



Perspectives

Welcome to PERSPECTIVES, an email-newsletter designed to give you a window into what is going on here at El Sobrante Landfill. Topics include waste management issues, community involvement, and environmental protection and legislation. We hope you enjoy it.

EL SOBRANTE LANDFILL

El Sobrante Landfill is a Class 3 regional disposal facility permitted to accept up to 10,000 tons per day, seven days per week. It employs approximately 40 full-time employees. Landfill operations are overseen by the California Integrated Waste Management Board, and the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health.

Letter from Damon De Frates District Manager, El Sobrante Landfill

As we wrap up the first month of the new year, I'm proud to report some safety and environmental developments at El Sobrante Landfill.

As you know, we keep working to decrease our impact on the environment. Over the past couple of years, operational improvements have helped to reduce our emissions as well as increase our production of renewable energy.

The 645-acre wildlife habitat preserve on our landfill is a big component of our environmental work. And we were so saddened when almost one-third of it was destroyed by fire last year. Fortunately, with help from the Cub Scouts from local Boy Scout Troop 424, we have begun restoring it.

I also am pleased to announce that our employees recently achieved more than three and a half-years without an accident or injury. Our people are what make El Sobrante succeed and heavy equipment operator Maria Muro is a great example of the dedication they bring to the facility.

We hope your year is off to a great start. If you are interested in learning more about the landfill and the wildlife preserve, I encourage you contact Lily Quiroa, Community Relations Manager, at (951) 277-5112 to schedule a tour.

Best,

Damon De Frates
District Manager
El Sobrante Landfill



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Environmental Initiatives at El Sobrante

Our goal to preserve the environment means we work hard to reduce our “carbon footprint.” Since 2001, through various operational improvements at El Sobrante Landfill, we have reduced nitrogen oxides emissions by 462 pounds a day and reactive organic gas emissions, such as methane gas, by almost eight pounds a day. Both of these gases are components of greenhouse gas emissions. The reduction is the equivalent of taking approximately 4,316 vehicles off the road on a daily basis.



Last year, we invested in a new state-of-the-art gas flare that improves air quality by destroying nitrogen oxide and carbon monoxide. The new flare is highly efficient and has helped to reduce emissions by 75 percent, compared to the previous flare. As a result, virtually nothing is being emitted into the atmosphere.

We also have substantially reduced our heavy equipment emissions by improving our equipment. In fact, we have upgraded over 70 percent of our heavy equipment since 2002, which means that close to two-thirds of it meets Tier 2 or Tier 3 emission standards set by the Air Quality Management District. By meeting these standards, El Sobrante has exceeded California emissions requirements, which are the most stringent in the country. The equipment upgrade has resulted in an 81 percent reduction of nitrogen oxides overall — a significant achievement considering the size and the nature of our operations.

Finally, another way we are reducing our impact on the environment is through our gas-to-energy station, which produces 3.84 megawatts of renewable energy. This is the equivalent of 105,000 barrels of oil or about 21,500 tons of coal per year that would otherwise be mined as a non-renewable source of energy.

We invite you to take a tour of our operations to learn more about our environmental efforts. Please contact Lily Quiroa, Community Relations Manager, for more information at (951) 277-5112.



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Cub Scouts Help Restore Wildlife Preserve

During the holiday break, Cub Scouts from Boy Scout Troop 424 helped to restore areas of the El Sobrante wildlife habitat preserve that were destroyed earlier in the year by fire. A spark from a trespasser's motocross bike caused the fire, which burned nearly 200 acres of the preserve and jeopardized 31 protected species.

The helpful Cub Scouts — ranging in age from 8 to 10 years old — worked side by side with our biologist to plant sycamore and cottonwood trees. These new trees will control erosion and provide a valuable source of forage and cover for wildlife.



While on site, the Scouts got an official tour of the landfill and learned the importance of recycling. After a morning of hard work, we enjoyed a pizza lunch together. For their time and commitment to the project, the Cub Scouts will receive points to help them earn their merit badges. More importantly, they learned the value of caring for wildlife and contributed to a project that will have a positive long-term impact in our community.



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Employee Profile: Maria Muro

As the only female heavy equipment operator at El Sobrante, Maria Muro is known for the dedication and skills she brings to the job.

Maria came to El Sobrante two years ago, seeking a challenging job that would keep her close to home and to her five children. She is one of 21 heavy equipment operators at the landfill and one of nine who can operate any of our equipment.



Maria grew up in Yuba City, where her father worked as a heavy equipment mechanic. She remembers being surrounded by heavy equipment as a child, and wishing that she could someday operate it, just like her father.

Her first job as a Caltrans worker placed Maria on the path to a successful career. Within three months of working there, she convinced her boss to send her to heavy equipment driving school, giving her the stepping-stone she needed to launch her career. After Caltrans, she worked at different job sites in Northern California and Nevada. Before coming to El Sobrante, she also worked at March Air Reserve Base.

Working in a predominantly male occupation has never deterred her from going after her goals. Instead, it motivates her to prove that she is just as skilled as the men working alongside her.

She also is a committed single mother raising her children — who range in age from three years to 16 years — in Dawson Canyon. On her days off, she loves hiking or enjoying the outdoors with her family. She is a talented and enthusiastic chef — particularly of Mexican food.

Maria Muro's strong work ethic and operating skills are greatly valued at El Sobrante Landfill. She is a trailblazer and role model who makes it all look easy!