



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 10, 2008

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ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
FACT SHEET

**FINAL CELL BEING PREPARED FOR TRASH
AT MIRAMAR LANDFILL**

RECYCLING WILL PLAY A BIG ROLE IN EXTENDING LANDFILL'S LIFESPAN

The City of San Diego has begun final preparations for the last cell at the Miramar Landfill. A \$3.9 million liner system is being installed at the Module "E" site where the Environmental Services Department (ESD) will begin depositing trash as early as January.

In 1991, the United States Congress passed the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, which directly affects the way municipal landfills operate by requiring the construction of complex and expensive liner systems in all areas designed for trash burial.

This liner system serves to encapsulate the refuse within multiple layers of impervious material, including clay soil and polyethylene, a hard but flexible plastic sheeting which is heat-fused together, essentially forming a huge trash bag. A system of pipes installed on top of the liner carries any liquid generated by the Landfill (known as leachate) away from the trash and into a collection area, ensuring that it never becomes a pollutant.

The Department expects to have the new module filled by 2012, at which point there will be no more space for garbage at the Miramar Landfill. ESD has already been working on plans and alternatives for San Diego waste disposal needs.

"The preparation work being done on Module-E reminds us that the Miramar Landfill is a finite resource and we need to prepare to handle the City's trash in the future," said Elmer Heap, Deputy Chief Operating Officer for Community Services.

The Miramar Landfill was opened in 1959 and while the current closure date is set for 2012, the Landfill was originally slated for closure in 1995. But, because of innovative engineering, recycling programs and other creative solid waste management practices, the City has been able to keep moving the closure date back

Also of significance to the City of San Diego is the continued revenue stream that the landfill provides. The facility currently generates about \$50 million from tipping fees, franchise fees and other programs at the Miramar Landfill.

RECYCLING ORDINANCES

The City of San Diego passed two key recycling ordinances this year that make it mandatory for residents and businesses to recycle. Construction, demolition and remodeling Contractor's are also required to recycle at least half of their debris. Both of these new regulations will keep recyclables out of the landfill and continue to extend to life of the facility.

City residents currently recycle about 55% of their waste, but with about eight million pounds of trash a day, that translates into about 1.1 million tons a year still going into the Miramar Landfill.

City officials hope the new regulations will help achieve a higher recycling percentage. Recent waste composition studies indicate that two-thirds of San Diego's waste stream can be recycled.

MIRAMAR LANDFILL

- The Landfill accepts trash from city, private and self-haulers.
- The Landfill accepts approximately 4,000 tons of waste Monday through Friday, less on weekends.
- The Landfill is open 361 days per year, rain or shine.
- Approximately 1,400 – 1,600 customers bring materials to the landfill each day.
- Trash is brought to the Miramar Landfill in approximately 446,000 vehicles each year.
- Customers' vehicles are checked at random for hazardous materials.
- Some 35,000 pounds of hazardous substances are discovered and diverted for proper disposal each year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information regarding operations at the Miramar Landfill, visit:
www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/miramar

For recycling tips and information on recycling programs at the City of San Diego, visit:
www.sdrecyclingworks.com

The City of San Diego's Environmental Services Department is charged with refuse collection disposal, recycling and environmentally sound management to meet the city's long-term disposal needs. For more information about the Environmental Services Department, visit www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/