Community Responds to Dumpsite Appeal

Environmental Health staff is investigating one the largest illegal dumping of containers staff can recall and the community is rallying around the effort.

Two illegal dumpsites were found last month, on Blanco Road near...
Reservation Road in Marina and on Johnson Canyon Road in Gonzales near the landfill there. 52 rusted drums were found in these locations, some leaking a black, tar-like substance.

It’s believed the drums were dumped between January 16th and 17th. With the areas being somewhat isolated, staff put out a call to the public through social media and the press for help identifying any people or cars that may have been involved. Solid Waste Services Supervisor Maria Ferdin says the community has stepped up.

“This is the first time I’ve worked on a disposal this large both in terms of number of barrels and dispersal relative to dumpsites,” says Ferdin, who has been with Environmental Health Bureau of the Health Department since 2001. “It’s also unique in that we asked for the public’s help and, to my surprise, we received relevant and corroborating information. Not only did I feel this event was egregious, so did the public.”

Tips from the public led investigators to two more locations and six more barrels but also indicated that 70 barrels in all were dumped, so the search is on for those remaining 12 containers.

If the people who dumped the barrels can be found, they may face charges and have to pay for the clean-up. In the meantime, because the barrels present a hazard, Environmental Health will have to arrange appropriate disposal. Tests are being done to determine what the substance is in those barrels.

You can see more images from the dumpsites on the Environmental Health website.

“Hazardous waste is a ‘cradle to grave responsible waste,’ which means that the producer of the waste or the property owner where the waste originated is responsible for appropriate disposal,” explains Ferdin. “This includes making sure that the waste is hauled by a registered waste hauler and ensuring that the waste is properly manifested from point of generation to point of disposal. None of that was done here.”

Environmental Health is looking for those additional barrels and asking the public to call if they are seen. A word of caution says Ferdin, if you do spot a site where barrels are dumped, do not touch them or any liquids that maybe nearby. Call 911 or the Environmental Health Bureau at 755-4505.
Probation Honored for Runs and Funds

Probation staff regularly takes part in the local Special Olympics Torch Run. Now they are being honored for running up the dollars!

Probation staff has been honored as the #1 fundraiser in 2017 for the Law Enforcement Special Olympics Torch Run.

Probation Services Manager Cristal Sanchez is part of the team and is proud that her department does so much for an organization that does so much good.

“The Law Enforcement Torch Run is part of an international campaign for Special Olympics coordinated and managed by all divisions of Law Enforcement officers and officials throughout the world whose mission is to raise dollars and awareness of the Special Olympics Movement,” says Sanchez. “Fundraising efforts help offer year-round training and competitions in sports to the athletes. The athletes gain skills to play not only on the field but in life.”

Probation staff raised monies through activities such as the Torch Run, Tip-a-Cop and the Polar Plunge as well as personal donations.

What’s next? The 2018 Polar Plunge for Special Olympics on March 10th at Rio Del Mar Beach in Aptos. Want to join in or support the cause? Check out the link to register.
https://specialolympics.donordrive.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.team&teamID=5528