



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

# News Release

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**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Nicole Hall, Supervising Public Information Officer  
Phone: (858) 492-5009/cell phone: (858) 518-7774

### **City of San Diego Changes Trash, Recycling and Yard Waste Collection Days to Increase Efficiency and Improve Customer Service** *City Expands Yard Waste Collection to 30,000 more City Residences*

**SAN DIEGO, CA** — Starting the week of June 7, 2004, the City of San Diego Environmental Services Department (ESD) will change more than 200,000 residences' trash, recycling and yard waste collection days. This change is the result of a citywide remapping of current collection routes that service 315,000 collection customers in an effort to reduce costs and to increase operational efficiencies. In addition, all yard waste collection will convert to an every-other-week collection schedule that will alternate, in most areas, with collection of recyclables from the blue recycling containers. Rerouting and the collection schedule change will facilitate the expansion of yard waste collection to 30,000 more homes throughout the City of San Diego.

"We have used a computerized global positioning system to develop these new more efficient collection routes which will reduce the amount of trucks on the road, decrease the miles traveled yearly by the entire collection fleet and expand our yard waste collection to more homes throughout the city," said Elmer L. Heap, director of the ESD. "We are trying to do more with less! Ultimately, this effort will reap benefits for both residents and the City by saving millions of dollars in the general fund, increasing operational efficiencies, offering more residents city services, and even helping the environment by decreasing smog emissions and diverting waste from entering the landfill."

During the first year of implementation the City has projected a \$600,000 savings during fiscal year '05 and an annual savings of \$1 million in fiscal year '06 and thereafter. The majority of the savings will be generated by reducing 10 to 15 collection trucks from the operating fleet of 185 and decreasing the miles traveled by City collection trucks by approximately 235,000 miles yearly.

Collection drivers' workloads will become more balanced throughout the week because the new routes will concentrate each day's collection activity in a single area, or zone, of the city. Prior to the

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implementation of the new routes, daily collection activity occurred in at least four different city areas and each had varying collection demands which made workloads unbalanced throughout the week. Under the new route design, there will be a total of five zones, one for each day of the week, which will require a more equally balanced number of collection vehicles, drivers and supervisors for each day throughout the week. Through zoning and placing the drivers and supervisors in the same area of the City each day, the workloads will be evenly balanced and responses to reports of missed collection will be quickly resolved.

“While planning the rerouting, we worked with our Labor Management Advisory Committee to ensure our plans were fair to employees,” said Heap. “We were able to decrease the amount of collection trucks in our fleet without eliminating any of the driver positions. Instead, our drivers will be reassigned to new routes that will be evenly distributed throughout the week. Our goal behind the entire rerouting project is efficiency but not at the expense of our employees.”

The savings from rerouting will enable the City to expand yard waste collection from 150,000 to 180,000 single-family homes. Yard waste collection will be added to Clairemont, Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. Citywide, approximately 122,000 residents of the total amount of customers who receive yard waste collection will convert from a weekly collection schedule to every-other-week collection.

Environmentally, the expansion of the yard waste program will help reduce the amount of materials disposed in the Miramar Landfill, which will help the City of San Diego comply with the State’s AB 939 diversion mandate and avoid potential fines of \$10,000 per day. Also, the reduction of collection trucks and more efficient routes will save 102,000 gallons of fuel every year and decrease smog emissions by 9.6 tons of nitrous oxide per year.

The City will notify residents about collection changes through two mailings. The first will include an explanatory letter and a 2004 Curbside Recycling Calendar mailed mid-May and the second will be a reminder postcard which will be mailed to residents in the first week of June. City staff is also providing information to residents about the rerouting and yard waste expansion through presentations at community meetings held in all eight council districts through May and June.

Residents may view both their current and new days of collection 24-hours a day by visiting the ESD Web site at [www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services). The site also offers access to a printable 2004 Curbside Recycling Calendar, provides residents with the types of City collection services offered at their addresses, lists what can and cannot be recycled in their blue recycling bins and yard waste collection containers, and displays the City’s recognized holidays when trash, recycling and yard waste collections are delayed by one day. For more information on the City’s rerouting and yard waste expansion program, please call ESD’s Customer Service at (858) 694-7000.

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