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For Immediate Release

May 23, 2023

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San Joaquin County Officially Launches Illegal Dumping Campaign
Illegal dumpers could face criminal prosecution and up to a \$10,000 fine

Stockton, CA – In response to record levels of illegal dumping and littering in San Joaquin County, the Board of Supervisors recently launched an aggressive multi-year illegal dumping public education, eradication, and enforcement campaign targeting the County’s nearly 800,000 residents.

The “See It, Report It, Stop It” illegal dumping campaign will use a Education, Eradication and Enforcement (Three Es) approach. The campaign seeks to *educate* the public on how to dispose of unwanted items responsibly and report unlawful littering; *eradicate* illegal dumping by informing residents about community cleanup activities and events; and *enforcement* through video surveillance, investigations, citations and other law enforcement measures.

“A record-setting amount of garbage, graffiti and illegal dumping is polluting our region. It accounts for 2,600 tons of trash in San Joaquin County communities each year, and costs taxpayers nearly \$1.3 million annually to clean up littered areas,” said Supervisor Robert Rickman, Chair of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors. “If not cleaned up and prevented, it could threaten our health, safety, environment and most important, our citizens, for generations to come.”

Illegal dumping is the disposal of any trash in dumpsters or containers not owned by an individual, or garbage dumped along roadways, waterways, fields, wooded areas, parks, or other unacceptable locations. Pouring chemicals, pesticides, used automotive fluids, and other pollutants into storm drains, waterways, and on the ground is also illegal. It is also unlawful to burn trash, bury trash, or drop it at any location other than a legal acceptance facility.

The consequences for illegal dumping are significant. The Board of Supervisors approved an ordinance last fall that enables the County Sheriff’s Office to issue citations and hold illegal dumpers financially accountable. The purpose of the ordinance is to protect public and private property from illegal dumping and to hold any person that takes actions that substantially contribute to illegal dumping accountable. The goal is to deter illegal dumping in a measurable amount to decrease its negative impacts. Each case of illegal dumping is investigated and violators may be subject to a fine of up to \$10,000 and possible criminal prosecution.

In addition to the enforcement component, the campaign will use a combination of outreach activities including billboards, radio advertisements, social media, educational materials, public events, and eventually an illegal dumping website, to discourage illegal dumping by residents and visitors.

“The unlawful disposal of garbage needs to stop. It’s not only harmful to our neighborhoods, businesses, and natural environment, it also places a hardship on available county resources and taxpayers who are burdened with paying the cost of cleanup. We need to work together to end illegal dumping,” Rickman concluded.

San Joaquin County residents are urged to report illegal dumping when they see it by using the MySanJoaquin App, calling (209) 468-3074, or visiting www.SJCycle.org.

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