



DATE: March 2, 2015

TO: Programs & Administration Committee
Planning & Organization Committee/Recycling Board

FROM: Gary Wolff, Executive Director
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SUBJECT: Presentations of Product Decisions Projects

BACKGROUND

As a follow-up to the Agency overview presented to the joint Board meeting on January 28 and as a prelude to the FY 15/16 Budget development and adoption, staff is presenting highlights of key Agency programs to the P&O/RB and P&A Committees in February, March and April. Key projects from the Discards Management arena and Energy Council were presented in February, from the Product Decisions Targets in March and from projects that span both areas in April.

DISCUSSION

The Agency Strategic Workplan 2020 recognizes that the Agency's long-term goal of achieving maximum feasible waste reduction will require widespread change in Product Decisions. These decisions about what to manufacture, offer for sale, or purchase, dramatically affect the quantity of and the options for managing discarded materials that are not readily recyclable or compostable even when adequate collection and processing infrastructure exists. About 40% (530,000 tons) of discarded materials originating in Alameda County that were landfilled in 2008 are not readily recyclable or compostable.

The Product Decisions Targets focus on four categories of decisions that occur before discards management, but that have significant implications for the quantity and costs and environmental impacts of discards management. These categories include waste prevention, household hazardous waste (HHW), and recycled content decisions, as well as decisions about products that are hard-to-recycle or compost. Target audiences include retailers, product manufacturers, institutional & commercial food service operations, and landscape professionals.

At the March 12 Committee meetings, several project managers will present an overview and highlights of the following Product Decisions Target projects:

- Food Waste Prevention
- Reusable Transport Packaging
- Recycled Content Compost/Mulch
- Recycled Content Building Materials
- Food Service Ware & Packaging
- Package Labeling for Recyclability

Two additional targets, Household Hazardous Waste Alternatives and the Reusable Bag Ordinance, span the Product Decision and Discards Management areas and will be discussed at the April Committee meetings.

RECOMMENDATION

This is an information item.