



Proposal to Orange County Stormwater Public Education & Outreach Program:

**Promoting Source Control of Trash Especially Single-Use Plastic and Expanded Polystyrene**

February 22, 2018

**Issue:** Cities and County now have 10 years to prevent trash originating in high priority areas from reaching waterways. This will require a significant investment to install trash collection facilities, clean trash capture facilities, and dispose of wastes. Waste that eludes trash capture facilities does end up in creeks and embayment where it must be cleaned up by hand. Control of waste at the source will reduce maintenance costs and field cleanup costs.

**Goal:** Reduce or eliminate use of the following single-use plastic and expanded polystyrene food serving-ware to reusable or compostable :

- a. Single-use plastic and expanded polystyrene plates, bowls, cups, and to-go packages.
- b. Single-use plastic cutlery, lids, stirrers, straws, to-go packages, and condiment packages.
- c. Single-use plastic bags.
- d. Single-use plastic water and other beverage bottles.

**High priority pollutant:** Trash (a new TMDL) is closely associated with bacteria and is increasingly recognized as an immediate health threat to aquatic life, and a threat to human health through the food chain.

**Education Strategy:** Implement a public outreach campaign to highlight the benefits of using reusable and compostable materials as listed above. A public outreach program for trash reduction would follow the successful OC Watershed Education model used for other pollutants appropriately modified to address trash. The outreach program could include:

1. Coordinating a county wide social media campaign. billboards, banners, tip cards and posters that provide a consistent message promoting reusable and compostable food serving-ware, as well as linking bacteria with trash.
2. Coordinating public events (Earth Day, Ocean Day, Coastal Cleanup Day and other annual pollution prevention events suggested by California Water Boards' [Erase the Waste](#) campaign) to include agency booth promoting the trash reduction messaging. Handout and verbal messaging should be the same throughout the OC watershed.
3. Producing PSAs highlighting trash (single-use plastic/expanded polystyrene) reduction for:
  - a. Movie theatres
  - b. Gas station monitors
  - c. Regional and local radio stations
  - d. Regional and local television using county officials and local celebrities
4. Designing and producing trash elimination materials:
  - a. Banner that cities can use on their properties and at their events.
  - b. Magnetic signs for agency vehicles promoting trash reduction.
  - c. County wide signs (e.g. Bring Your Own, Straw/Utensils/To-Go Bags on Request) for restaurants and other food service businesses.
  - d. County wide sticker of recognition (such as "Erase the Waste") for restaurants and other food service businesses.
  - e. Inserts for trash bills and water bills.

Preparing a draft trash policy for city use promoting reusable or compostable materials as listed above.