



Turning Waste Into Resources

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Landfill Operators Request Greater Discretion for Essential Use** *Your #coronaproject can wait*

(Monterey County, CA) Monterey County Health Department has extended the shelter in place public safety order until at least May 3, 2020 limiting activities outside the home to those defined as “essential.” These include health care, food, pharmacies, fuel, banks, laundry, and vital government services (including law enforcement, utilities, etc.). Monterey Regional Waste Management District (MRWMD) and Salinas Valley Recycles (SVR) are maintaining their facilities to provide essential services needed within the community, including sanitary disposal and waste diversion for curbside service providers, and self-haulers that provide essential services. While landfills and recycling centers remain open, they ask residents and businesses to consider carefully whether or not each trip there is indeed essential.

Social media has exposed a trend in “Corona projects” or “quarantine projects” (tagged #coronaproject and #quarantineproject) as people share their accomplishments while staying at home. However some have taken their spring-cleaning project beyond the confines of home to the next step, like a trip to the landfill for disposal. “We are seeing evidence of these ‘Corona Projects’ at our facilities,” states Patrick Mathews, General Manager for SVR. “What appears to be non-essential home and yard cleanup chores are culminating at recycling and disposal centers. Normally this would be a welcomed and encouraged occurrence, but under the current conditions it’s an unnecessary health risk for the public and for our workers.”

Under Governor Gavin Newsom’s orders, residents are directed to stay at home, allowing activities like exercising and shopping to maintain health and utilize essential services, while strictly observing the recommended minimum social distancing of 6-feet in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. For businesses to determine whether or not they are providing an essential service, the International Labor Organization (ILO) defines “essential services” as services, by whomsoever rendered, and whether rendered to the government or to any other person, the interruption of which would endanger the life, health or personal safety of the whole or part of the population.

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The landfill trip by a self-hauler who does not subscribe to regular curbside pickup services may be considered essential as they are providing the same service the curbside hauler would to maintain sanitary conditions at their home or business. However this does not include finally getting rid of the old rug in the garage or catching up on the “honey-do” list. General Manager for MRWMD Tim Flanagan offers the reminder, “If trips are essential, please maintain social distancing and sanitation standards for your health and the health of our staff. But if it is not a matter of life or death, or in this case healthy or unhealthy conditions, then it can wait.”

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#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Monterey Regional Waste Management District (MRWMD)** is located just north of Marina at 14201 Del Monte Blvd., Monterey County, CA 93933-1670, serving a population of approximately 170,000 in 853 square miles, including the cities of Carmel-by-the-Sea, Del Rey Oaks, Marina, Monterey, Pacific Grove, Sand City, Seaside, and the unincorporated areas of Big Sur, Carmel Highlands, Carmel Valley, Castroville, Corral De Tierra, Laguna Seca, Moss Landing, Pebble Beach, San Benancio, and Toro Park. Call 831-384-5313 for information or visit [www.mrwmd.org](http://www.mrwmd.org)

**Salinas Valley Recycles (SVR)** has three locations including Sun Street Transfer Station (and HHW facility) at 139 Sun Street in Salinas, Johnson Canyon Landfill at 31400 Johnson Canyon Road in Gonzales, and Jolon Road Transfer Station at 52654 Jolon Road in King City. SVR serves a population of approximately 244,000 along 95 linear miles designated as the Highway 101 corridor, including the communities of Aromas, Bradley, Chualar, Gonzales, Greenfield, Jolon, King City, Lockwood, Prunedale, Royal Oaks, Salinas, San Ardo, San Lucas, Soledad, and Spreckels. Call 831-775-3000 or visit [www.SalinasValleyRecycles.org](http://www.SalinasValleyRecycles.org) for information.

MRWMD and SVR are *not* the curbside service providers; contact GreenWaste Recovery, Waste Management Inc., Monterey City Disposal, Tri-Cities Disposal, or Republic Services for information about curbside pickup services.