

Community Comment

May 10, 2017

I'm Jill Duffy and the Executive Director of the Humboldt Waste Management Authority with this week's Community Comment.

HWMA owns and operates the Hawthorne Street Transfer Station which includes the Tip Floor, Eureka Recycling Center, Household Hazardous Wastes and the (closed) Cummings Road Landfill. Each day we receive about 170 tons of solid waste from local garbage haulers and the general public.

A lot of people don't realize that one of the main reasons trash disposal is so expensive is because, with no local landfill, north coast garbage is hauled 280 miles south for disposal. HWMA contracts for an average of 13 semi-trucks each day to haul trash to the Potrero Hills Landfill in Solano County.

The recent two week Hwy 101 closure reminds us how vulnerable and remote the North Coast is. HWMA can hold about 4-5 days of accumulated solid waste and curbside recyclable materials at the Hawthorne Street Transfer Station before potentially having to close the doors to general public delivery. Closure would be necessary to continue accepting curbside collected trash from garbage haulers, and to ensure our employee and equipment operational safety.

Our regular hauler, Solid Wastes of Willits, was unable to deliver trailers due to the slide. They were able to use J&T Logging of Fortuna and Sasso Trucking to transport between 2-4 trailers daily from our Transfer Station over Highway 299 to either Potrero Hills Landfill or Anderson Landfills.

When it was clear the highway would remain closed for an extended period, HWMA contacted Bettendorf Trucking of Arcata to secure transportation to Dry Creek Landfill. Bettendorf responded immediately and provided between 7-9 trailers per day to the landfill. This response and service enabled the Authority to continue regular operations for franchise haulers and the general public with no interruptions in service.

This closure illustrates how quickly our community will step up and provide assistance. HWMA thanks Bettendorf Trucking and Eel River Disposal. Bettendorf's drivers and trucks literally kept garbage flowing out of Humboldt, efficiently moving trash to Dry Creek Landfill. Eel River Disposal removed some recycling materials to their facility, which helped to keep our tip floor congestion to a minimum and contribute to a safe working environment. HWMA extends our sincere appreciation to these local businesses who ensured no interruption to your garbage disposal services. Express your thanks by giving these truck drivers a wave and a thumbs up when you see them on our highways.

This has been Jill Duffy with your Community Comment