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# MEMORANDUM

## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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**DATE:** January 15, 2009

**TO:** C. H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator

**FROM:** Ursula Kramer  
Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "UK", located to the right of the "FROM:" field.

**RE:** Tangerine Landfill Useful Life Report

Solid Waste Management Division (SWM) has continued to analyze the potential useful life of the Tangerine Landfill and to utilize the latest information and best available technology to refine our analysis. Based on the recent review of the Landfill data, we expect that we can continue to operate Tangerine Landfill until approximately 2013.

The recent analysis puts Tangerine's useful life as four years longer than originally anticipated since a previous review performed by a third party indicated the landfill would reach its useful life in 2009. The updated analysis considers the following:

1. Waste disposal rates have declined steadily over the past decade and have sharply declined over the past six months. Until recently, projections were based on an annual increase of 3%, when we are experiencing a 20% decrease in waste disposal volumes.
2. The introduction of the Al John compactors in 2002 significantly increased the compaction rate, and therefore, the available space. Prior to 2002, waste was compacted using the smaller and less reliable Caterpillar 826 compactors which when operable, produced significantly less compaction than the newer and heavier Al John compactors.
3. The amount of landfill settlement due to ongoing waste degradation cannot be accurately anticipated due to the extremely variable nature of the waste material. The recent analysis includes the latest settlement data.
4. SWM operations staff have been aggressive in developing additional disposal space. For example, areas with excessive soil cover are frequently excavated creating additional disposal space.
5. The latest update is based on much more accurate Computer Aided Design analysis. Earlier estimates converted tonnage from gate receipts to airspace volume. AutoCAD allows us to utilize actual airspace volume for capacity calculations. This technology update allows much more accurate calculations.

The above analysis is based on the following operating parameters:

- The smaller east site disposal area is no less than 6 acres in order to ensure sufficient area is available for safe access by commercial and residential customers. (The larger west area will not be less than 10 acres.)
- Residential and commercial volumes remain steady at current rates. Note this is about 20% less than last year's receipts. This decrease appears to be directly linked to the downturn in the economy.

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- The final elevations for the site allow continued use for internal County operations, specifically disposal of Ryan Field and Catalina Transfer Stations, beyond the eventual public closure date.

We recommend that the Tangerine Landfill continue to operate. We will continue to monitor the operations and waste received in order to ensure a safe operation and provide any revisions to these analyses at least annually or as new information becomes available. As we have seen, there are several factors that can significantly impact the calculations, including volume received and settlement. In addition, we have heard

significant concern from the public and the Board that closure of the Landfill may result in significant increases of illegal dumping.

The Tangerine Landfill is operating near a revenue neutral position for FY 2009. Unfortunately, based on the latest volume receipts at all of our locations, including Tangerine, our revenue has decreased. If this decrease remains, we anticipate about a \$300,000 operating deficit for FY2010 for the Tangerine Landfill.

As we continue to operate Tangerine Landfill and the remaining County solid waste operations, we are proceeding with a possible sale of County solid waste facilities through a public auction.

UK/vlb

cc: John M. Bernal, Deputy County Administrator  
Dave Eaker, Deputy Director, SWD  
Richard Grimaldi, Deputy Director, EQD