# CHAPTER 18

# PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

# CHAPTER 18 PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

This section addresses the impacts of the proposed project on police protection, fire, potable water, and solid waste collection services. The analysis specifically addresses whether the project would affect current levels of public services. Information provided in this section was obtained directly from local service providers.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The assessment below provides information on the availability of public services and utilities in the vicinity of the project area.

### Police Protection Services

The County Sheriff's Department provides police protection services to the unincorporated areas of the County and several incorporated cities under separate contracts with the Sheriff's Department. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) is responsible for controlling traffic on highways in the state of California, including SR-14.

The County Sheriff's Palmdale Station is currently located at 1020 East Palmdale Boulevard, but is moving to a new station located on Avenue Q at the intersection of Sierra Highway. It is anticipated that the relocation will take place in mid- to late- 2005.[1] The Palmdale Station provides service to the City of Palmdale as well as 700 square miles of unincorporated County area from the Wrightwood ski area to Lake Hughes.[2] The station has an operating capacity of 189 sworn personnel and 44 civilian personnel, however it is currently operating with 163 sworn personnel and 35 civilian personnel.[3]

The project area is within the service area of the Palmdale station. According to the Sheriff's Department, the response time for a service call to the site varies for a non-emergency call. Response times for non-emergency calls are dependent on the locations of the Sheriff's deputies at the time of the call and average around 59 minutes. For an emergency call, response times to the project area are anticipated to be slightly over five minutes.[4] The response time to the PWRP for a priority call is estimated to be twelve minutes.[5]

### Fire and Emergency Medical Services

The PWRP is equipped with a gravity-fed fire hydrant using non-potable water (well water). Fire protection service is provided through the County Fire Department. The County Fire Department provides fire protection service to the unincorporated areas of the County and several contractual cities. The nearest fire station to the PWRP is County Station No. 131, which is located approximately three miles from the PWRP at 2629 East Avenue S, in the City of Palmdale. The nearest fire station to the storage reservoirs is also County Station No. 131. Staffing at County Station No. 131 includes a three-person engine company and a two-person paramedic squad. The County Fire Department has set a five-minute response time as its goal for the nearest responding engine company. According to the operator on duty, County Station No. 131 would be able to respond to a call for service at the site in approximately five to seven minutes.[6] However, due to the expansive nature of this area, engine

[1] *Hill, Russ, Operations Sergeant, Palmdale Sheriff's Station, telephone communication, January 10, 2005.*

[2] *District No. 20, http://www.lasd.org/stations/for1/palmdale/index.html, accessed online January 6, 2005.*

[3] *Hill, Russ, Operations Sergeant, Palmdale Sheriff's Station, telephone communication, January 10, 2005.*

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Ibid.*

companies overlap to ensure the most rapid response. Other nearby fire stations include County Fire Stations Nos. 24 and 37, which would also be available to respond to the PWRP facilities in a major emergency.

The nearest emergency room facility in the area is at the Lancaster Valley Community Hospital, located at 43830 West $10_{th}$ Street. Lancaster Valley Community Hospital is situated approximately nine miles from the primary PWRP location.

**Water Supply**

Historically, groundwater has accommodated much of the potable water demand in the Antelope Valley. Currently, much of the Antelope Valley's potable water supply comes from imported SWP water supplies, which are conveyed into the valley via the California Aqueduct from the San Joaquin Delta. AVEK is the water wholesaler with SWP entitlements for much of the Antelope Valley. The PWD, which supplies water at the retail level to much of the City of Palmdale, also has SWP entitlements as well as extracting groundwater from a well field located approximately two miles west of the PWRP. Little Rock Reservoir provides additional water supplies for the city. The PWD prepared an Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) in 2000 that identified water supply deficits during dry years for years 2010 and 2020.

The PWD's UWMP prepared in 2000 indicates that in an average year, groundwater may supply up to 40 percent of the local water demand. Under 2000 conditions, groundwater is relied on to provide between 9,592 to 10,618 afy. According to the PWD's Urban Water Management Plan, future demand (2020) on groundwater could increase to 19,643 afy during a dry year.[7] This amount does not include other regional demands on the groundwater basin including farming operations, smaller local water districts, and private wells.

Groundwater elevations in the Antelope Valley have declined since the 1920s due to groundwater extraction for agricultural and residential use. The groundwater basin in the Antelope Valley is not managed. There have been attempts made to manage water supplies on a regional level through the establishment of stakeholder groups, such as the Antelope Valley Water Group and other recent efforts, but the groundwater basin remains unmanaged.

**Energy Sources and Consumption**

The Southern California Edison provides electrical service to the PWRP. Energy consumption at the PWRP is currently approximately 15,300 kilowatt hours per day (kwh/day). This is projected to increase to approximately 67,000 kwh/day in 2025. The PWRP currently generates 83,000 cubic feet per day (cf/day) of digester gas. This is expected to increase to 454,000 cf/day in the year 2025. District No. 20 operates flares and micro-turbines that burn digester gas at the PWRP. No natural gas is delivered to the site by Southern California Edison for energy use.

**Solid Waste Disposal**

The majority of solid waste generated at the PWRP is in the form of biosolids. Biosolids are treated sewage sludge, which is the byproduct of municipal wastewater treatment. Biosolids management options for reuse include application to land as a soil amendment, landfill co-disposal with refuse, surface disposal, or incineration. Currently, biosolids generated at the PWRP are delivered to the San Joaquin Composting Facility in Kern County to be processed into compost. The facility, located approximately 145 miles from the PWRP, routinely manages green waste and biosolids from portions of Los Angeles, Kings, Kern, and Fresno Counties. Currently, the composting facility is

---

[6] *Operator 82, County Fire Department, telephone conversation, January 6, 2005.*

[7] *PWD, UWMP, 2000.*

permitted to accept as much as 786,000 tons of solid waste per year and has a daily truck limit of 93.[8]

The closest landfill to the PWRP is Waste Management's Lancaster Landfill and Recycling Center, which handles agricultural waste, tires, construction/demolition, green waste, biosolids, industrial, inert, and mixed municipal waste for portions of the County. This landfill is located at 600 East Avenue F in the City of Lancaster, approximately 14 miles northwest of the PWRP. Currently, the landfill can accept as much as 1,700 tons of solid waste each day.[9]

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

### Thresholds of Significance

CEQA defines a significant effect on the environment as a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in the physical conditions within the area affected by the project. Generally, a project may be considered to have significant public services-related impacts if it would:

- Cause adverse impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public services.
- Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.
- Be served by a landfill without sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs.
- Not comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.
- Result in a major reduction or interruption of utility services to consumers.

**Impact 18-1: Operation of the treatment and storage facilities would increase the demand for disposal capacity for biosolids.**

The project includes the expansion of PWRP facilities. In 2004, the PWRP treated an average of 9.4 mgd, producing approximately 310 tons of dry biosolids material.[10] Under the proposed project, the PWRP would treat up to 22.4 mgd of wastewater utilizing CAS. The treatment of this amount of wastewater with the specified process would result in the production of approximately 956 tons of dry biosolids material per year.

The increase in biosolids would not significantly affect the capacity of the San Joaquin Composting Facility, where it is assumed that the biosolids would be recycled. The facility is permitted to accept as much as 786,000 tons of solid waste per year and currently accepts approximately 404,550 tons of solid waste per year.[11] Therefore, the project's contribution would create a less than significant impact on this solid waste facility.

**Mitigation Measure**

No mitigation measures are required.

***Significance of Impact***

Less than significant

[8] *Integrated Waste Management Board, Solid Waste Information System Database, 2005.*
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] *District No. 20, Annual Monitoring Report, 2004.*
[11] *Solid Waste Information System Facility Database, February 11, 2005.*