

**King County****Department of  
Natural Resources and Parks**

Director's Office

King Street Center

201 South Jackson Street, Suite 700  
Seattle, WA 98104-3855

February 14, 2006

The Honorable Pete von Reichbauer  
King County Council  
Room 1200  
COURTHOUSE

Dear Councilmember von Reichbauer:

Thank you for your letter of January 18, 2006 asking for an update on the progress of the Illegal Dumping Task Force (IDTF) recommendations implementation.

The IDTF made four recommendations. One of them was to create the centralized hotline telephone number for citizens to report illegal dumping and link it to an intranet database for agencies to coordinate response. The hotline (206-296-SITE) went live on June 1, 2005 and all affected agencies were directed by the Executive to begin forwarding illegal dumping calls to the hotline for handling.

There was a modest public notification effort last summer when the hotline first launched but we purposely held back on a high profile campaign until we were sure that all systems were functioning well. The hotline was initially promoted through press releases and news articles that were published in the King County Journal, the Seattle Times, the Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce and the Renton Reporter in late August and September 2005. Later this year, we plan to advertise the hotline more widely.

Currently, in addition to appearing on the county's home page, the number is on the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Solid Waste Division, and Road Services websites. The hotline is either the first or second item listed when using the KC.gov search function. We plan to work with the other relevant agencies to get them to include the number on their websites. The hotline is also listed in the DEX (Qwest) yellow and white pages.

The second recommendation was to increase emphasis on field investigators' safety. The Solid Waste Division (SWD) is working with Interagency Resource to Achieve Compliance (IRAC) to develop a series of inspector/investigator training sessions to improve both safety awareness and investigator skills. IRAC has sponsored two "Photo Documentation" courses that were well attended by County, State, and local staff. SWD and IRAC are working with trainers from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Labor and Industries and the King County Safety Office

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to update the curriculum and provide IRAC's "Safe on Site" training series. We are also working on additional related training with the EPA. Formalizing the protocol for using Sheriff escorts and the "buddy system" is still in development. The Water and Land Resources Division is developing a shared site information database for inspectors to improve interagency communications regarding possible hazardous and unsafe conditions at sites.

The third recommendation was to make the County enforcement system more effective. An enforcement committee has been set up to examine the County's approach to enforcement and propose code changes. This enforcement work group, staffed by SWD and IRAC, is currently meeting and hopes to have proposed legislation drafted by the end of the second quarter of 2006. The full-time prosecuting attorney position with dedicated funding for illegal dumping enforcement has not been filled and is still in development phase.

The fourth recommendation was to develop an illegal dumping prevention and education outreach program. One of the first steps will be a literature search on programs that have been effective in reducing illegal dumping in other parts of the country. The Solid Waste Division has \$30,000 budgeted to pilot illegal dumping prevention and education outreach programs in 2006. They will work on increasing the community's awareness of impacts on property values, options for lawful waste disposal and easily accessible information and assistance for people who are victims of illegal dumping.

You asked in your letter whether or not we had noticed an increase in illegal dumping after hours were reduced at some transfer stations in 2004. The changes to transfer station hours occurred before a consolidated database was developed but we have reviewed our records and have found no indication of an increase in illegal dumping complaints. It will be very valuable for future projects to be able to document trends through the illegal dumping database that is part of the new hotline.

Thank you for your offer of support to these initiatives for reduce illegal dumping and its impacts on our community. As part of our upcoming campaign to prevent dumping and market the hotline, we would be happy to provide material promoting the 206-296-SITE hotline for constituent newsletters and web pages. Any suggestions on other ways to get the word out are welcome. Also, your support for legislative changes we expect to propose will be very helpful.

Thank you for your interest in these important issues. If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 206-296-6500.

Sincerely,



Pam Bissonnette  
Director

cc: Theresa Jennings, Division Director, Solid Waste Division (SWD)  
Kevin Kiernan, Engineering Services Manager, SWD  
Pam Badger, Environmental Programs Managing Supervisor, SWD