

GOVERNMENT

Novato Sanitary District Approves Zero Waste Agreement

March 15, 2011

Novato Sanitary District agreed to amend its Franchise Agreement with Novato Disposal to make major progress toward achieving Zero Waste Goals at minimal cost to Novato residents. The purpose is to take 80% of the trash collected and recycle, reuse or compost it, keeping it out of the landfill.

“Novato Sanitary District is the first community in Marin to formally incorporate zero waste goals in a franchise agreement and have a specific plan to achieve them,” said Beverly James, District Manager/Engineer. “I am very proud of that.”

The contract requires Novato Disposal to meet a series of performance goals, including achieving 60% diversion by 2015, 70% diversion by 2020, and 80% by 2025.

Novato Disposal has already taken the first step toward reaching zero waste goals by implementing school and residential single-family food waste composting. The contract requires the company to extend food waste composting to apartments and condominiums. The company will also increase recycling at commercial buildings and to multi-family customers. Supermarket and restaurant Food waste recycling is planned to begin in 2012.

Director Mike DiGiorgio commented that “this new agreement locks in about the lowest rates in the County and maybe even the North Bay, while also making it possible to achieve leading rates of recycling and composting. It is really a fantastic deal for our community.”

Novato Disposal’s rates are already among the lowest in the county—about 20% to 40% below what most other communities are paying. As part of the amendment, the Company has agreed to implement these new residential programs without any increases, except for inflation.

The key to the arrangement is that in exchange for the contract extension from 2015 to 2025, Novato Disposal will implement the major expansion of zero waste residential programs at no additional cost to the community. This includes expanded curbside recycling, expanded food composting, and on-demand pickup of bulky items. The economies of scale and guaranteed stream of compostables and recyclables helps keep program costs down. There simply is no other cost effective way to achieve the dramatic improvements that will be brought by the zero waste program without this agreement.

Novato Sanitary District President Bill Long noted that “the real benefit of this extension is that it allows the District to meet its ambitious zero waste goals while maintaining stable rates. This is a real win for the community and the environment.”

“Another way the District plans to help increase Novatans’ recycling will be to allow all our customers, at their convenience, to just call in and have bulky items picked up several times a year at no charge,” James said. This will replace the former spring and fall cleanup days during which residents set large, bulky items at the curb.

More information about the District and its programs can be found on the District’s website at www.novatosan.com (<http://www.novatosan.com/>) or by calling the District at (415) 892-1694.

“This agreement will help us take recycling and composting to the next level and radically reduce what gets buried in the landfill.”

— Beverly James, Manager/Engineer Novato Sanitary District

