



# Contra Costa County Illegal Dumping Initiative

Educate - Prevent - Clean-Up - Enforce

July 2021 Presentation to Measure X Community Advisory Board

Presented by John Kopchik, Director of Conservation and Development

# Contra Costa County Illegal Dumping Initiative – Interdepartmental Think Tank

At the request of the Board in 2018, an interdepartmental “Think Tank” team of experienced professionals from five different County departments was formed to discuss the issue of illegal dumping and develop preliminary recommendations on how to improve efforts to reduce illegal dumping.

## **TEAM MEMBER DEPARTMENTS**

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY’S OFFICE**

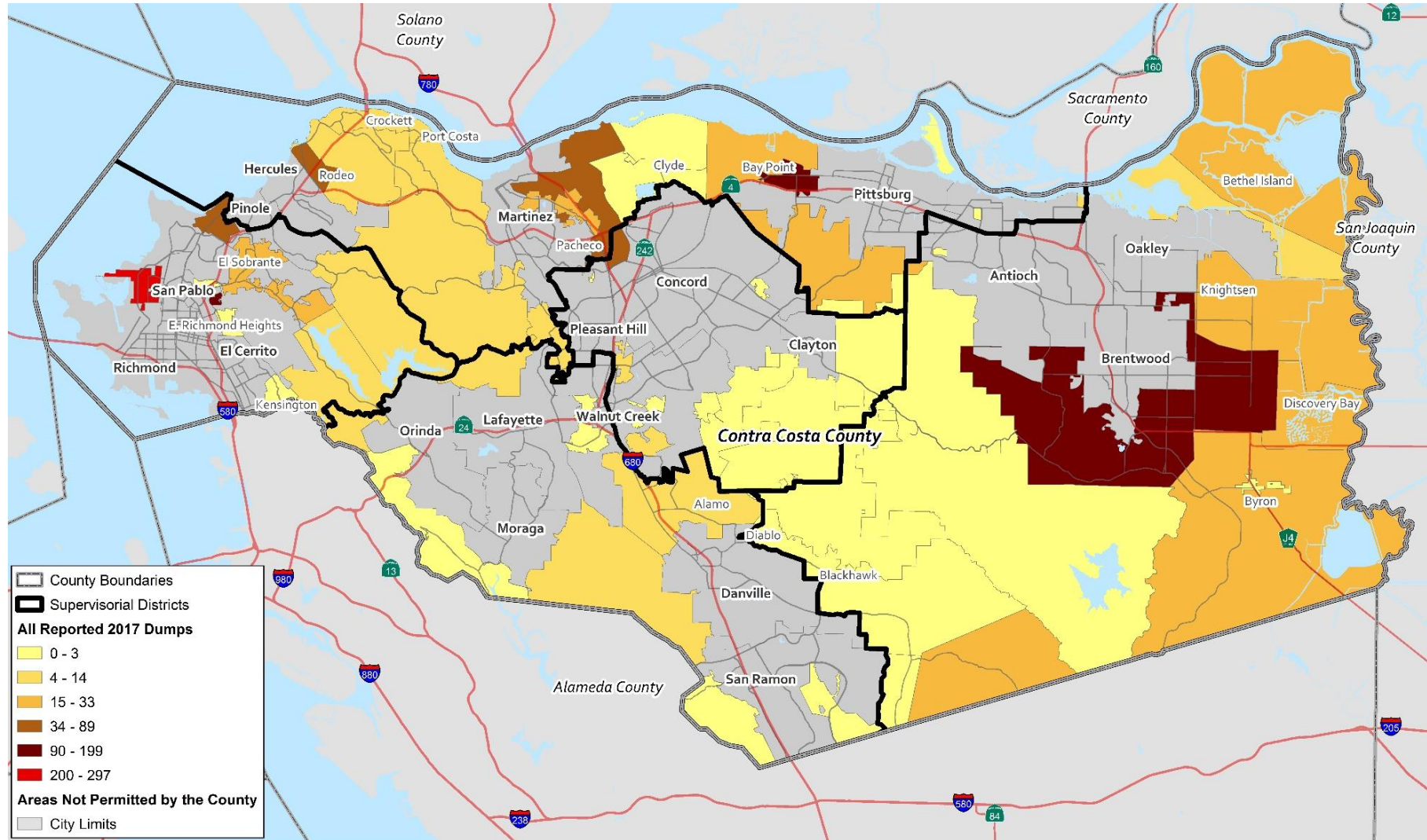
**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIVISION OF THE HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

**SHERIFF’S OFFICE**



# Illegal Dumping Hot Spots are widespread throughout the Contra Costa County



- ▶ The communities of Bay Point, North Richmond and unincorporated Brentwood receive the highest number of reports of illegal dumping.
- ▶ Illegal dumping in Contra Costa County occurs in rural (roads and ag land), suburban, and urban environments.

## Community Blight – A Downward Spiral





# Illegal Dumping in Contra Costa County - Why is This Happening?

**"I didn't know about free and easy alternatives."**

Lack of public awareness of proper disposal options available

**Save Money**

Cost Avoidance

**Convenience**

Few or no local alternatives

**"I Hired The Wrong People."**

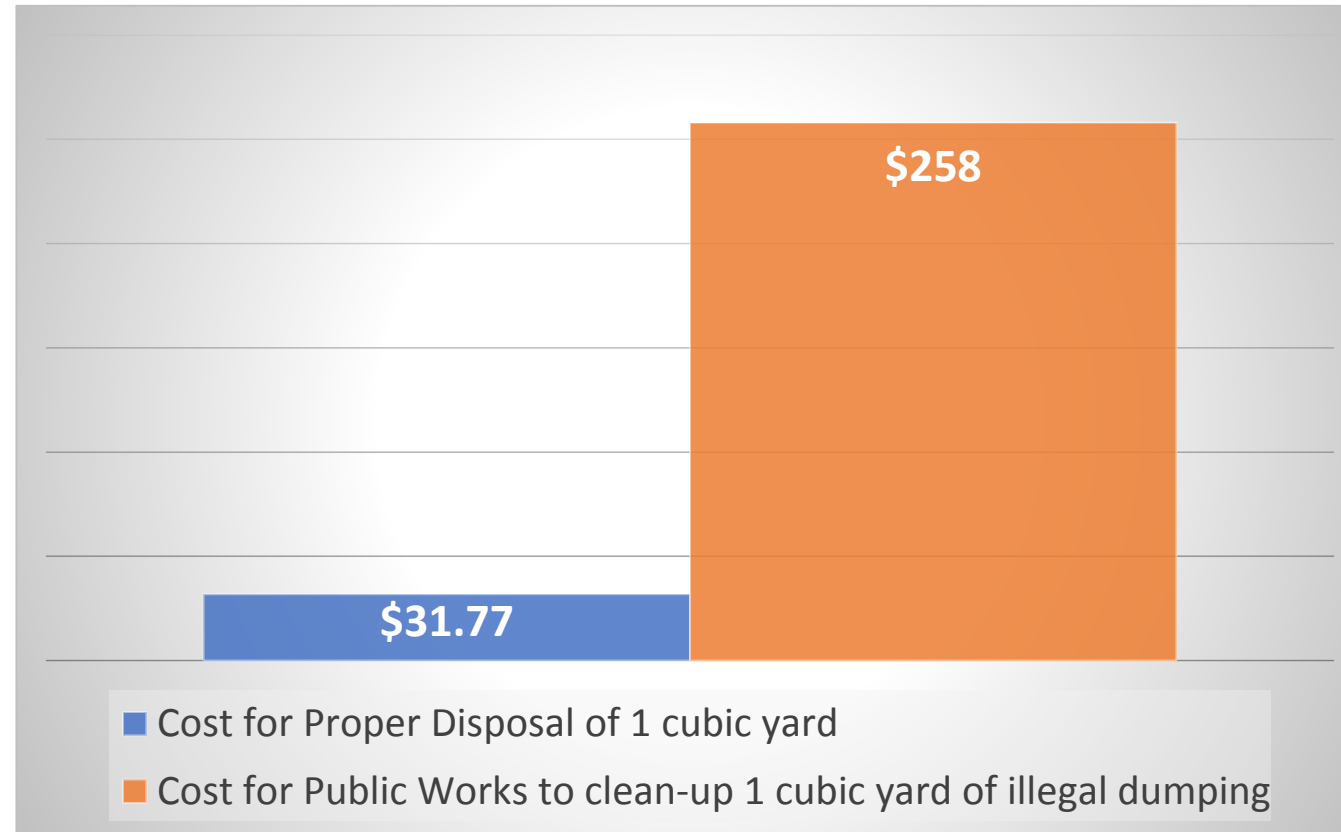
Use of Unpermitted haulers  
(lack of public awareness of the issue,  
Lack of awareness of risk and consequences (impacts caused))

**"I Won't Get Caught"**

- Low risk of getting penalized.
- If you do get caught then Low fines, minimal penalties
- Still better off paying a few fines, then paying to dispose properly every time.



# Illegal Dumping in Contra Costa County – Key Observation



Costs taxpayers **8x** more to clean-up and dispose of materials ***after*** they are illegally dumped than it would be if those items were disposed of through proper channels.

# Contra Costa County Illegal Dumping Initiative – A Four Prong Approach





# Contra Costa County Illegal Dumping Initiative – Strategy Highlights

Educate  
Prevent  
Clean-up  
Enforce

- **#5 PUBLIC OUTREACH CAMPAIGN** - Create public outreach campaign(s) with different messaging: (1) How to Do the Right Thing – Proper Disposal, (2) How to Report Illegal Dumping. (Educate Strategy)
- **#26 SIGNAGE** -Install street signs with information about How To Report posted at key entry ways or at/near dumping Hot Spots. (Prevent Strategy)
- **#27 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS - LIGHTING** – Identify capital improvements that may be needed, such as street lighting or barricades. (Prevent Strategy)
- **#34 & #35 ON-CALL RIGHT-OF-WAY DEBRIS REMOVAL** –
  - **Removal by Franchise Waste Haulers:** Increase service area and potential scope/frequency.
  - **Removal by Public Works:** Increase frequency of clean up in creeks, roadways outside County Franchise Waste Hauler Areas. (Clean Up Strategy)

*For full list of strategies, see CCCIDI Strategy Table*

# Contra Costa County Illegal Dumping Initiative – Strategy Highlights

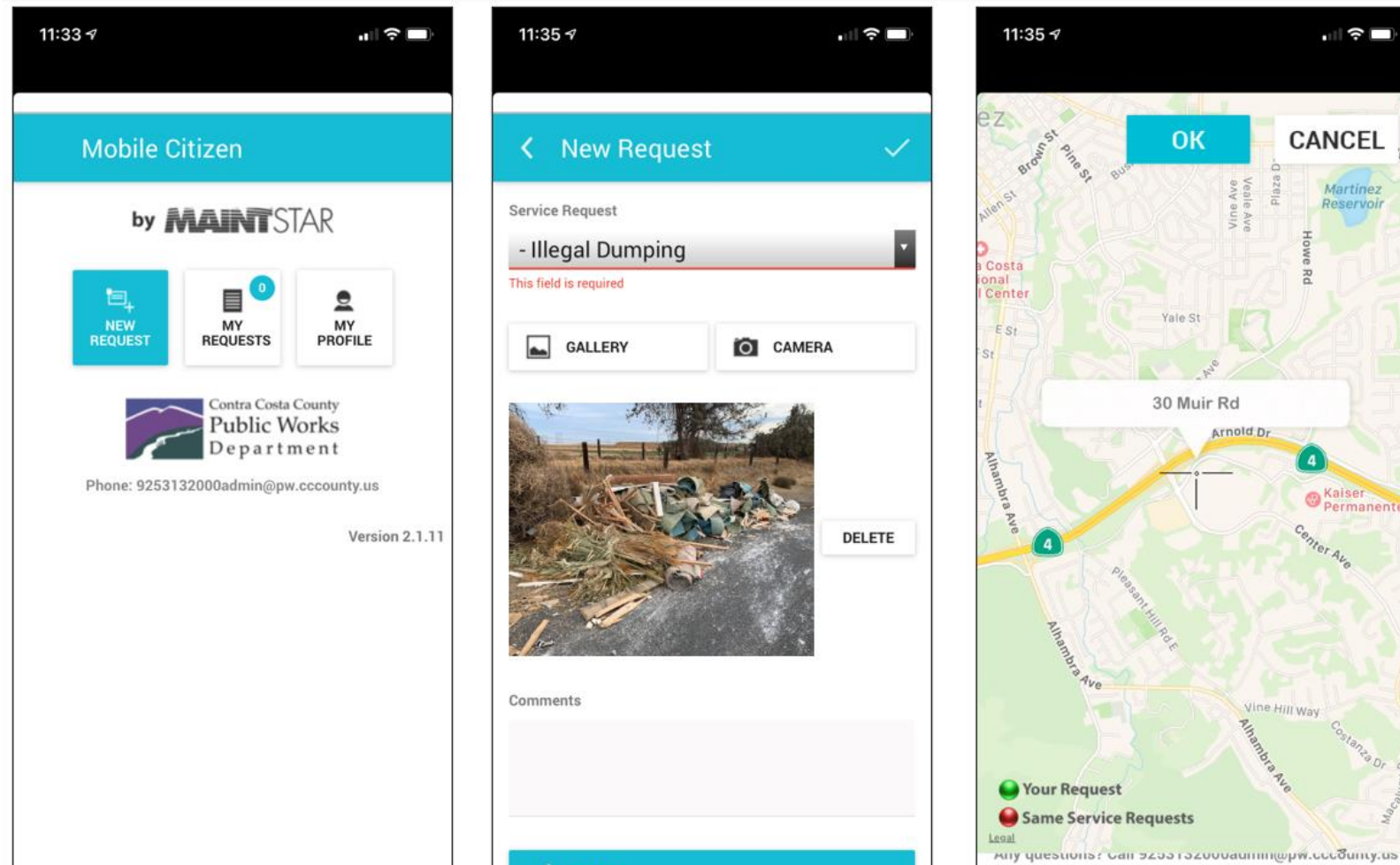
Educate  
Prevent  
Clean-up  
Enforce

- **#45 LAW ENFORCEMENT INVESTIGATORS** - Dedicate two per diem law enforcement deputies to investigating dumping crimes. (Enforce Strategy)
- **#46 SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS** - Wireless high definition, license plate reader surveillance cameras with night vision, infrared & solar powered. Remote-controlled to zoom and capture evidence – Place at key entry ways and hot spots. (Enforce Strategy)
- **#56 INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION** - On-going coordination with cities to facilitate information sharing and collaboration opportunities such as:
  - Maintain/utilize countywide e-mail listserv
  - Convene collaboration meetings
  - Discuss best practices
  - Identify opportunities for coordinated implementation of strategies

*For full list of strategies, see CCCIDI Strategy Table*

# Contra Costa County Illegal Dumping Initiative – Strategy Highlights

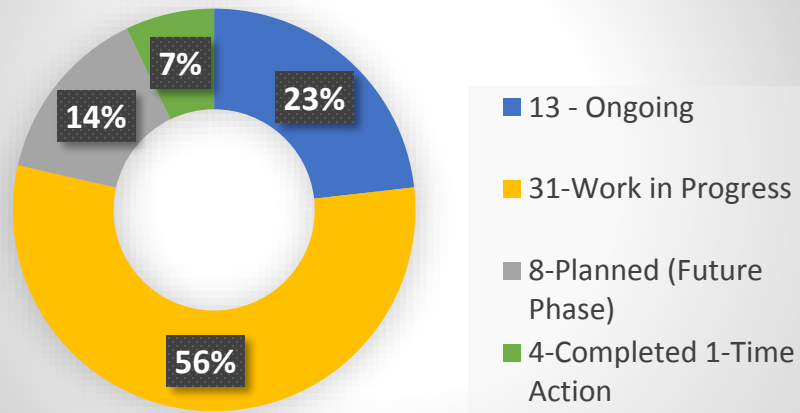
**#36 Reporting/New Mobile Citizen App** - With Mobile Citizen, residents can simply report non-emergency concerns including illegal dumping, take a photo, provide comments, details about location and then submit. The submitted request is sent to the appropriate division of Public Works for follow up. (Clean Up Strategy)





# Contra Costa County Illegal Dumping Initiative Dashboard – (Year 2) Implementation Updates - February 2021

## Strategies by Status



## Strategy #3:

8

Fully Permitted Haulers

## Strategy #9 & 34: Complete

On-call Right-of-Way Debris Removal & Bulky Item Pick Up Established in All 4 County Franchise Haulers

## Strategy #33:

2/3/2021 Wildcat Creek Clean-up Event removed:

550 Tons of Garbage

170 Waste Tires

## Strategy # 36 & 47:

57

Mobile Citizen Reports of Illegal Dumping

## Strategy #40: Derelict RV/Boat Abatement

78 towed

## Strategy #46: Surveillance Cameras

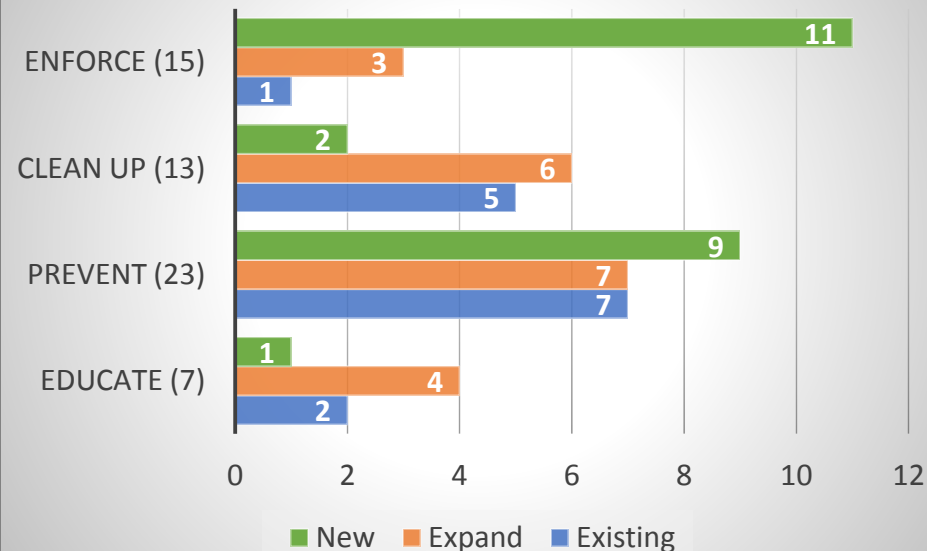
Service Contract finalized and submitted. Implementation expected soon.

## Strategy #53:

Number of Illegal Dumping Cases Filed

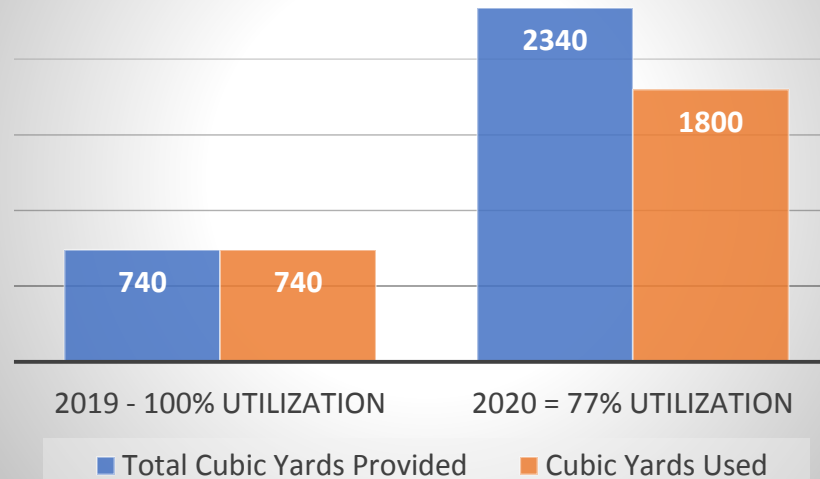
1 <sup>12</sup>

## 56 Approved Strategies by Category



## Strategy #16 - Community Clean-up Bins

By Total Cubic Yards Provided by Franchise Haulers



*For Full Implementation Updates,  
See CCCIDI Strategy Table*

# Contra Costa County Illegal Dumping Initiative – Funding History

Pre-2018

- County has spent approximately 1.8 million a year on various baseline, ongoing actions to try to address illegal dumping for many years with little improvement.

2018

- Think Tank recommended an additional \$944,000 investment above the baseline to implement new or augmented program strategies

2019

- Ultimately the Board approved \$528,000 as a first investment of augmented funding
- This has been paid for out of County reserves and a one-time state grant

2021

- Board made an additional investment of \$350,000 from reserves to continue the augmented work (which had slowed due to the pandemic)

# Contra Costa County Illegal Dumping Initiative – Program Funding

The Illegal Dumping Initiative needs \$600,000 a year for continued implementation of new and augmented strategies such as:

Educate  
Prevent  
Clean-up  
Enforce

Derelict Boat and RV Abatement

Educate  
Prevent  
Clean-up  
Enforce

Capital Improvements – Street Lighting, Barricades etc.

Educate  
Prevent  
Clean-up  
Enforce

Wireless High-definition Surveillance Cameras For Illegal Dumping Hot Spot Monitoring And Evidence Collection

Educate  
Prevent  
Clean-up  
Enforce

Investigating and Prosecuting Illegal Dumping Crimes



## Thank you!



Before and After Photos:  
North Richmond – Castro Street Clean Up on January 20, 2021

## Additional Resources

# Contra Costa County Illegal Dumping Initiative – Program Timeline

- April 2018 - Supervisor Diane Burgis hosted an Illegal Dumping Forum
- May 2018 - Interdepartmental Think Tank Team formed
- October 2018 – Think Tank presented fifty-six (56) preliminary illegal dumping strategies to combat illegal dumping to Board of Supervisors
- February 2019 – Think Tank hosted Collaborative Strategies Meeting with cities within County.
- June 2019 - The Board of Supervisors approved a total of fifty-six (56) illegal dumping strategies recommended by the interdepartmental Illegal Dumping Think Tank.
  - The total cost to implement the strategies for the first year was \$378,000.
  - State granted one-time funding of \$375,000, and the County appropriated the remaining \$3,000.
- September 2019 – First Illegal Dumping Ad Hoc Committee Meeting chaired by Supervisor Burgis and Supervisor Glover. Committee continues to meet periodically.
- 2020 commenced implementation of the program.



1) Dumping is driven by the perception that it is much cheaper to dump illegally than legally.

- Lack of awareness about bulky waste pick-up
- Lack of fear about being caught
- Lack of fear about cost to be paid if one is caught



## 2) Broken window theory applies to Illegal Dumping

- Piles of illegally dumped waste sometimes act as magnets for more dumping
- Suggests alternative course of action to would-be dumpers rather than proper disposal
- Perception that it's a safe place to dump (can get away with it)

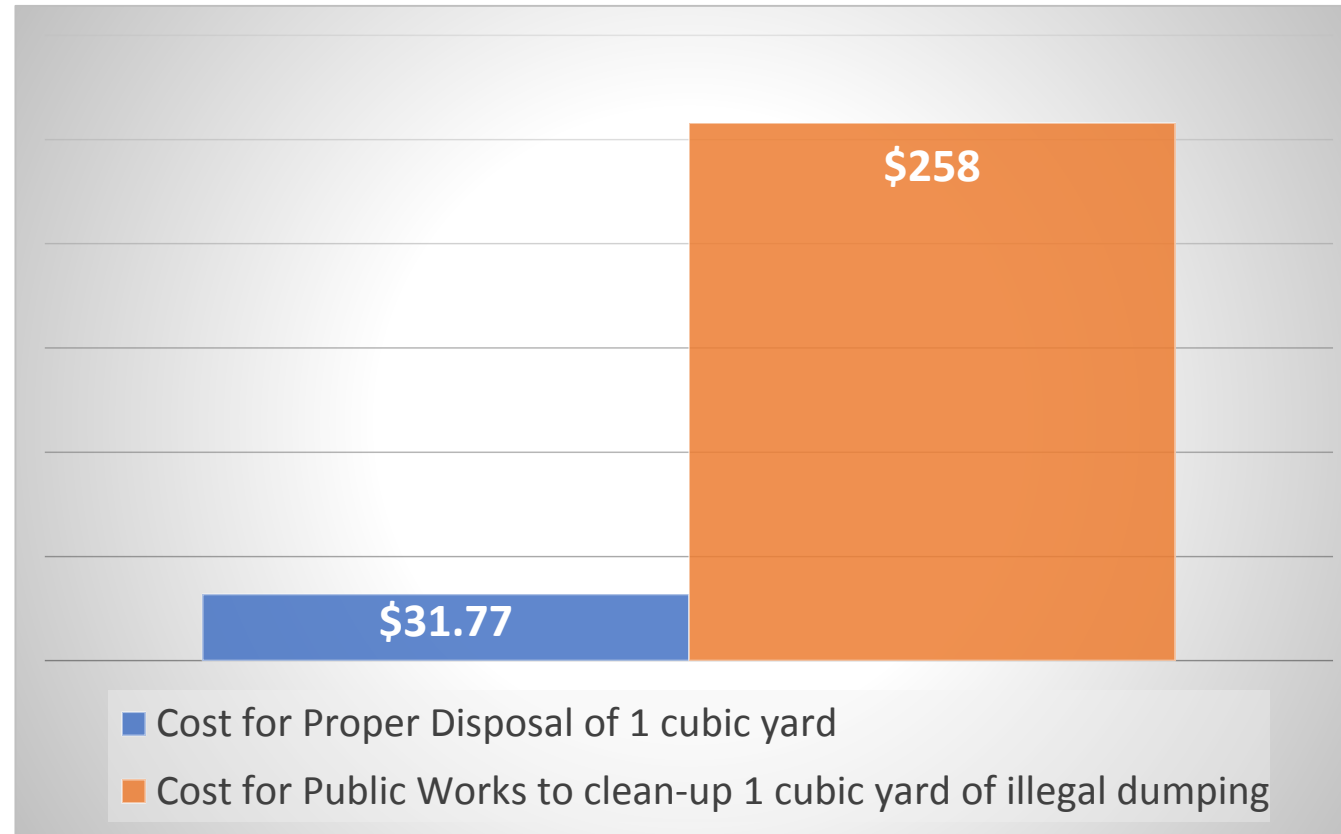


## 3) Enabling theory also applies to illegal dumping

- Hot Spot Crew patrols North Richmond EVERY WEEKDAY removing illegally dumped waste from roadways, **chronic localized dumping continues with no end in sight.**
  - More is then dumped overnight, often found in spots that were cleaned up earlier that day
  - Of the nearly 1,300 addresses found in waste illegally dumped in North Richmond over a five year period, about 84% were local addresses, *meaning close enough to see how quickly dumping gets removed.*
- **Break the Enabling Cycle** - Clean-up programs need to be complimented by education and enforcement, such as gathering and tracking identifying evidence to counter this perception and enforce consequences.



## 4) The True Cost of Illegal Dumping



Costs taxpayers **8x** more to clean-up and dispose of materials *after* they are illegally dumped than it would be if those items were disposed of through proper channels.

5) Identifying, charging and prosecuting perpetrators of illegal dumping is complicated and time-consuming and, under current conditions, can sometimes provide a low-return on investment.

- Difficult for public to report
- Difficult to positively ID without dedicated investigation
- Existing penalties do not provide adequate deterrent



## 6) Dumping problem tends to pop-up somewhere else rather than ceasing all together

- Cameras in one area push dumping to another
- Problem often resurfaces in cleaned-up areas
- One agency's success can push the problem elsewhere



## 7) Broad, consistently implemented, multi-pronged strategy is key to long-term progress

- For individual mechanisms to be successful, strategies must be consistently implemented as part of a joint interdepartmental approach; no weak links.



# Contra Costa County Illegal Dumping Initiative

## Sheriff Leads Effort in Bay Point

- Illegal dumping is so severe that at times it spills out onto the sidewalks and streets.
- Rodents take up homestead in abandoned mattresses, box springs, couches, household appliances etc. **Sitting piles cause the infestation spread to local residences.**
- More importantly, many **Bay Point youths walk to school and must walk around the trash piles or cross the street to avoid harm.**
- Recognizing the health hazards, the trash piles presents to the residents, and the blight it brings to the community, the **Office of the Sheriff** entered into an agreement with **Republic Services** that allows us to dispose of illegal dumping at the **Martinez Transfer Station** at **no cost.**
- In less than a year Bay Point Blight Program picked up over **13 tons of trash.**



# Illegal Dumping Initiative – Strategy Table Excerpt

Groups strategies by approach type(educate, prevent, clean-up, enforce), categorizes each strategy as existing, expanded, or new, identifies funding mechanism, budget, lead department, and tracks implementation updates. Full table is attached.

Educate Prevent Clean-up Enforce	#	CCC Illegal Dumping Initiative Strategies (Yellow highlighting used to denote where strategy wording is proposed to be changed and such changes are shown in red text)	Only if #	Dept. (Bold = Lead)	February 2021 Think Tank Updates (Italicized blue text carried over from past updates) Yellow highlighting denotes new updates	Proposed Funding for FY 21/22*	Remaining Initial Funding (to be carried over to FY 21/22)	Initial Funding (Approved for FY 19/20 and carried over to FY 20/21)*
CLEAN-UP	32	Sheriff's Office: Building community trust & pride in Bay Point by assisting with removal of illegal dumping (free disposal at Transfer Station outside Martinez)		SO	(Existing)	existing budgets		existing budgets
	EXPAND - PROPOSED CHANGE TO EXISTING							
	33	Assist with hauling and removal of waste tire piles illegally dumped in the public right-of-way on an as needed basis. CCEH staff will haul away piles of up to 35 waste tires, however they can partner with the local conservation corps to clean-up large waste tire piles (36 waste tires or more) illegally dumped on public lands.		CCEH	PWD/ Flood Control, City of Richmond Public Works, Fish and Game, San Pablo PD, AMTRAK and BNSF Railroad Police, Service Master, Civicorps, Sheriff's Office, Richmond Fire, and CCEH worked together to coordinate cleanup of the Wildcat Creek encampments on February 3, 2021, resulting in the removal and disposal of approximately 550 tons of garbage and 170 waste tires. K-rails barriers placed on the east side of Pick-N-Pull by BNSF Railroad Police to help prevent illegal dumping. A follow up clean day scheduled for February 17, 2021 to cleanup the remaining miscellaneous garbage and debris.	grant funded		grant funded
	34	Franchise Hauler provided On-call <u>Right-of-Way Debris Removal</u> : Establish service in the one County Franchise area not currently implemented -and- Increase area (currently in place for three of the County's four Franchises) and potential scope/frequency		DCD	Complete	Garbage Rates		Garbage Rates
	35	Public Works: Dumping in creeks, roadways outside County Franchise Areas where hauler provides on-call removal service and hazardous waste or oversized items not serviced by the Franchisees. Potential for increasing removal frequency within the existing budget (\$400K) is dependent upon reducing the area Public Works is responsible for (limit to areas outside County Franchise authority).	34	PWD	Some franchise haulers have started to refuse to provide right-of-way pickups in certain locations and circumstances, e.g. higher speed, higher volume roadways, picking up items away from the road shoulders or in ditches. Explore potential options to work together with franchise haulers to address these areas. PWD spending on debris pickup has increased in the last four years. This may be related to an increase in illegal dumping activities overall. Though franchise haulers have helped , costs continue to rise due to increased need for service.	existing budget (only if 34)		existing budget (only if 34)