subsequently learned there is, indeed, an easy way to open these doors from the inside the room to exit outwards. This simple technique will be demonstrated at our Board meeting. I appreciate the concerns expressed and welcome further comment.

2. Committee Updates:

a. Finance Committee Meeting (no meeting)

b. Legislative Committee (November 4)

The Committee met to discuss the agency's 2026 legislative and regulatory priorities which will include: Implementation of AB 2440 (*Loose Battery Extended Producer Responsibility*); SB 1215 (*Battery-Embedded Products added to E-waste Law*); SB 54 (*Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act*); single-use vape legislation (AB 762); program and facility operations funding opportunities; expanding the Zero Waste Now coalition; and open meetings/remote attendance legislation. More information about legislative update can be found in agenda item 9A.

c. Pub Ed/Outreach Committee (no meeting)

d. Technical Advisory Committee (no meeting)

e. Master Plan Steering Committee (next meeting is January 30)

3. Collection and Outreach Program Support and Compliance:

a. SB 1383 and SB 54 Compliance Update

RethinkWaste staff continued to make steady progress toward SB 1383 compliance throughout November 2025. During the month, staff processed 37 waiver requests, approving 31 and denying six (6), while maintaining active outreach with residential, commercial, and multi-family generators to support ongoing compliance efforts.

Staff reminded Member Agencies of standard SB 1383 enforcement activities, which began in January 2024 and have progressed through phased mailings of Notices of Violation (NOVs). By the end of Q3, NOV letters had been issued across multiple jurisdictions. In October, the City of San Mateo issued its 2nd citations from the second batch, and staff completed the mailing of 137 Warning Letters on behalf of the County of San Mateo, which elected not to issue NOVs at this time. Menlo Park's NOVs are scheduled for release in Q4.

Staff will distribute more than 60,000 SB 1383 compliance and proper sorting postcards to multi-family complex tenants throughout the service area in November. This outreach aims to enhance awareness of SB 1383 requirements and promote accurate sorting across all three collection streams.

Staff also continued collaboration with Member Agencies on the transition to the new Minerva compliance and tracking software, with training sessions extending through December.

In addition, staff is preparing a new round of SB 1383 holiday-themed social media content for distribution across all Member Agencies to promote community awareness and engagement.

Lastly, CalRecycle Deputy Director Michelle Martin and SB 54 Communications Manager Melanie Turner will present an in-person update on SB 54 implementation at the November Board of Directors meeting.

Overall, RethinkWaste staff remain focused on supporting outreach, enforcement coordination, edible food recovery efforts, contamination monitoring, and reporting to ensure Member Agencies remain on track with SB 1383 and SB 54 compliance requirements.

b. Community Outreach and Environmental Education

i. Rethink Recycling Day – *another successful event!*

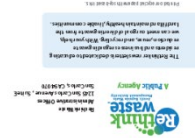
RethinkWaste hosted its annual Rethink Recycling Day on October 25 to a great success where we hosted facility tours, honored our Poster Contest winners, decorated pumpkins in an eco-friendly manner, learned how to make recycled candles and spoke with our community partners. We especially want to thank Board Member Laurie Adams for helping us in honoring our 2025 Poster Contest winners at the event. We had 54 attendees with 94% of attendees from the service area. A post event survey conducted of attendees showed that most attendees were “very satisfied” to the overall event.



ii. Shoreway Tours Program

Shoreway facility tour highlights from the last month included a tour that was part of San Mateo County’s Sustainability Department Solutions to Waste Schools Program, and a business tour for a senior activity club. There will be two tours for staff from the City of Menlo Park in mid-November.

- iii. **Community Outreach**
Staff is working on mailing the Rethinker newsletter to single-family households in Redwood City, East Palo Alto and North Fair Oaks who currently do not bill via Recology in late November. The Rethinker newsletter (screenshot below) to single-family homes for everyone else went out via bill insert from September-November.



Due to Christmas Day and New Year's Day falling on a Thursday, a direct postcard mailing to Thursday and Friday customers only for the holiday schedule change where the Thursday and Friday customers will have their service delayed one day will happen in early December.



To address questions from the October Board meeting, below are some statistics on the electronic newsletter sent in October. The Bay Area Recycling Outreach Coalition (BayROC) campaign final report is still being finalized, and the final report will be sent to the Public Education and Outreach Committee.

- October “News You Can Use” electronic newsletter: 25.1% open rate, 2.6% click through rate.

iv. **In-Schools Program Update**

The Environmental Education (EE) team provided refresher education to Heather Elementary in San Carlos in mid-October, which included assemblies for all grade levels and a week’s worth of lunch bin monitoring to reinforce students’ retention of proper waste sorting practices. In early November, the EE Team conducted a full In-Schools Program roll-out at Parkside Montessori in San Mateo. After meetings with school administrators and preliminary site visits to establish what no-cost equipment the campus needed, staff hosted assemblies for transitional kindergarten all the way through 8th grade students, as well as one classroom presentation. As usual, the team also stayed for each lunch period throughout the week to assist with bin monitoring and make adjustments to the waste diversion processes.

4. Shoreway Facility/Site Updates:

- a. HDR Engineering has completed their on-site heat mapping of the Transfer Station floor assessment project. An update be provided today in item 7B. HDR’s final Findings and Recommendations Report is expected in the near future.
- b. Another round of site signage upgrades are being installed in the next few weeks.
- c. Work continues on an exciting design refresh of our Outdoor Education area (located under the canopy on the west side of our Transfer Station) where we welcome thousands of school kids and site visitors each year. Exciting times ahead for our visitors!!

5. Contractor Updates:

a. **Recology San Mateo County (Recology)**

Recology San Mateo County has annual **Coats for Kids** Program from November 10-21 to collect new and gently used coats for those in need during the cold weather season. Coats were collected curbside November 10th-14th, and at various drop-off sites throughout our service area through November 21. Thank you to all the Member Agencies who participated by serving as a collection site. We will report on how many coats were collected and distributed in a future update.

Recology's 2025 Holiday Collection Schedule:

With the holidays coming up, as a reminder, **there are no changes to service on Thanksgiving Day. With Christmas and New Year's Day both falling on a Thursday this year, Thursday and Friday customers will be serviced one day later during those two weeks (Thursday customers on Friday, and Friday customers on Saturday.)** Holiday Tree collection will take place between January 2-31, 2026.

As of January 1, 2026 Recology will begin billing for collection services in Redwood City, taking it over from the City who has done the billing up to now. This will allow customers to contact one entity for all their service and billing needs.

b. **South Bayside Industries (SBI) operations**

No report.

Respectfully submitted,



Joe La Mariana
Executive Director

Attachments:

None