

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF RESOURCES RECYCLING AND RECOVERY

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN AND COMPLAINT FOR PENALTY
1348.SLCP.CAP.2023.3

Before: The State of California
Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

In the Matter of: City of Ontario
1425 South Bon View Avenue
Ontario, CA 91761

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

1. The California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery is hereinafter referred to as "CalRecycle."
 - 1.1 CalRecycle, in consultation with the California Air Resources Board, adopted regulatory requirements, consistent with the mandate of Senate Bill 1383 (Lara, Chapter 395, Statutes of 2016), that are designed to achieve the organic waste reduction goals established in section 39730.6 of the Health and Safety Code through a 50 percent reduction in the level of the statewide disposal of organic waste from the 2014 level by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction in the level of the statewide disposal of organic waste from the 2014 level by 2025. The purpose of these reductions is to further the statewide effort to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants (SLCP), including methane. These SLCP regulations are referred to hereinafter as the "Regulations" and can be found at Title 14 California Code of Regulations (CCR) sections 18981.1 through 18998.4. Cities, counties, and special districts are responsible for implementing these Regulations in their communities starting January 1, 2022.
 - 1.2 The City of Ontario is hereinafter referred to as "Jurisdiction." Jurisdiction is required to comply with the Regulations.
 - 1.3 Jurisdiction is or expects to be facing continuing violations of the Regulations commencing during the 2022 calendar year, which could result in significant administrative civil penalties under the Regulations.

- 1.4 Senate Bill 619 (Laird, Chapter 508, Statutes of 2021), through amendments to section 42652.5 of the Public Resources Code (PRC), created a mechanism called a Notification of Intent to Comply through which a local jurisdiction may secure administrative civil penalty relief from any continuing violations of the Regulations for the 2022 calendar year and may be eligible for a broader and longer-term regulatory compliance path, including suspended administrative civil penalties, through a Corrective Action Plan.
- 1.5 Under PRC section 42652.5(e), the Notification of Intent to Comply must include a description of proposed actions to remedy the violations, as well as a proposed schedule for those actions, that the Jurisdiction commits to undertake to remedy the violations.
- 1.6 The Notification of Intent to Comply is hereinafter referred to as "Notification."
- 1.7 For violations taking more than 180 days to correct, PRC section 42652.2 allows CalRecycle to determine, in its sole discretion, that violations identified in a Notification may be addressed through a Corrective Action Plan issued pursuant to 14 CCR section 18996.2.
- 1.8 The Corrective Action Plan is hereinafter referred to as "CAP."
- 1.9 For violations disclosed in the Notification approved by CalRecycle as meeting the requirements of PRC section 42652.5(e), CalRecycle shall waive administrative civil penalties during the 2022 calendar year if the Jurisdiction implements the proposed actions according to the approved Notification's schedule of actions and, as applicable, approved CAP schedule of actions.
- 1.10 For violations disclosed in the Notification that commence during the 2022 calendar year and continue into the 2023 calendar year, administrative civil penalties may begin accruing as of January 1, 2023. SB 619 provides administrative civil penalties accruing on and after January 1, 2023, shall be waived upon complete compliance with an approved CAP schedule of action.

DETERMINATION OF VIOLATIONS

2. As authorized by PRC section 42652.5(c), the Jurisdiction notified CalRecycle of its ongoing or anticipated violations of the Regulations and the PRC through a Notification submitted February 23, 2022.
- 2.1 CalRecycle reviewed the Jurisdiction's Notification, its description of the Jurisdiction's disclosed violations of the Regulations, and proposed actions and schedule for those actions to remedy those violations for compliance with PRC section 42652.5(e). CalRecycle approved the Notification's proposed actions and schedule of actions, as modified by this CAP.

2.2 The Jurisdiction's Notification identified the following violations of the Regulations as follows:

2.2.1 The Jurisdiction is and has been in violation of 14 CCR section 18984.5 in that since January 1, 2022, the Jurisdiction has not conducted container contamination minimization for the residential or commercial sector.

2.2.2 The Jurisdiction is and has been in violation of 14 CCR section 18984.6 in that since January 1, 2022, the Jurisdiction has not met recordkeeping requirements for compliance with container contamination minimization.

2.3 CalRecycle accepted the Jurisdiction's self-reported Notification and characterization of its violations therein. CalRecycle has not undertaken a compliance review of Jurisdiction, and thus CalRecycle's approval of the Notification or this CAP should not be taken as an indication that Jurisdiction is in full compliance with Regulations in other respects. CalRecycle will be undertaking a compliance review of all jurisdictions in the future.

SCHEDULE FOR COMPLIANCE

3. Based on the foregoing DETERMINATION OF VIOLATIONS, CalRecycle finds that:
- a. The Jurisdiction worked with CalRecycle to develop this CAP, which includes schedule of actions necessary for the Jurisdiction to achieve address the violations disclosed in the Notification and described in Section 2 (Determination of Violations) above.
 - b. CalRecycle hereby approves and issues this CAP pursuant to PRC section 42652.5(c)-(e) and Title 14 CCR section 18996.2.
 - c. The Jurisdiction will fully implement the programs identified in this CAP by the dates provided in the Section 3.2 below.
 - d. CalRecycle will monitor the Jurisdiction's continued implementation of the programs identified in the CAP from March 23, 2023 through November 30, 2023 ("the oversight period") to assure implementation is complete and timely. The oversight period may be extended at the discretion of CalRecycle if any extensions to the Schedule are granted as described below in Sections 4.4 and 4.5.
 - e. During the oversight period, the Jurisdiction will submit status reports to CalRecycle and attend status meetings with CalRecycle to demonstrate the ongoing progress the Jurisdiction is making on remedying the violations described above.
 - f. During the oversight period, the Jurisdiction will provide bimonthly status reports to CalRecycle:

Report Cycle

Report 1: May 31, 2023, covering March 1, 2023 – April 30, 2023

Report 2: July 31, 2023, covering May 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023

Report 3: September 30, 2023, covering July 1, 2023 – August 31, 2023

Report 4: November 30, 2023, covering September 1, 2023 – October 31, 2023

- g. The status reports are to be used to document the status and work completed for each of the identified tasks in the CAP. For each task in the CAP, the Jurisdiction will explain the status of the task, specifying what actions have been taken to complete the task.
- h. If the work has been delayed or has not been completed, the Jurisdiction will explain the reason(s) for the delay/incompletion. The Jurisdiction will also attach any previously submitted extension requests made pursuant to section 4.4 of this CAP and any extensions granted pursuant to section 4.5 of this CAP, using additional sheets as necessary for the report. CalRecycle may consider the explanation in deciding whether to allow the Jurisdiction to continue to operate under the Notification and CAP or to revoke approval of the Notification and CAP pursuant to PRC section 42652.5(d).
- i. During the oversight period, the Jurisdiction will meet with CalRecycle telephonically or via other remote electronic means (such as Teams or Zoom) bimonthly to provide interim progress updates on the following schedule:

Meeting Cycle

Meeting 1: During April 2023

Meeting 2: During June 2023

Meeting 3: During August 2023

Meeting 4: During October 2023

- j. The status meetings are to be used to discuss the most recent status report and to discuss interim progress made by the Jurisdiction on each of the identified tasks in the CAP.
- k. Prior to the close of the oversight period, CalRecycle may undertake a compliance review or field visit to supplement other status reporting.
- l. At any time prior to the conclusion of the oversight period, if CalRecycle determines the Jurisdiction has failed to implement the programs identified in the Notification and CAP, has failed to participate in status reporting during the oversight period, has substantially misrepresented its progress in status reporting, or has substantially failed to make interim progress on Tasks set out in Section 3.2 for four consecutive reporting periods, CalRecycle may immediately issue a notice revoking its approval of the Notification and CAP and indicating its intent to impose penalties as provided in PRC section 42652.5. Title 14 CCR sections 18997.3, 18997.5, and 18997.6 and PRC section 42652.5 governs the process and considerations CalRecycle will utilize in calculating and assessing administrative civil penalties against the Jurisdiction, which may be up to \$10,000 per day per violation.

3.1 Based on the foregoing DETERMINATION OF VIOLATIONS, it is hereby ordered that the Jurisdiction will implement the actions described below in accordance with the compliance deadlines contained in the schedule of actions to remedy violations as set forth in Section 3.2 below.

3.2 Schedule and Program of Actions

Section 18984.5 Container Contamination Minimization

The Jurisdiction will monitor generators using a three-container organic waste collection service for contaminants.

Task #	Description	Target Completion Date
TASK 1	<p>The Jurisdiction will implement the monitoring of contaminants being placed in a collection container by a generator through route reviews.</p> <p>Minimum requirements - Route reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All hauler routes must be reviewed annually. • Containers may be randomly selected along a hauler route. Not required that every container on a hauler route be sampled annually. <p>Task 1a: The Jurisdiction will develop the requisition for a Route Auditor position.</p> <p>Task 1b: The Jurisdiction will recruit for the position of a Route Auditor.</p>	8/31/2022 (Task completion to be verified)
TASK 2	The Jurisdiction will develop a schedule for conducting route reviews.	8/31/2022 (Task completion to be verified)
TASK 3	The Jurisdiction will conduct 20-26 route reviews annually.	8/31/2022 (Task completion to be verified)
TASK 4	The Jurisdiction will have completed annual review of all routes through the Route Auditor.	8/31/2022 (Task completion to be verified)
TASK 5	<p>The Jurisdiction will establish a system for notifying generators of violations.</p> <p>Minimum requirements - Route reviews:</p>	8/31/2023

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The contamination notice will, at a minimum, include information regarding the generator’s requirement to properly separate materials into the appropriate containers. The contamination notice may be left on the generator’s container, gate, or door at the time the violation occurs, and/or be mailed, e-mailed, or electronically messaged to the generator. 	
TASK 6	The Jurisdiction will perform container contamination minimization for all routes that are not subject to an exemption or waiver from such service under 14 CCR sections 18984.11 and 18984.12 (a) and (c), or are not an authorized self-hauler subject to the Jurisdiction’s ordinance requiring compliance with the requirements of section 18988.3.	8/31/2023

Section 18984.6 Recordkeeping Requirements for Container Contamination Minimization

The Jurisdiction will keep records of the number of residential or commercial violations identified and number of notices issued.

Task #	Description	Target Completion Date
TASK 7	The Jurisdiction will document the methods used to monitor container contaminants.	8/31/2023
TASK 8	<p>The Jurisdiction will establish a system for documenting route reviews conducted and tracking the violations for recordkeeping and reporting.</p> <p>The Jurisdiction will include the following information and documents in the Implementation Record:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A description of the Jurisdiction’s process for determining the level of container contamination. 2. Documentation of route reviews conducted, if applicable. 3. Copies of all notices issued to generators with prohibited container contaminants. 4. Documentation of the number of containers where the contents were disposed due to observation of prohibited container contaminants. 	9/30/2023
TASK 9	The Jurisdiction will begin documenting contamination minimization efforts and tracking number of violations.	9/30/2023

COMPLIANCE REVIEW, ENFORCEMENT, AND RELEASE

4. Communications. All approvals and decisions of CalRecycle regarding notifications will be communicated to the Jurisdiction in writing by the Branch Chief, Jurisdiction and Agency Compliance and Enforcement Branch, Waste Permitting, Compliance and Mitigation Division, or the Branch Chief's designee. No formal advice, guidance, suggestions, or comments by CalRecycle regarding reports, plans, specifications, schedules, or any other writings by Jurisdiction shall be construed to relieve the Jurisdiction of the obligation to obtain such formal approvals as may be required.

4.1 Submittal. All reporting from the Jurisdiction described in section 3 (Schedule for Compliance), paragraph 3.f, shall be submitted through an online portal or compliance module developed by CalRecycle with instructions provided to Jurisdiction. All other communications from the Jurisdiction according to this CAP shall be sent in writing electronically to:

Melissa Gomez
Melissa.gomez@calrecycle.ca.gov

4.2 Compliance Review. At the end of the oversight period or at any time deemed appropriate by CalRecycle, CalRecycle will meet with the Jurisdiction to assess the Jurisdiction's CAP implementation efforts and to determine whether or not the Jurisdiction has timely complied with all commitments in all sections of this CAP. If requested by the Jurisdiction, CalRecycle has discretion to issue notice of a hearing at any time upon its staff's recommendation that the Jurisdiction has completed the conditions of the CAP. In accordance with PRC section 42652.5, failure to implement programs and or comply with all sections of the CAP at any time may result in CalRecycle's revocation of its approval of the Notification and CAP and imposition of administrative civil penalties retroactively to the date of violation in 2022, for administrative civil penalties accruing in 2023, and for administrative civil penalties accruing during any other additional time covered by the Notification and CAP. These potentially applicable penalties are described in Section 5.0 of this CAP.

4.3 CalRecycle Review and Approval: If CalRecycle determines that any report, plan, schedule, or other document submitted for approval pursuant to this CAP fails to comply with the Notification as amended by this CAP or fails to achieve successful implementation of the Regulations, CalRecycle may:

- a. Amend the CAP as appropriate to remedy the violations of the Regulations expeditiously, and/or
- b. Serve a notice that CalRecycle will revoke approval of the Notification and consider the imposition of penalties in accordance with Title 14 CCR sections 18997.3, 18997.5, and 18997.6.

- 4.4 Extension Request and Other Task Modification Requests: If the Jurisdiction determines that it will be unable to perform any activity or submit any document within the time required under this CAP, the Jurisdiction may, as far in advance of the due date as possible, request an extension of time in writing. The extension request shall include a justification for the delay. If the Jurisdiction finds that a task required by this CAP in Section 3.1 is not feasible, despite the Jurisdiction's best and substantial efforts, the Jurisdiction may propose an alternative task that is substantially similar or equally effective to the original task, subject to the approval of CalRecycle. The modification request shall include an explanation of the infeasibility, an explanation of how the alternative task is substantially similar or equally effective, and a justification for any extension of time associated with the change.
- 4.5 Extension and Other Task Modification Approvals: If CalRecycle determines that good cause exists for an extension, considering the factors set out in Title 14 CCR section 18996.2(a)(2), it will grant an extension as appropriate and specify in writing a new compliance schedule. If CalRecycle determines that good cause exists for the change in task because the original task is infeasible and the alternative task is substantially similar or equally effective, it will grant an approval and extension as appropriate and specify in writing the new task; additionally, if CalRecycle determines that good cause exists for any extension associated with the change in task, considering the factors set out in Title 14 CCR section 18996.2(a)(2), it will grant an extension as appropriate and specify in writing a new compliance schedule.
- 4.6 Compliance with Applicable Laws: The Jurisdiction shall carry out this CAP in compliance with all Local, State, and Federal requirements, including but not limited to requirements to obtain necessary permits.
- 4.7 Liability: Nothing in this CAP shall constitute or be construed as a satisfaction or release from liability for any conditions or claims arising as a result of past, current, or future operations of the Jurisdiction, including for violations of the Regulations that were not disclosed in the Notification and any violations of the Regulations that the Jurisdiction fails to remedy notwithstanding commitments in the Notification and this CAP.
- 4.8 Government Liabilities: The State of California and CalRecycle shall not be liable for injuries or damages to persons or property resulting from acts or omissions in carrying out activities pursuant to this CAP, nor shall the State of California be held as a party to any contract entered into by the Jurisdiction or its agents in carrying out activities pursuant to the CAP. The Jurisdiction shall indemnify, defend, and save harmless the State, its officers, agents, and employees from any and all claims and losses accruing or resulting in connection with the performance of this CAP.

- 4.9 Parties Bound: This CAP shall apply to and be binding upon the Jurisdiction and upon CalRecycle and any successor agency (regional agency, etc.) that may have responsibility for, and the authority over, the subject matter of this CAP.

PENALTY

5. Penalties, if any, shall be assessed and calculated in accordance with the provisions of PRC 42652.5 and Title 14 CCR sections 18997.3, 18997.5, and 18997.6. Penalties shall be calculated based on the factors set out in section 18997.3 and may be as much as \$10,000 per day per violation for the duration of the violation(s).
- 5.1 Penalty Procedures. Penalty, if any, shall be imposed in accordance with the procedures and methodology set out in PRC section 42652.5 and Title 14 CCR sections 18997.3, 18997.5, and 18997.6. Regulatory violations that are considered “minor,” meaning they involve violations constituting minimal deviation from regulations, shall be subject to penalties of no less than five hundred dollars (\$500) per violation and no more than four thousand dollars (\$4,000) per violation per day; “moderate” violations are subject to no less than four thousand dollars (\$4,000) per violation and shall be no more than seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500) per violation per day; and “major” violations, are subject to penalties no less than seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500) per violation per day and no more than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) per violation per day. The following types of deviations are deemed to be “major” under the regulations for the purposes of assessing penalties:
- a. Failure to have any ordinance or similarly enforceable mechanism for organic waste disposal reduction and edible food recovery.
 - b. Failure to have a provision in a contract, agreement, or other authorization that requires a hauler to comply with the requirements the Regulations.
 - c. Failure to have an edible food recovery program.
 - d. Failure to have any Implementation Record.
 - e. Implementation or enforcement of an ordinance, policy, procedure, condition, or initiative that is prohibited under Title 14 CCR sections 18990.1 or 18990.2.
 - f. Failure to submit the reports required in Title 14 CCR sections 18994.1 and 18994.2.

EFFECTIVE DATE

6. Issuance. This Corrective Action Plan is final and effective from the date of issuance.
- 6.1 Date of Issuance March 23, 2023

Signature on file

Mark de Bie, Deputy Director
Waste Permitting, Compliance and Mitigation Division
Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery