



Upper Valley Agency
WASTE MANAGEMENT

July 15, 2009

Mr. Michael Oliver
PO Box 341
Oakville, CA 94562

Dear Mr. Oliver:

Thank you for your letter of July 1 regarding the recent increase in the fee for a "minimum load" at Clover Flat Landfill. A copy of your letter will be provided to the Board members at their next scheduled meeting. The Board discussed this increase at great length during their meeting of June 29 and ultimately determined that the fee should be phased in over a 6 month period, with a \$20.00 minimum until January 1, 2010. All the remaining CFL fees were increased by the consumer price index (CPI) of about 1%.

The rationale for changing this particular fee was that we were significantly undercharging for drive up loads. We are supposed to charge about \$62/ton. Since drive up loads are not actually weighed (and the cost of installing and attending to an in and out scale system would be prohibitive), the former minimum charge was based on our best guess of what the average drive up load weighed. Outgoing solid waste in bulk is weighed, and we found that what was being weighed outbound was significantly heavier (by several hundred tons/month) than what we were collecting for at the gate based on our estimations. Thus we determined we needed to increase the minimum charge at the gate to rectify this situation. The new rates happen to be identical to that charged at Devlin Road, though that isn't why we chose that number. It is also in the range of normal residential service (weekly pick up and free recycling), though again that is not why we picked the number. The sole reason came back to closing the gap between estimated weight in versus actual weight out.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss further, and as I mentioned I will ensure that the Board members are made aware of your concerns.

Sincerely,

Steve Lederer
Manager, Upper Valley Waste Management Agency

July 1, 2009

Mr. Steve Lederer
Director, Environmental Management Department
County of Napa
1195 Third Street, Room 101
Napa, CA 94559

Dear Mr. Lederer:

I am writing you concerning the recent fee increase at Clover Flat Landfill.

Because our ranch is a significant distance from a public road, it is not feasible for us to use public garbage and recycling service. We compact our non-compostable garbage, we use several 33-gallon containers to sort our plastic, glass and metal for recycling, and we bundle our papers, cardboard and magazines. I drive to Clover Flat approximately once per month to dispose of the garbage and to recycle. I use a half-ton pickup for this, and probably 75% of the load is for recycling, with a relatively small amount of material for the landfill.

When I made the trip last week I was stunned to see a sign informing me that effective July 1, the minimum fee is being increased almost three-fold, from \$11.50 to \$30.00! When I asked the attendant why this very substantial increase was being imposed, he told me it was because too many people from Napa were taking advantage of the lower rates at Clover Flat. He added that "The County" had approved the increase, which is the reason I am directing my letter to you.

Surely there must be a better way to address any perceived abuse of the system by our Napa neighbors. This draconian increase solves the problem by penalizing the vast majority of citizens who are complying with the rules and who are being environmentally responsible. If the issue is restricting access to the landfill, there must be alternatives, such as checking IDs to verify addresses. Or is this simply a convenient excuse to dramatically raise the revenue at Clover Flat while thinly disguising the action as solving an abuse problem?

I respectfully ask that this fee increase be withdrawn, and that those who are paid to manage the landfill be brought back to the table to find a more rational solution.

Sincerely,



Michael Oliver
PO Box 341
Oakville, CA 94562

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