

**LOPEZ CANYON RESTORATION PROJECT  
COMMUNITY MEETING SUMMARY  
JUNE 2013**

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS                      BUREAU OF SANITATION**

Meeting Date: June 12, 2013  
Location:        Lopez Trailers

Tour:        6:30-7:00 pm  
Meeting: 7:05-8:30 pm

**OVERVIEW**

36 Lopez neighbors attended the tour and meeting. The hotline phone number has been changed to 818-485-0703.

**LOPEZ CANYON ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER UPDATE**

We are not currently at full production but are processing normally. Three odor complaints were received and investigated. Two incidents were due to high winds when processing was shut down and odors were not detected from the other complaint.

**LANDSCAPING UPDATE**

Due to the dry year and the fact that we depend on rainfall for native plant growth, very few native seeds sprouted this year. We are considering expanding the irrigation system to cover a wider area during dry times. We've added landscaping along the perimeter around the landfill and also along the entrance road.

**LANDFILL POST-CLOSURE MAINTENANCE UPDATE**

Post-Closure Maintenance began August, 2012. We now need to revisit and re-compact 'A' Canyon, the oldest portion of the landfill. This will be a six month job which will start in May at 8 am on weekdays.

**JANUARY 2013 CONDENSATE SPILL AND ACTION TAKEN**

On January 18 an open ½" valve was discovered in the condensate Tank Farm containment berm. Liquid overflow from one of the tanks was collecting in the berm and flowing through the ½" valve into a storm drain next to the tank farm. The leak was reported to the appropriate regulatory agencies and clean-up took place over a period of six days. To prevent this from happening again no one will be allowed to touch the drain valve and new procedures were put into place for inspection and servicing.

**Q&A (see Page 5)**

**COMMITMENTS TO THE COMMUNITY (see Page 6)**

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**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS    Reva Fabrikant, Community Liaison**

36 Lopez neighbors attended this meeting. Two vans and one car provided tours of the landfill. The hotline phone number has been changed to 818-485-0703.

**LOPEZ CANYON ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER UPDATE    Jim Kurz,  
Operations Superintendent**

***July 2012 - May 2013 Tonnages:***

46,176.41 tons of yard trimmings was processed

15,677.56 tons of brush was processed

2,559.38 tons of raw manure was processed

43,393.52 tons of mulch was produced

13,244.44 tons of mulch was donated to residents

30,149.08 tons of mulch went to farmers

4,395.26 tons of manure-based compost was produced

We are not currently at full production but are processing normally. Three odor complaints were received. The Air Quality Management District (AQMD) and the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) both came out to check out the incidents. Two incidents were due to high winds and affected Kagel Canyon. When the winds subsided the odors went away. AQMD did not detect any odors when they responded to the third complaint.

**Q:** What is full production?

**A:** Full production is when we process 300 tons of curbside collected yards trimmings per day. This is very labor intensive since we hand pick through the yards trimmings to clean them out as much as possible.

**Q:** Where can we bring our yard trimmings?

**A:** After 4pm locals can bring their yard trimmings here for free. Call Jim to let him know that you are coming. This service is ONLY available to locals since you are the ones impacted by the facility. Pick-up truck loads will be accepted from locals.

**Q:** Are operations changed when there are high winds?

**A:** Yes. We don't turn the windrows and we shut down operations. This minimizes odors. The mister is not in the facility area so we can't use that. The mister operates on weekdays when staff is present.

**Community Comment:** You should operate the mister during high winds, and even on weekends, since that might help.

**Sanitation Response:** We will look into it.

**Q:** Do you use dolomite to control odor? It helps with horse manure and might help here.

**A:** We don't use it and will check the regulation to see if we can use it. Dolomite has to be kept moist since it's unhealthy to breathe it in.

**LANDSCAPING UPDATE    Jim Kurz**

This has been a dry year and we depend on rainfall for the natives plants to grow. As a result lots of the native seeds didn't sprout this year. We might expand the irrigation so that it's available to cover a wider area during dry times. 'B' slope has irrigation so growth is good there.

We've added landscaping along the perimeter around the landfill and also along the entrance road.

**Q:** How frequently is irrigation used?

**A:** In the summer it's turned on every other day and rotated around the area to increase coverage.

## **LANDFILL POST-CLOSURE MAINTENANCE UPDATE   Jim Kurz**

Post-Closure Maintenance started in Aug 2012 (the LEA gave final closure certification approval September 14, 2012). We are legally required to maintain the landfill forever (as long as it impacts the environment). This includes gas monitoring, maintaining proper water drainage, managing land settlement and landscaping.

'A' canyon, which is the back portion, is the oldest part of the landfill and was closed in 1995/6. We now need to rebuild the slopes due to settlement. The area needs to be re-compacted upgraded and drainage needs to be reinstalled. Once that's done, new hydroseeding and landscaping will complete the process. This is a six month job that will start in May, 2014 at 8am on weekdays.

**Q:** What's happening at 'C' level? We see pipes there.

**A:** There was a hot spot in the area so we went in to re-compact the spot and replaced some pipes that were brittle from the sun.

**Q:** Is there any groundwater monitoring for 'A' canyon?

**A:** Yes. We have five monitored groundwater locations. 'A' canyon has very thick vegetation and 25 feet of dirt cover so it has very few hot spots.

**Q:** How shallow is the ground cover?

**A:** It varies in different locations of the landfill. At a minimum it's five feet but most areas have more. 'B' canyon has a clay liner with two feet of soil over the clay.

**Q:** How is the landfill divided up?

**A:** There are 'A' Canyon, 'B' Canyon, 'AB+' which combines 'A' and 'B' and there's 'C' Canyon which has a plastic liner. Please see the attached landfill map.

**Q:** We're concerned about the potential for an explosion due to fertilizer, similar to what happened in West, Texas. Is there any fertilizer on-site that could explode?

**A:** No. We just have yard trimmings and horse manure. The methane produced due to underground refuse decomposition is not mixed with oxygen so it will not explode. We monitor the gas system to keep it safe.

**Q:** How flammable is compost?

**A:** Compost can combust at very high temperatures, 400°-500° F (482° F is the hazard analysis temperature for wood). We check and monitor the compost daily and control the temperature (140°-150° F) so that it doesn't get even close to 300 degrees Fahrenheit. We also maintain 45-50% moisture in our piles which prevents flammability.

**Q:** What happens over weekend when no one is around? Can the temperature spike?

**A:** It would take much longer than one day for the temperature to spike such a great extent. We monitor everything on Friday before we leave. We also have 24 hour security to inform us of any problems.

**Q:** There was a break-in at the landfill a while ago and there was a small fire in a mulch pile. If security is 24 hours a day, how could that happen?

**A:** The Fire Department said that the fire was of suspicious origin, not due to anything regarding composting operations. When security spotted the light of a

flashlight I was notified and came. Security pointed a flashlight in the area and the culprits took off. The landfill is large and there are ways to get through the fences. Security does their best to monitor and observe suspicious activities.

### **JANUARY 2013 CONDENSATE SPILL AND ACTION TAKEN – Jim Kurz**

The landfill gas condensate tank system is used to contain condensate (a byproduct of the gas collection system), to test it, and then discharge it into the sewer. Fortistar, the company that owns and operates the gas-to-energy generating plant, discharges condensate into the system.

One of our gas condensate tanks that's located along the main haul road below 'C' canyon had a blockage in the discharge line. We believe that the blockage was created by a problem Fortistar had with their oil/water separator. This problem enabled the discharge of motor oil into the gas condensate system. The resultant oily sludge plugged up the system and caused one of the tanks to fill up and overflow out of the top hatch. The gas condensate tank secondary containment system should have contained the overflow, but the containment drain valve was not closed and therefore allowed the oily condensate to drain into the storm drain system.

On January 18, 2013 at 10:30am, while our landfill Environmental Engineer and Environmental Compliance Inspectors were conducting an inspection, they discovered that a reddish brown liquid with a distinctive motor oil odor had settled in the Whitehorse Debris Basin of the landfill. They tracked the spill upstream to the landfill gas condensate tanks along the haul road, in the south part of the 'C' Canyon fill area. Fluid from Gas Condensate Tank #1 was overflowing from the top into the concrete containment berm. Lopez staff immediately placed sand bags around the discharge pipe at the Whitehorse Debris Basin to prevent further discharge into the flood control channel. All valves feeding Gas Condensate Tank #1 were manually shut off and the check valve from the containment berm to the V-ditch was closed. The overflow valve to Gas Condensate Tank #2 was opened so that flow from Gas Condensate Tank #1 was diverted into the Gas Condensate Tank #2, thus stopping the flow of liquid from the top of Gas Condensate Tank #1. Fluid did spill over into the County flood control channel and as required, notifications were made to Sanitation Management, City of Los Angeles Environmental Affairs Division, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles County Flood Control, and City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation Watershed Protection Division. All requested clean-up procedures were followed. The debris basin and flood control channel were cleaned, flushed and steamed; liquids and solids from the debris basin were all disposed; and a secondary crew was sent to the Hansen Dam area to steam clean a small amount of oil that entered a small pond. Everything was cleaned up in six days.

To prevent this from happening again no one will be allowed to touch the drain valve and no one will be allowed to dump oil into our tanks. New inspection and servicing procedures were also put into place.

**Q:** This spill happened in January, why weren't we informed about this at the time it happened?

**A:** The spill was never a danger to the public and the lead agencies did not require or ask us to notify the community. The spill never touched soil so there was no danger that it would enter the drinking water or Hansen Dam water. A small amount of the oily liquid made its way to small pond in the Hansen Dam area (below the fishing hole, near the mouth of the channel). City staff was already in the process of cleaning the County Flood Control Channel when they were sent to place oil absorbent pads in and around the pond. Our Emergency Response Contractor pumped the pond down to remove any water and oils. The Department of Fish and Wildlife was present during this process and was pleased with the cleanup.

**Q:** Do you know how long the spill lasted?

**A:** We don't know exactly, but since the condensate has a very bad odor, anyone near the tanks would have been aware of a problem in that area. The engineer who found it smelled the condensate and said that it probably wasn't spilling for a long time. Immediate actions were taken by landfill staff to stop and contain the spill.

**Q:** What's the total amount of how much spilled?

**A:** About 500 gallons of condensate and oil.

**Q:** What is condensate? What is leachate?

**A:** Condensate is a by-product of the gas collection system. Basically it is water condensation from the gas collection pipes. Leachate is liquid that passes through the buried trash and is collected through a collection system which is in place under 'AB+' and 'C' Canyons.

**Community Comments:** This is the biggest major incident we've had and yet we were not notified when it happened. We are angry about that. We should receive notification as soon as something like this happens and want immediate notification next time. We found out about this spill last week, that's way too late.

**Sanitation Response:** We apologize that we didn't inform the community when the spill happened. In the future, when we notify regulatory agencies we will also notify the community. The community will be added to our emergency notification list.

**Community Suggestion:** When the community is notified you should also notify County Supervisors. We need INSTANT communication from the City to the community.

## **Q & A**

**Q:** FTDNC at large board member Fritz Bronner brought up some good points regarding the staging area and trails. How can we share that with you?

**A:** Send his ideas to Reva Fabrikant and they will then be shared with whoever needs to see them.

**Community Comment:** I want to remind everyone that the horse manure compost is a great product and is available to Lopez neighbors free.

**Sanitation Response:** This product is ONLY available to Lopez neighbors. If you'd like a large amount or need delivery please contact Jim Kurz.

**Community Comment:** I like having community meetings here at Lopez. The updates given at neighborhood association meetings have not worked out well. We do not get minutes, attendance is not good, and we don't get as detailed

information as we get at these meetings. We'd like to have regular meetings at the landfill again, like we had before.

**Sanitation Response:** Most City landfills, don't have regular meetings during the post-closure period. Toyon has a community meeting once a year. We proposed one meeting a year here to be consistent with other landfills. Providing updates at community associations and meeting here once a year meant that we met more often with this community than with communities at other landfills. Meetings are time consuming for City staff as they work overtime, and there are added costs for the City. We also had very poor attendance at some of our community meetings, at times only having three community members show up. For those reasons we prefer having one meeting per year at the landfill and with one Sanitation staff member providing updates at local community meetings.

**Community Comment:** That doesn't work for us. We need to know what's happening here and the fact that you didn't tell us about the spill until this meeting makes us distrust you. We need to meet more regularly so that we can make sure we're kept informed of what's happening. We want at least two meetings at Lopez.

**Sanitation Response:** We will change the schedule and have two meetings with tours at Lopez, in September and May. We will also give presentations at the 3 main community associations throughout the year; FTDNC, LVTIA, and KCCA.

**Community Comment:** FTDNC has public forum time and anyone can come and give a presentation then.

**Community Comment:** In the past we discussed possible future plans for Lopez after closure. Could that be a viable topic to discuss now?

**Sanitation Response:** We could discuss plans for the periphery of the landfill, where trash wasn't buried. But nothing can be done on the fill area for at least another 20-30 years. Therefore, there's really no point in doing any planning or design work on the fill area.

**Community Comment:** We can discuss the trails now and how to get the money to build them.

## **COMMITMENTS TO THE COMMUNITY**

1. The Lopez team will discuss the possibility of operating misters on weekends when there's a possibility of odors from the LCEC.
2. Check the regulations to see if it's possible to use dolomite to control LCEC odors.
3. Notify the community of an incident at Lopez as soon as regulators are notified.
4. Change the community meeting schedule to the following: Two meetings with tours at Lopez in September and May, and updates at FTDNC, LVTIA and KCCA throughout the year.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

**NEW HOTLINE PHONE NUMBER: 818-485-0703**

**WEBSITE:** <http://lacitysan.org/srpcd/index.htm>

**Khalil Gharios, Manager, Solid Resources Processing and Construction Division**

213-485-3002 [Khalil.Gharios@lacity.org](mailto:Khalil.Gharios@lacity.org)

**Jim Kurz, Operations Superintendent, Lopez Canyon Landfill (NEW NUMBER)**

818-485-0706 [James.Kurz@lacity.org](mailto:James.Kurz@lacity.org)

**Reva Fabrikant, Community Liaison**

866-950-7382 [Reva.Fabrikant@revafab.com](mailto:Reva.Fabrikant@revafab.com)

## **NEXT TOUR & MEETING**

**Wednesday, September 11, 2013**

**Tour: 6:30pm -7:00pm**

**Meeting 7:00pm – 8:30pm**

**At: Lopez Landfill**