



San Joaquin County Solid Waste Facility Reopenings Frequently Asked Questions

On May 13, 2020, the San Joaquin County Department of Public Works reopened to the public the Lovelace Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and Transfer Station; North County Recycling Center and Sanitary Landfill; and the Household Hazardous Waste Facility. These facilities were temporarily closed to the public since March 21st in response to a COVID-19 “Stay at Home” order issued by San Joaquin County and to ensure that the Department had sufficient healthy essential staff to process the County’s waste streams throughout the pandemic.

ALL COUNTY SOLID WASTE FACILITIES ARE NOW OPEN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

1. *What should I know before going to the landfill?*

Public Works staff has been working with the County Public Health Officer to develop and implement safety measures for reopening all facilities to the public which include:

- Customers are strongly encouraged to wear facial coverings while at the facility.
- Staff and customers must adhere to social distancing and local Public Health Orders.
- Only electronic payment will be accepted. Protective cashier screens are on site.
- Customers at North County will unload materials at landfill face.
- Increased stall spacing has been implemented at the Lovelace MRF.
- Customers at Household Hazardous Waste facility must stay in vehicles and staff will unload.

2. *How long is the wait time at County-owned solid waste facilities?*

Wait times vary by day, time and location. Weekends tend to be the busiest days while weekdays tend to be less busy. The busiest site is the Lovelace MRF, followed by the North County Sanitary Landfill and finally the Foothill Landfill.

The County has provided new webcams at all sites so that customers may view the number of vehicles in line before making a trip. **These webcam links may be viewed at: www.sjgov.org/solidwaste.**

Customers may also contact the location directly for estimated wait times:

Lovelace MRF:	(209) 982-5770
North County Sanitary Landfill:	(209) 887-3868
Foothill Sanitary Landfill:	(209) 887-3969

3. *Why aren't the sites accepting cash payments?*

County-owned solid waste sites are striving to eliminate physical points of contact to minimize public contact and potential COVID-19 contamination. As a result, cash payments are not accepted at this time. To further ensure the safety of all involved, signatures are not currently required for credit card transactions.

4. *Why not use all the stalls at the Lovelace facility?*

Due to the structure and small footprint of Lovelace MRF, the County has taken the step of reducing the number of stalls available to the public for self-haul in compliance with State and Local Health Orders of maintaining social distancing.

5. *When are County-owned facilities going back to normal operations?*

The Solid Waste Division will return to normal operations as soon as possible. Before that can occur, the new COVID-19 public health requirements must be met to ensure the safety of our staff and public users. As the County goes through the process of evaluating operations for COVID-19 compliance, efficiency improvements are being sought out as well. As a result, some operations may be permanently changed, but are expected to provide equal or greater service as quickly as possible. The public is encouraged to check for the latest updates and reopening guidelines related to COVID-19 by visiting: www.sjgov.org/covid19/

6. *Do County-owned solid waste facilities require customers to wear face coverings and are they provided to the public?*

At this time, face coverings are not required at our facilities. However, face coverings and gloves are **strongly encouraged** to protect the public and employees from potential contamination. Face coverings are not provided to the public for purchase or otherwise.

7. *Why are the Lovelace MRF rates higher than the other landfill facilities?*

Due to the cost of processing and transporting waste from the Lovelace MRF to an offsite landfill for final disposal, the rates at this site are slightly higher than those at other County-owned facilities.

8. *Do you have any remote drop offs or bins that are away from people?*

County-owned facilities have reconfigured sites so that there is adequate social distancing when disposing of waste materials. Facilities have set up separate remote drop-off locations on site for bulky or specialty items such as mattresses, appliances, tires, electronics, organics and others. Customers delivering these items will be directed to corresponding drop off areas by staff. Customers with waste only will be directed to designated areas where there are a number of dumping “lanes” available and spaced to ensure adequate social distancing.

9. *During the COVID-19 pandemic, has the County experienced increased illegal dumping?*

There was no increase in illegal dumping in comparison to last year thanks to the public’s cooperation. Illegal dumping is a crime. If residents see any instances of illegal dumping, please call local law enforcement authorities to report. For remediation please call: (209) 468-3074.

10. *Any other useful information?*

- Follow staff instructions. County staff will direct traffic flow and enforce social distancing.
- Pay extra attention to your surroundings.
- Have payment ready prior to arriving at the cashier station.
- Load your vehicle in a manner where you can unload it quickly and safely.
- Wait times at the North County and Foothill landfills should be shorter than the Lovelace MRF.
- Consider visiting solid waste facilities during the week as weekends are much busier.
- Customers may visit our website or call any facility for hours of operation or current wait times:
 - www.sjgov.org/solidwaste
 - North County Recycle Center and Landfill: (209) 887-3868
 - Lovelace Road Material Recovery Facility and Transfer Station: (209) 982-5770
 - Foothill Landfill: (209) 887-3969
 - Household Hazardous Waste Facility: (209) 468-3066