



## Board Report

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**File #:** 19-0035, **Version:** 1

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- a. Receive a status update regarding stakeholder involvement and staff work on the Monterey County Illegal Dumping and Litter Abatement Task Force; and
- b. Provide direction regarding amending Monterey County Code Chapter 10.41 to further address litter and illegal dumping in Monterey County.

### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- a. Receive a status update regarding stakeholder involvement and staff work on the Monterey County Illegal Dumping and Litter Abatement Task Force; and
- b. Provide direction regarding amending Monterey County Code Chapter 10.41 to further address litter and illegal dumping in Monterey County.

### SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

The Illegal Dumping and Litter Abatement Task Force (IDALATF) is a working group with members from local city and county governments, solid waste haulers and landfill operators, law enforcement, business leaders in agriculture, members of the community, as well as private landowners and ranchers, whose only focus is to reduce illegal dumping in Monterey County.

Initially created by the County Administrative Office in May of 1996, and subsequently approved by the Board of Supervisors, the task force began as an ad hoc committee with a mission to reduce illegal dumping through public education and community clean-ups, enforcement of mandatory garbage requirements, and inter-agency cooperation.

The impact of illegal dumping to the community comes at a cost affecting public health and safety, land values, quality of life, environmental contamination, and food safety. The IDALATF is committed to working with the community to help solve this problem. recently, the IDALATF has organized Earth Day events, provided support for events sponsored by partner agencies, reached out to the Agricultural Community, and assisted the public with removing illegally dumped materials from public and private properties. The following is a summary of efforts of the Illegal Dumping and Litter Abatement Task Force:

- Since Fiscal Year 2015, issued 114 disposal vouchers to the public to assist with disposal costs of illegal dumping. These vouchers were provided to community volunteer clean-up groups, private property owners, and public agencies who were either victims of illegal dumping or who organized volunteers to clean-up public spaces. Also, since 2015, disposal vouchers assisted with disposal of 43 tons of waste.
- Improved communication and coordination among partner agencies to respond to the public when they report illegal dumping on county roadways. Partner agencies have developed online resources for the public to easily report litter or dumping issues either online or through a mobile device. These resources include Monterey Regional Waste Management's Keep Monterey County Clean, City of Salinas's Salinas Connect, and Monterey County's Monterey County Connect.
- Earth Day events for FY 2017/2018, culminated in a multi-agency clean-up event at Carr Lake in Salinas. Partner agencies included Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority, Return of the Natives, and the Health Department's Environmental Health Bureau. With the assistance of 146 volunteers, 2,806 pounds of trash was collected.

- Ensure that vehicles that transport solid waste are permitted and in good working order through the solid waste vehicle inspection program, so they do not contribute to litter on our county roads.
- Utilize all media to communicate the 2018 Earth Day Events, availability of the voucher program, as well as publicizing illegal dumping events in pursuit of enforcement.

The Environmental Health Bureau (EHB) requests direction from the Board of Supervisors regarding whether to amend the existing litter and illegal dumping ordinance, Monterey County Code Chapter 10.41. Currently, litter and dumping violations are classified misdemeanors under Monterey County Code section 1.20.050, punishable by a penalty of up to \$1,000. Staff has had preliminary internal discussions about amending the code in various ways to deter violations and increase penalties. In order to increase criminal penalties for violation staff would need to meet with the Sheriff and District Attorney's offices as well as County Counsel to determine if that option is available. Staff has also preliminarily considered adding increased civil penalties in a revised ordinance which would cause alleged violators to go through an administrative hearing process, similar to code enforcement hearings. A notable difficulty in proving violation of the ordinance is that it generally requires an eye witness to testify at the hearing regardless of whether the hearing is criminal or civil. EHB has also considered, if the Board directs for the ordinance to be modified, establishing some type of incentive program where individuals reporting violations for littering or dumping are paid a portion of the fines as a reward.

While EHB is prepared to work with County Counsel, the District Attorney, and or Sheriff's Department to amend the existing ordinance, EHB recommends that efforts continue to be concentrated on public outreach and education. EHB believes that proactive measures to engage the community on this issue and empower residents with tools to prevent the need for illegal dumping will ultimately yield the best result and avoid the staff cost and time which would be associated with prosecuting violations either administratively or criminally.

This work supports the Monterey County Health Department 2018-2022 Strategic Plan Initiative 1) to empower the community to improve health and it also supports two of the ten essential public health services, specifically, 5) to develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts and 6) to enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.

#### OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The IDALATF is a multi-agency cooperative partnership that includes Monterey County Health, Sheriff's and Public Works departments, Monterey County Water Resources Agency, California Transportation Agency District 5, Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority, Monterey Regional Waste Management District, Transportation Agency of Monterey County, Fort Ord Reuse Authority, Waste Management, Inc., BFI Waste Services, Tri Cities/Monterey Disposal, Grower-Shipper Association of Central California, Comgro, Inc., Monterey County Farm Bureau, Elkhorn Slough Foundation, Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve, Friends, Artists & Neighbors of Elkhorn Slough & North Monterey County Citizens Oversight Coalition.

#### FINANCING:

The IDALATF is an unfunded working group made up of local government agencies, non-profits, private citizens and landowners, law enforcement, and solid waste service providers. In FY 17-18, the CAO proposed a pilot program that would allocate up to \$200,00 contributed equally by Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority and Monterey Regional Waste Management District to assist Public Works for litter clean-up on county roadways. The voucher disposal program is funded at \$10,000 by Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority and the Monterey Regional Waste Management District at \$5,000 each.

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

Check the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Initiatives:

☐ Economic Development:

- Through collaboration, strengthen economic development to ensure a diversified and healthy economy.

☐ Administration:

- Promote an organization that practices efficient and effective resource management and is recognized for responsiveness, strong customer orientation, accountability and transparency.

☒ Health & Human Services:

- Improve health and quality of life through County supported policies, programs, and services; promoting access to equitable opportunities for healthy choices and healthy environments in collaboration with communities.

☐ Infrastructure:

- Plan and develop a sustainable, physical infrastructure that improves the quality of life for County residents and supports economic development results.

☐ Public Safety:

- Create a safe environment for people to achieve their potential, leading businesses and communities to thrive and grow by reducing violent crimes as well as crimes in general.

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