





Costa Mesa Sanitary District

....an Independent Special District

Memorandum

To: Board of Directors

Via: Scott Carroll, General Manager 

From: Elizabeth Pham, Management Analyst II 

Date: February 9, 2016

Subject: 2015 Christmas Tree Recycling Program Update

Summary

The Christmas Tree Recycling Program collects Christmas trees from residents and recycles them into mulch. The mulch is then distributed locally throughout California and used to enrich the nutrients in soil. When the anaerobic digestion facility becomes operational (April 2016), Christmas trees will be deposited in the facility where the material will be converted into renewal natural gas and soil amendment. This program is made available to residents three weeks after Christmas. Staff is providing the Board of Directors with a final report on the results of the program.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board of Directors receive and file this report.

Analysis

In 2015, the Christmas Tree Recycling Program collected 4,719 trees from residents. In comparison to the previous year, which collected 6,132 trees, there has been a 7.7% decrease in the total amount of trees collected.

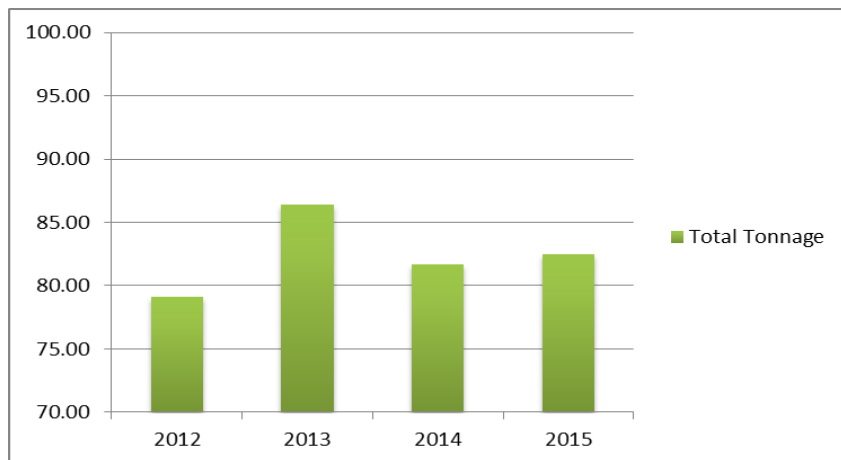
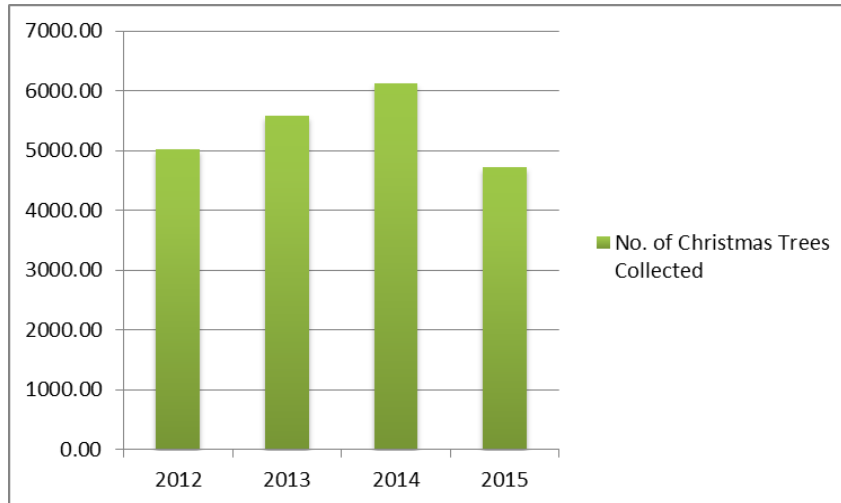
Despite the decrease in the amount of trees collected from residents, the findings show a steady increase in the total tonnage of trees collected. In 2015, the total tonnage for Christmas trees collected was 82.48. In 2014, the total tonnage for trees collected was 81.71, reflecting a 1% increase in the total tonnage collected.

The decrease in the overall amount of trees collected can be contributed to an increase in purchasing artificial Christmas trees, while the increase in the overall tonnage can be contributed to purchasing authentic Christmas trees that weigh more.



District staff received a moderate amount of complaints regarding missed Christmas tree pick-ups. CR&R indicated that the delay was caused by the storms (January 4 through January 8), which did not provide safe conditions for employees to pick-up Christmas trees.

The findings from previous years can be shown in the following graphs:



Strategic Plan Element & Goal

This item complies with the objective and strategy of Strategic Element 2.0, Solid Waste, which states:

“Objective: Our objective is to manage the collection and recycling of residential trash in the most economical and environmentally friendly way.”

“Strategy: We will do this by looking for ways to improve efficiencies, achieve high customer satisfaction, and considering prudent new recycling methods.”

Legal Review

Not applicable.

Environmental Review

Recycling Christmas trees is not a disturbance of the environment similar to grading or construction and does not constitute a project under CEQA or the District's CEQA Guidelines. The recycling program is a betterment of the environment.

Financial Review

The Christmas Tree Recycling Program is funded through the District's solid waste rates.

Public Notice Process

Copies of this report are on file and will be included with the complete agenda packet for the February 9, 2016, Board of Directors Study Session meeting at District Headquarters and posted on the District's website.