

Mesquite Regional Landfill Environmental Protection

The Sanitation Districts have purchased the Mesquite Regional Landfill in Imperial County, which is fully permitted to handle up to 20,000 tons per day for approximately 100 years. The landfill infrastructure is in place and ready to receive waste. The Mesquite Regional Landfill has many innovative and state-of-the-art environmental control systems. The Mesquite Regional Landfill's environmental protection features include:

- Groundwater protection – The Mesquite Regional Landfill will employ redundant groundwater protection features. First, the site was chosen for its natural suitability. There is little annual rainfall and significant evaporation. Groundwater exists in bedrock at depths of 140 to over 300 feet below the ground surface at the Mesquite Regional Landfill. The landfill is underlain by a multiple-layered liner system that meets or exceeds stringent regulatory standards. The landfill is also surrounded by an extensive groundwater monitoring system.
- Landfill gas recovery – Landfill gas is a natural byproduct of decomposition of organic materials and is primarily composed of methane gas and carbon dioxide. A gas collection network will be engineered into the waste to collect the landfill gas. The purpose of the gas collection system is to prevent landfill gas from being vented to the atmosphere or from migrating off-site. Once collected, the gas will be destroyed by combustion in an engineered flare. When feasible, the Sanitation Districts will pursue energy recovery from landfill gas by using it to produce electricity and, potentially, vehicle fuel. A team of specially trained engineering technicians will monitor the gas collection system to ensure optimal performance.
- Covering and compacting refuse - Each day, all waste will be compacted and covered with a minimum of 6 to 12 inches of clean soil or other suitable cover material. Covering waste reduces the potential for litter, odors, vectors, and fire.
- Dust and litter control - Water trucks will routinely moisten roadways and the disposal area with water to reduce dust. Many of the roads will be paved and maintained to reduce the potential for dust generation. A maintenance crew will monitor nearby areas for litter. Temporary fencing will be used to capture blowing litter on windy days.
- Visual appearance - The final landfill surface will be designed to minimize erosion, maintain a sound final cover, and blend with the surrounding area in terms of color.
- Screening of unacceptable wastes – At the materials recovery/transfer facilities, loads will be screened to remove unacceptable waste before they are transported to the landfill. When waste is unloaded at the landfill it is again screened by landfill employees working near the disposal area who are trained to identify unacceptable wastes. An inspector will be present to identify, remove, and properly store unacceptable wastes. Confiscated wastes will be temporarily stored in a special area before transport to the appropriate disposal facility. To minimize the amount of household hazardous waste coming to the landfill from Los Angeles County, the

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Sanitation Districts jointly sponsor, with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, weekly household hazardous waste collection days, offered free of charge to the public.

- Desert tortoise protection - A significant portion of the landfill site is fenced to exclude desert tortoises, which are a protected species under the Endangered Species Act. Authorized biologists have cleared the fenced area of desert tortoises and relocated them to an approved site. All personnel working at the landfill site will receive training in order to avoid interference with desert tortoises. Monitoring of the adjacent desert habitat and wildlife is conducted by trained biologists.

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