



Converting Waste Into Resources

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Local Sanitation Agency to Gain New Authority for Stormwater and Urban Runoff

Whittier, CA – Today, Governor Edmund G. (“Jerry”) Brown signed into law Senate Bill 485 by Senator Ed Hernandez (D-Azusa). When the bill goes into effect on January 1, 2016, SB 485 will allow the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County to manage and treat stormwater and dry weather urban runoff in Los Angeles County. Currently, the Sanitation Districts are only authorized to provide wastewater and solid waste management services.

“Our Directors asked us to pursue this important legislation because we want to be able to help the cities that we serve with the daunting challenges they face in meeting regulatory requirements for stormwater and dry weather urban runoff over the next 20 to 30 years,” said Grace Hyde, Chief Engineer and General Manager of the Sanitation Districts. “We greatly appreciate Senator Hernandez’s leadership on this critical issue.” The cities and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County are required to manage the water under a municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permit issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board. The MS4 permit sets strict requirements for the cities and county to reduce pollutant loads in stormwater so that water quality standards will be attained in the rivers and coastal waters of the Los Angeles Region. The permit also allows the cities and county to form groups to develop watershed management plans, and encourages them to develop flexible and adaptive approaches that “green” their watersheds while reducing the water pollution going to local waterways.

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This legislation follows several years of collaboration between the Sanitation Districts and the Los Angeles County Division of the League of California Cities and the California Contract Cities Association. "SB 485 will help cities by providing cost-effective flexibility to achieve compliance with municipal stormwater requirements through coordination among existing local agencies in Los Angeles County. We are excited to work with the Sanitation Districts in this new capacity," said Carol K. Chen, President of the League of California Cities, Los Angeles County Division.

Under SB 485, the Sanitation Districts will be able to construct and operate facilities for the diversion of stormwater and dry weather runoff from the stormwater drainage system, management and treatment of the water, discharge of the water to the stormwater drainage system or receiving waters and the beneficial use of the water.

The Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, established in 1923 and headquartered in Whittier, California, are a regional public agency consisting of 24 independent special districts serving over 5.5 million people in 78 cities and the unincorporated territory within the county. The Sanitation Districts protect public health and the environment through innovative and cost-effective wastewater and solid waste management and, in doing so, convert waste into resources such as recycled water, energy and recycled materials.

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