

Solid Waste

Otherwise known as “trash” or “garbage”, this function was added to our services by voter approval in late 1996. The primary reason, at that time, was because of a 10% franchise fee on rates, imposed by the County to enhance their general revenues. Because of constant changes in state law (driven by environmental concerns), solid waste is a very dynamic issue. For the same reason, rates are not cheap and are constantly in flux. The District adds a 6% franchise fee to administer the solid waste program. In addition SLO County Integrated Waste Management Authority charges a \$0.30 per customer per month fee to administer their solid waste programs in the County. Rates are reviewed annually for increases based on the Consumer Price Index.

The pickup of waste is performed by the San Miguel Garbage Company (SMGC), based on terms set forth in a Franchise Agreement between them and the District. The Franchise Agreement has an effective date of January 1, 2008, with a ten year term. George Kardashian is the owner of the company and operates as a family business with his wife Linda and their son Aaron. There are basically two types of service: curbside and commercial. Curbside means cans set out by customers. Commercial is bins (dumpsters) but also includes roll-offs and special services.

In early 1999, the Heritage Ranch Owners Association elected to enforce a policy on the books for mandated garbage service and defined same as a subdivided parcel with both a dwelling and water service. The District facilitates enforcement of this provision through collection procedures identified in Section 61115(3)(b) of the Government Code for solid waste accounts that have accrued a delinquency during the proceeding twelve month period. This code allows local agencies to place a property tax lien on any property that does pay minimum water, sewer or solid waste fees.

In August 2001, a Diversion Program was adopted into the solid waste program at Heritage Ranch to comply with state law. The State Law, Sections 41780 et seq. of the Public Resources Code requires cities, counties, and districts to:

“divert 50% of all solid waste away from landfills by July 1, 2001, through source reduction, recycling, and composting activities”

The program at Heritage Ranch fulfills this by recycling certain materials and composting green waste on a weekly basis. The program provides separate standardized waste wheeler containers for recyclables, greenwaste and garbage. The minimum weekly service includes one 35 gallon waste wheeler for garbage, one 64 gallon waste wheeler for recycling, and one 64 gallon waste wheeler for greenwaste. Customers are obligated to recycle more because the amount of weekly garbage is less than the amount of recyclables and greenwaste.

SMGC does not sell and make a profit on the recycling material or greenwaste. There are disposal and operational costs incurred for both recyclables and greenwaste. However, there are no landfill fees associated with the disposal of recyclables and it is generally less expensive than disposal of regular garbage.