



City and County of San Francisco
[Commission on the Environment](#)

DIRECTOR'S REPORT
December 4, 2023

This report covers San Francisco Environment Department updates for the period of September 1 through October 31, 2023. A glossary of acronyms is included at the end of the report.

Clean Transportation

- Electric Vehicles: Staff supported SFMTA in briefing the District 8 Supervisor's office on September 7 on a proposed curbside charging feasibility study and pilot framework design.
- Electric Vehicles: Staff and implementation partners GRID Alternatives and the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition launched the second cohort of participants for the CEC-funded electric bicycle (e-bike) pilot to transition app-based delivery workers from cars to e-bikes. Fifteen participants, 74% of whom are persons of color, attended a kick-off meeting and in-classroom bike safety training on September 14 and an on-bike training on September 16.
- Electric Vehicles: Staff presented an update on the CEC-funded e-bike pilot at the Local Agency Formation Commission hearing on September 15.
- Electric Vehicles: SFE completed contracting with En2Action, a local community-based organization, and began work to support a new fast-charging plaza charging project in Bayview-Hunters Point. En2Action will lead community outreach and engagement to collect community input to inform the project.
- Electric Vehicles: SFE partnered with SFPUC to complete a pilot test of Google's Environmental Insights Explorer EV charging mapping tool. Over five weeks, staff used the beta mapping tool, responded to weekly survey requests, and provided feedback via e-mail and two focus group meetings on how the tool and additional new features could support San Francisco's EV charging needs.
- Electric Vehicles: Staff facilitated a joint agency leadership briefing on October 30 with SFMTA and SFPUC to discuss challenges and opportunities to scale public charging deployments at SFMTA parking locations.
- Transportation Demand Management: The Emergency Ride Home Program began a digital marketing campaign in English, Spanish, and Chinese to spread awareness of the program to Spanish and Chinese communities. The Spanish ads had the highest engagement on Google Display with a 1.23% click-through rate and the Chinese ads had the highest engagement on Meta engagement with a 1.15% click-through rate.

Climate

- Climate Action: Staff convened a biannual Climate Action Plan meeting for approximately 40 City department staff on September 11. Agenda items included the new Water Supply Addendum, CAP Reporting Dashboard, CAP Marketing Campaign results, and two department spotlights: SFO's decarbonization update and an overview of SFPUC's new Alameda Watershed carbon sequestration study findings.
- Climate Action: Staff participated in two meetings in support of the BAAQMD-led EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) effort to develop a priority climate action plan for the Bay Area.
- Climate Action: Staff successfully submitted biannual reporting to three C40 Accelerator Programs: Net Zero Carbon Buildings, Renewable Energy, and Clean Construction.
- Green Building: SFE organized two meetings of the Building Operation Task Force, held in September and October, to support implementation of the CAP Building Operations chapter.
- Green Building: Staff performed a comprehensive analysis of decarbonization costs for single-family residences, multi-family dwellings, and commercial buildings. Findings from the analysis will provide the groundwork for the Department's funding and financing strategy.
- Green Building: Staff completed data collection for the 2023 Municipal Natural Gas Equipment Inventory, which will serve as a crucial dataset to bolster municipal electrification efforts.
- Green Building: Staff collaborated with Ujamaa Kitchen, the Green Business Program, and the Food Service Technology Center to organize the first commercial induction training for culinary startups in the Bayview.
- Environmental Justice: The Environmental Justice team coordinated zero waste outreach at affordable housing sites in the Mission District and Mission Bay. Working with Environment Now, staff conducted door-to-door outreach at 36 Hoff, where they reached 84% of building residents. Staff also tabled at 150 Berry and 490 S. Van Ness, engaging 68 residents in the process. In addition, staff presented to a group of 11 residents at 691 China Basin.
- Healthy Ecosystems: The Director and staff supported Mayor London Breed at the inaugural session of the Global Commission on Nature-Positive Cities. This initiative aims to inspire leaders to enhance resilience, address climate challenges, and promote overall livability by embracing nature-based solutions and supporting cities that prioritize nature.

Energy

- BayREN Business: The Business program, which offers rebates for energy efficiency retrofits to small businesses in the Bay Area, reopened on June 14. The program enrolled 24 projects in September and October.
- BayREN Single-family: SFE met with BayREN members to discuss how the existing single-family BayREN Home Plus program could be redesigned to serve more low-income families in the region by June 2024.

- BayREN Multi-family: The Multi-family program enrolled 318 residential units in September and October.
- BayREN Refrigerant Replacement: Staff met with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to solicit feedback on the BayREN Refrigerant Replacement Program. CARB recommended the deployment of natural refrigerants and facilitated introductions to the U.S. natural refrigerant industry group and the California Department of Farm and Agriculture, which provides refrigeration grants to grocery stores in food deserts.
- Fix Lead SF: Staff continued to partner with the Department of Public Health to implement lead hazard abatement in single- and multi-family residences.

Toxics Reduction

- Green Business: The Green Business team conducted a corridor walk on 24th Street in the Mission District on October 11, with the goal of recruiting Spanish-speaking businesses into the Green Business Program.
- Green Business: The Green Business team hosted a Green Business partners meeting on October 24. The meeting included SFE and SFPUC commercial teams and focused on updates and opportunities for interdepartmental collaboration. SFE teams present at the meeting included Clean Transportation, Climate, Energy, Environment Now, Outreach, and Zero Waste. Participating SFPUC teams included Power (i.e., Clean Power SF), Water (i.e., water conservation) Wastewater (i.e., pollution prevention).
- Residential: SFE selected a third-party contractor to conduct an audit of Recology's Household Hazardous Waste programs. The audit reviewed the permanent collection facility, home collection program, retail collection, and all forms of documentation used by Recology. No major issues were identified.
- IPM: Staff continued a virtual public meeting series convening integrated pest management (IPM) practitioners. Attendees are offered continuing education units (CEUs) issued by the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR). The September 7 meeting featured a presentation titled "Grazing as a tool for your IPM," which had 47 attendees, 23 of whom requested and earned CDPR CEUs. The October 5 meeting featured a presentation titled "Putting the integrated in integrated pest management: exploring a variety of weed control methods," which had 46 attendees, 27 of whom requested and earned CDPR CEUs.
- The Commission on the Environment reviewed and approved the 2023-2024 Reduced Risk Pesticide List on September 26.

Zero Waste

- City Government: Staff presented to 198 City employees at SFHSA, SFE, SFPL Noe Valley Branch, Laguna Honda Hospital, SFMTA, and DHR's New Employee Orientation. Among audits reviewed by SFE, the Real Estate Division's 49 South Van Ness building passed and accepted the Refuse Separation Compliance Ordinance Plan (RSCOP) for the Real Estate Division Hall of Justice (850 Bryant). In addition, staff onboarded nine non-profit organizations and schools onto the Virtual Warehouse Rheaply online exchange platform.

- Commercial: Staff issued eight Notices of Noncompliance and six Notices of Pass audit results related the Refuse Separation Ordinance. Staff also partnered with Kimball Sustainable Healthcare to lead a workshop for local hospitals on improving refuse quality management.
- Commercial: Environment Now conducted waste assessments for two businesses as part of its ongoing Compliance Verification effort to assess businesses' capacity to remove blue recycling and green compost services and promote proper sorting practices.
- Commercial: Environment Now recruited eight restaurants for the Commercial Reuse program to promote a transition from single use foodware to reusables. Environment Now focused on training new staff and outreach in District 11.
- Construction and Demolition: Staff approved 209 initial plans and 119 final summary reports with 4,092 tons of debris recovered at an average recovery rate of 71%. In addition, staff issued 35 Inspection Reports from field inspections and Green Halo monitoring, including 28 Notices of Violation (NOV), three Warnings, and four Requests for Documentation resulting in correction of 93% of all NOV's within a defined cure period and 57% of NOV's issued for Violation #2 resulting in a new permit application. Staff also conducted outreach to 150 C&D contractors with Green Halo material reduction and recovery plans to remind them of the C&D debris recovery requirements, answer questions, and provide support as needed.
- Environmental Justice: Environment Now conducted outreach to four affordable housing sites via door-to-door engagement, presentations, and tabling, reaching 160 residents including 15 engagements in Cantonese and 51 in Spanish.
- Residential: Staff issued eight Notices of Non-Compliance and approved three Plans related to the Refuse Separation Ordinance. Staff reviewed and approved zero waste events plans for the Portola Music Festival and Castro Street Fair, both of which met zero waste event requirements. Staff also provided a Zero Waste training to 10 residents at Mercy Housing and the Sister Lillian Murphy Community in District 6. SFE also collaborated with the SFPL North Beach Branch to host a Fix-it Clinic offering clothing repair services to residents.
- Zero Waste: The Department submitted its Refuse Separation Compliance Ordinance (RSO) report to the Board of Supervisors, as required under the RSO ordinance and the Environment Code, Chapter 19. The report covers activity from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023, and is included as an appendix to the Director's report.

Citywide/Cross-Sector Programs or Initiatives

- Administration: SFE submitted its annual Language Access Ordinance compliance report on October 1.
- Climate: Staff participated in BAAQMD's Appliance Rules plenary and Technical, Equity, and Steering committee meetings.
- Energy: Staff supported the BayREN Regional Forum, titled "Building Resilience: Keeping the Lights on in an All-Electric Future," where building officials, architects, and sustainability experts discussed technologies and programs to improve operational resilience in homes.

- Green Building: Staff collaborated with AIA-California and Green Cities to deliver a roundtable with architects and local governments on a new construction decarbonization option in CalGreen standards.
- Green Building: Staff presented San Francisco’s commercial building benchmarking, efficiency, and renewable electricity requirements to the Commercial Real Estate Professionals Network.
- Green Building: Staff attended the California Building Electrification Summit, where the California Energy Commission announced its goal to install six million new heat pumps statewide by 2030.
- Healthy Ecosystems: SFE and other City staff attended the San Francisco Estuary Institute’s Ecology for Health meeting in Richmond, CA.
- Healthy Ecosystems: Staff attended and tabled at the California 30X30 Partnership Gathering in Riverside, CA, the first 30X30 event in California since COP15.
- Racial Equity: Staff working in community outreach attended a Be The Change workshop focused on best practices for community engagement.
- Racial Equity: SFE collaborated with Booker T. Washington and BAYCAT to develop and submit the final version of the Racial and Social Equity Assessment Tool (RSEAT 2.0) as well as an introductory video to the grantor, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance.
- Racial Equity: Staff supported the American Indian Cultural District’s CHHESS Focus Group Gathering on Climate Resilience and Land Use at the Crissy Field Center.
- Zero Waste: Environmental Education and Zero Waste staff presented on sustainable farming and stewardship to 165 third grade students for Urban Agriculture Youth Day.
- Zero Waste: Staff collaborated with SFUSD to table at a compost giveaway at the Academy at McAteer on October 28. Staff distributed approximately 10 cubic yards to roughly 60 attendees. Staff also participated in the West Coast Reusable Foodware Forum steering committee and launched its inaugural webinar, which attracted 70 attendees from local governments around the West Coast.

State and Federal Collaboration

- Zero Waste: Staff provided comments to CalRecycle on updates to SB 1013 regulations governing beverage container recycling.

Press and Media Highlights

- [**'Nature is not a luxury': Alliance aims to make SF more biodiverse for wildlife and residents**](#)
 “‘Nature is not a luxury, it’s a necessity,’ said Tyrone Jue, director of the San Francisco Environment Department. ‘I am excited to work together with our diverse partners to bring more nature into every neighborhood, especially those who face environmental injustices. Every San Franciscan should enjoy the beauty and benefits of nature and join us in creating a greener, healthier, and more livable city for everyone’” (MSN Local News).

- [San Francisco nature alliance wants to paint the city green](#)**
 "Just 5% of the city has green spaces with biological diversity, Tyrone Jue, director of the San Francisco Environment Department, said at a press conference announcing the initiative" (Axios).
- [San Francisco Announces Extreme Weather Resilience Program to Support Community Organizations for Extreme Weather](#)**
 "'We can stop the climate crisis, but we must act now. The Extreme Weather Resilience Program partners with our community organizations to shield our most vulnerable communities from heat and smoke. This program is not only a lifesaver, but also a game-changer,' said Tyrone Jue, Director, San Francisco Environment Department" (Mayor Breed Announcement).
- [Cashing In on the Future of California's Bottle Deposit System](#)**
 "'Our ultimate goal for CRV is to rapidly increase how many people are redeeming... getting more money back into people's pockets,' said Charles Sheehan, chief policy and public affairs officer with San Francisco's Department of the Environment. Since the program kicked off last year, Sheehan said the department recycled more than three million bottles and cans and paid out about \$190,000 in CRV as of this summer" (KQED).
- [SF campaign aims to harness nature for benefit of residents](#)**
 "At the rollout for Reimagining San Francisco the director of the city's Environment Department, Tyrone Jue, noted that when viewing the city from the air, greenspaces account for less than 5% of the city, meaning there is an opportunity to activate the other 95% through the new initiative. While pointing out that the city's climate action plan calls for having net zero carbon emissions by 2040, more still needs to be done to address the impacts of a warming planet, said Jue" (Bay Area Reporter).
- [San Francisco startup wants to help you electrify your home](#)**
 "The city is awaiting a decision on whether the city will receive a grant to begin testing virtual power plants, Tyrone Jue, director of San Francisco's environment department, told Axios. Jue envisions some technical challenges around getting different virtual power plants connected to each other but thinks 'it's imminent we'll see scaling of virtual power plants'" (Axios).
- [San Francisco Releases Updated Climate Action Plan With A New Chapter Focusing On Water Supply And Conservation](#)**
 "'As robust and comprehensive as San Francisco's Climate Action Plan is, it must be routinely re-evaluated and updated in order to be adaptable and effective in addressing the growing impacts of climate change,' said Tyrone Jue, Director of the San Francisco Environment Department. 'I'm grateful to the SFPUC's leadership for the long-term investments in resilience and sustainability, and I look forward to the progress yet to come'" (SFPUC).
- [Can heavy-duty plastic bags really be reused as many times as industry says? ABC7 puts them to test](#)**
 "'Overnight, like at our recycling facility, Pier 96, it was like plastic bags went away and they were no longer a problem,' revealed Charles Sheehan of the San Francisco Department of the Environment" (ABC 7).
- [San Francisco is Home to State's First Green Certified Nail Salon](#)**
 "[Minhthu] Le says often nail salon workers either don't connect their health symptoms to the workplace, or if they do, don't know how to limit their contact to potentially harmful chemicals. 'We go out to train the salons and all the staff at the most convenient times, so just let us know how we can

help them to reduce exposure to better health in the long-term.' Le says the city is working on rewarding business owners who work toward green certification" (KQED).

- [Biden-Harris Administration Announces Over \\$13 Million in California for Environmental Justice Projects as Part of Investing in America Agenda](#)

"The San Francisco Department of Environment will receive \$1 million for a project will engage the city's environmental justice communities to recommend and implement community-led climate action and use this engagement to inform ongoing implementation of the city's Climate Action Plan" (EPA).

Public Events/Conferences (e.g., conferences attended, speaking engagements, travel for work)

- Administration: Leo Chyi attended Bloomberg CityLab 2023 in Washington, DC. The conference highlighted innovative practices from cities worldwide, with the goal of strengthening networks, fostering collaboration, and promoting successful models that can be adapted and replicated.
- Clean Transportation: Staff attended the 2023 Clean Cities 30th Anniversary Celebration and Stakeholder Summit and the 2023 Clean Cities Training Workshop in McLean, VA, on September 6-8. Over 300 participants, including representatives of 75 Clean Cities coalitions, attended the event to discuss Clean Cities partnerships and the future of transportation.
- Clean Transportation: Staff participated in a panel titled "Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Climate Action Planning in the Region" at the Bay Area TDM Summit 2023 on September 22. The event was scheduled as part of the Association for Commuter Transportation's National TDM Week and the Bay Area's Transit Month.
- Clean Transportation: Clean Cities Coalition interns staffed Charge Across Town's annual EV Week at Pier 27 on October 7-8. The event featured several EV and e-bike test drive opportunities and educational events highlighting charging solutions, environmental benefits, and incentives. Staff and interns also attended a panel discussion on October 6.
- Clean Transportation: Staff attended the Micromobility America conference on October 19-20 in Richmond, CA. Staff participated in a panel titled "Delivering Change: How to Get More Couriers on Two-Wheels."
- Climate: SFE staff attended the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) annual meeting in New Orleans, LA, on October 23-25. The event highlighted sustainability, resilience, and equity.
- Energy: Staff attended the California Energy Commission and Electric Power Research Institute's Building Decarbonization Summit on October 10-11, in Sacramento, CA. The summit highlighted affordable, reliable, and equitable opportunities to electrify residential and non-residential buildings.
- Green Business: Staff presented to the Bayview Merchants Association on October 26. The presentation encouraged businesses in the Bayview to join the Green Business program and take advantage of related rebates.
- Green Business: Staff presented to En2Action's Ujamaa Kitchen cohort, a group of eight start-up food service businesses, on October 26, and highlighted the benefits of induction stoves.

- Policy: Staff presented at the Bay Area Youth Climate Summit at the California Academy of Sciences on November 14. The presentation highlighted the policy process and the role of a Racial Equity Assessment in drafting citywide policies. Commissioner Angelique Tompkins attended and helped introduce Department staff.
- Toxics Reduction: Staff tabled at the Excelsior neighborhood's Sunday Streets event on October 15. Staff engaged 75 residents on topics related to energy and toxics reduction.
- Toxics Reduction: Staff attended a hybrid household hazardous waste informational exchange event on September 7. The event included CalRecycle policy updates and brainstorming opportunities on HHW projects.
- Toxics Reduction: Staff participated in the California Invasive Plant Council Symposium on October 25-28 in Chico, CA. Attendees discussed integrated pest management strategies to limit the spread of invasive species, including mechanical practices and biological controls limiting the application of harmful pesticides.
- Zero Waste: Staff attended the Product Stewardship Institute Forum in Portland, OR, which highlighted updates to extended producer responsibility policies and programs.
- Zero Waste: Staff presented at Swissnex, a project of the Government of Switzerland, on San Francisco's organics circularity system. The presentation attracted more than 300 attendees, including the Mayor of Zurich.
- Zero Waste: Staff presented on waste reduction strategies at the Coast Waste Management Association's annual conference, which attracted approximately 300 attendees from British Columbia and beyond. Staff also presented on environmental policymaking at the International Interior Design Association's (IIDA) Climate Action Hall, which attracted about 65 attendees.

Incoming – Proposals submitted and grants and contracts awarded TO the Department

- SFE was selected to receive a \$1 million Government-to-Government Environmental Justice Grant from the US EPA. SFE will partner with Bayview Hunters Point Community Advocates to implement the community-led climate action project.
- SFE was awarded \$400,000 from the U.S. DOE's Building Upgrade Challenge. This challenge seeks to decarbonize and improve energy efficiency in residential and non-residential buildings. The funding will be used to develop an implementation plan to install 200 low-voltage hot-water heat-pumps in 200 homes, in 200 days, in San Francisco's Bayview-Hunters Point and adjacent neighborhoods. SFE will collaborate with PODER, Rising Sun for Opportunities, QuitCarbon, and the Climate Equity Hub.
- SFE was awarded a \$15,000 grant from Bright Cities, a project of Healthy Babies, Bright Futures. This grant will support the Department's work to implement the Healthier, Cleaner, Quieter Communities Act (the San Francisco ordinance banning the use of gas-powered landscaping equipment). Grant funds will be used to identify hard-to-reach, low-income, primarily Spanish-speaking workers and owners in the landscaping and grounds maintenance industry and support their transition to zero emission equipment.
- SFE worked with SF Rec and Park to support their application to CARB's Advanced Technology Demonstration and Pilot Projects grant. If awarded, this \$780,000 grant will help Rec and Park

transition hundreds of landscaping tools to electric, particularly equipment stored or used in the southeastern neighborhoods and Civic Center area.

Outgoing – Requests for Proposals released, and grants and contracts awarded FROM the Department

Solicitations/Requests for Proposals Released:

- SFE released an RFP to select a qualified organization to lead bicycle repair at City-coordinated community repair events (September 15).
- SFE released an RFQ to select a co-applicant(s) for a grant application to the California Energy Commission's General Funding Opportunity (GFO)-23-301: Energy Efficiency and Load Flexibility in Industrial and Commercial Cold Storage Facilities (September 20).

Awards Issued:

- Local Motion LLC was awarded a grant in the amount of \$59,716 for bicycle repair at City-coordinated community repair events from an RFP issued in September (October 13).

Ethics

- The City Attorney's Office provided an ethics training to Department staff on September 12. The training highlighted rules and best practices regarding conflicts of interest, behested payments, gifts, and related issues.
- All Commissioners required to complete Form 700 (assuming office) filings and Ethics and Sunshine Training did so by the respective deadlines. Filers included: Angelique Tompkins.
- All departing Environment Department staff completed Form 700 (leaving office) filings by their respective deadlines. Filers included: Cara Gurney and Maggie Johnson.
- SFE received a gift of \$950 in travel costs from the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance (CNCA) for staff to attend the 2023 CNCA Annual Conference in Toronto, Canada; a gift of \$1,004 in travel costs from the Arbutus Foundation for staff to attend a composting panel discussion in New York, NY; and a gift of \$2,000 in travel costs from the Aspen Institute for staff to attend the Bloomberg CityLab Conference in Washington, DC.

Staff Updates

- The Climate and Healthy Ecosystems team welcomed Lauren Crane as its new McCarthy Fellow.
- The Clean Transportation team welcomed Joshua Berman as its new Clean Transportation Specialist and Skyler Seamons and Edna Aguilar as its new Clean Cities Coalition Interns.
- The Community Partnerships and Engagement team welcomed Adriana Castillo as its new Assistant Community Engagement Coordinator; Simone Koskinen Diaz as its new Environmental Education Coordinator; and Teron McGrew as its new California Climate Action Fellow.

- The Toxics Reduction team welcomed Maxine Schulte as its new Residential Toxics Reduction Associate and Valerie Vines as its new Toxics Reduction Assistant Coordinator.
- The Zero Waste team welcomed Callie Shiang as its new California Climate Action Fellow.

GLOSSARY

ABAG: Association of Bay Area Governments
 ACCO: Association of Climate Change Officers
 AOA: Apartment Owners Association
 BAAQMD: Bay Area Air Quality Management District
 BOMA: Building Owners and Managers Association
 BayREN: Bay Area Regional Energy Network
 BC3: Business Council on Climate Change
 C40: C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group
 CAEECC: California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee
 CAISO: California Independent Systems Operator
 CalGreen: California State Green Building Code
 CARB: California Air Resources Board
 CBO: Community Based Organization
 CEC: California Energy Commission
 COIT: Committee on Information Technology
 CNCA: Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance
 CPSC: California Product Stewardship Council
 CPUC: California Public Utilities Commission
 DBI: SF Department of Building Inspection
 DER: Distributed Energy Resources
 DOE: U.S. Department of Energy
 DPH: SF Public Health
 DOT: U.S. Department of Transportation
 DTSC: California's Department of Toxic Substances Control
 ECBO: Existing Commercial Building (energy benchmarking) Ordinance
 EJ: Environmental Justice
 EPA: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 EV: Electric Vehicle
 EVWG: Electric Vehicle Working Group
 FAA: Federal Aviation Administration
 FCEV: Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles
 FUF: Friends of the Urban Forest
 GARE: Government Alliance on Race and Equity
 GHG: Greenhouse Gas
 HERO: Home Energy Renovation Opportunity HOPE SF: Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere, San Francisco
 HHW: Household Hazardous Waste
 ILG: Institute for Local Governments
 IOU: Investor-Owned Utility
 IPM: Integrated Pest Management
 kW: Kilowatt
 kWh: Kilowatt hour
 LBNL: Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

LEED: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System
LGC: Local Government Commission
LGSEC: Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition
NCRA: Northern California Recycling Association
NREL: National Renewable Energy Laboratory
PACE: Property Assessed Clean Energy
PEV: Plug-in Electric Vehicle
PV: Photovoltaic
RAD: Rental Assistance Demonstration
SFE: San Francisco Environment Department
SFECC: San Francisco Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee
SFHSA: San Francisco Human Services Agency
SFO: SF International Airport
SFMTA: San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency
SFPL: San Francisco Public Library
SFPUC: San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
SFPW: San Francisco Public Works
SFUSD: San Francisco Unified School District
Title-24 2016: California Energy Code 2016 version
UCSF: University of California, San Francisco
UFC: Urban Forestry Council
USDN: Urban Sustainability Directors Network
USDOE: United States Department of Energy
USDOT: United States Department of Transportation
U.S. EPA: US Environmental Protection Agency
USF: University of San Francisco
USGBC: United States Green Building Council
ZNE: Zero net energy
ZW: Zero Waste



Refuse Separation Compliance Ordinance Report for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)

Pursuant to the requirements of the Refuse Separation Compliance Ordinance (RSO), File Number 180646, and Chapter 19, Environment Code, San Francisco Environment Department (SFE) submits this report to the Board of Supervisors. The report covers ordinance implementation from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023.

Background

The ordinance subjects refuse account properties that offer roll-off compactor service or have 40 cubic yards or more of refuse service per week, or large refuse generators (LRGs), to visual audits of their refuse once every three years, selected at random. LRGs whose refuse is found through an audit by Recology to exceed passable contamination volume thresholds in any stream (5% for composting, 10% for recycling, or 25% for trash) will fail the audit. After reviewing and verifying an audit failure, SFE will issue a notice and order to the LRG directing them to submit a Refuse Separation Compliance Ordinance Plan (RSCOP) addressing how the LRG will engage and utilize a Zero Waste Facilitator (ZWF). The sole function of a facilitator is to serve exclusively in helping the facility improve refuse separation and bring them into mandatory separation compliance.

Context

Fiscal year 2022-2023 marked the first year of a new three-year compliance cycle of RSO implementation. This is the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic that most LRGs, in particular commercial office accounts, resumed in-person work. As a result, refuse services were adjusted to accommodate the increase in refuse generation. Most audits conducted during the fiscal year were commercial accounts followed by multifamily, affordable housing, and City government buildings.

Implementation Results

FY 2023 Metrics	
Audit Result	%
Pass	25%
Fail	75%
Total	100%

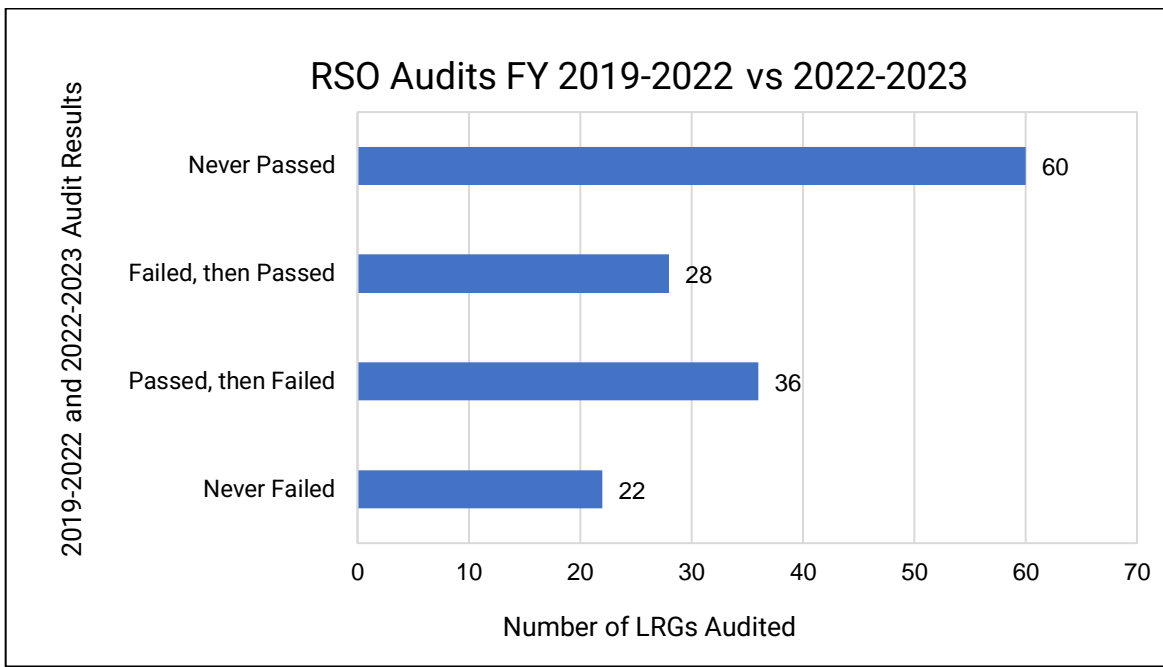
LRGs are audited every three years. As noted above, FY 2022-2023 is the first year of the new three-year cycle. The pass and failure rates of the previous cycle were 57% and 43%, respectively. Among accounts that remained LRGs from the first three-year cycle and were audited during the first year of the second three-cycle cycle (146 accounts), 60 make up 41% that never passed. Twenty-eight accounts represent 19% of accounts that failed previously and passed the audit in the second



compliance cycle. Twenty-two accounts, or 15% of the total, were audited twice since RSO implementation in 2019 and passed both of their audits. In addition, 36 accounts make up the 25% of accounts that passed previous audits and failed their audit in the second three-year cycle.

Thirty-one accounts were added as new Large Refuse Generators and were audited in FY 2022-2023. Twenty-four LRGs account for 77% of accounts that failed their first ever RSO audit, while seven LRGs, or 23% of total new LRGs, passed their first RSO audit.

2023 Metrics versus RSO Cycle 2019-2022



2023 Total Account Metrics by Sector

Audit Result	Sector				Total
	Affordable Housing	Residential	Commercial	Municipal	
Pass	0	7	33	5	45
Fail	15	27	88	2	132
Total	15	34	121	7	177



SFE distributed Notices of Noncompliance and Orders to Comply (NONC) to all 132 accounts that failed an audit. The notices apprise accounts of next steps and require them to complete an RSCOP. Once the RSCOP is approved, the account executes its compliance plan, which may have several components but must include the hiring of a Zero Waste Facilitator.

SFE continues to observe LRGs that struggle to pass audits for each stream, particularly the trash stream, without engaging the support of a ZWF. Currently, each sector except City Government has a higher fail rate than in the previous cycle. The high audit fail rate of 75% can be attributed, but not limited to, the following factors:

- Lack of audit preparation from new LRGs
- Audits occurring before onsite sorters perform their jobs
- ZWFs not fulfilling their duties
- Internal hires for the role of ZWF needing more guidance
- For commercial LRGs, the return of in-person work post-Covid-19
- The complex nature of intercepting material before it reaches a compactor

To that end, 50 accounts audited twice since RSO implementation either never failed or failed in the first cycle and then passed in FY 2022-2023, with most accounts receiving support from a ZWF. Evidence suggests that ZWFs are preparing LRGs to pass their audits and be compliant with the Mandatory Recycling and Composting Ordinance.

Zero Waste Facilitator Workshop

On December 6, 2022, SFE hosted an annual workshop on RSO compliance, regulatory requirements, and best practices for ZWFs. The workshop had more than 50 attendees, who were mainly comprised of ZWFs followed by LRGs, public servants, and Recology representatives. ZWFs welcomed the opportunity to ask questions, troubleshoot field-related challenges, and learn more about Recology's auditing procedure. A recording of the workshop is available to interested parties and has been accessed on at least 45 occasions.

Furthermore, SFE routinely receives inquiries from ZWF companies seeking to be added to the ZWF list, suggesting that the RSO program is attracting companies to San Francisco's green job market. Since January 2023, SFE received 12 inquiries from ZWFs to get added to the ZWF list. Thirty-three ZWF companies were recruited to help properties comply with RSO and 89 full-time employees were committed in RSCOPs completed by LRGs in FY 2022-2023.

Enforcement Regulations Adopted

On June 14, 2023, SFE held a public hearing to introduce its updated Notice of Noncompliance and Order to Comply (NONC), Order Imposing Administrative Penalties, and RSO Enforcement



Regulations, which outline the enforcement process for noncompliant LRGs and potential penalties. Since RSO implementation, several LRGs have been nonresponsive to the NONC and have failed to comply. SFE is prepared to pursue enforcement action against noncompliant LRGs and anticipates an increase in compliance as penalties escalate from \$500 to \$1,000 per day after 60 days of continued noncompliance. On July 11, 2023, SFE's Director signed the RSO Enforcement regulations, which are accessible via the SFE website at www.sfenvironment.org/largerefusegenerator.

Lessons Learned

The pass/fail rate for FY 2022-2023 revealed that both LRGs and ZWFs require greater oversight and technical assistance. SFE's RSO implementation priorities for FY 2023-2024 will revise and improve the existing toolkit based on findings from successful LRGs. SFE will schedule site visits to engage LRGs and ZWFs, prioritize addressing contamination in the trash stream, and communicate best practices for source-separation to LRGs and ZWFs. In addition, SFE staff will dedicate time to study LRGs that never failed or passed after failing an initial audit to gain insight about their approach and inform SFE's RSO outreach and toolkit.

Next Steps

After reviewing implementation data from the first year of the 2022-2025 RSO cycle, SFE does not anticipate a need to amend the existing ordinance or regulations. All new identified LRGs will receive an official notice about the Refuse Separation Compliance Ordinance via mail to their service and billing addresses by August 4, 2023. All accounts that qualify as LRGs will be audited between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2025. SFE expects revised outreach and resources will prepare LRGs and ZWFs to lower contamination levels and be in a stronger position to pass refuse audits. The Department plans to showcase new resources at its upcoming ZWF workshop, which is typically held in the fall. Furthermore, FY 2023-2024 will mark the first year of implementing the RSO Enforcement Regulations, granting the Department the authority to enforce and pursue penalties on noncompliant accounts.

For questions, please contact Kelaia Cruz, Commercial Zero Waste Assistant Coordinator at the Environment Department (kelaia.cruz@sfgov.org).

City of San Francisco 2023 Climate Action Retreat Recap

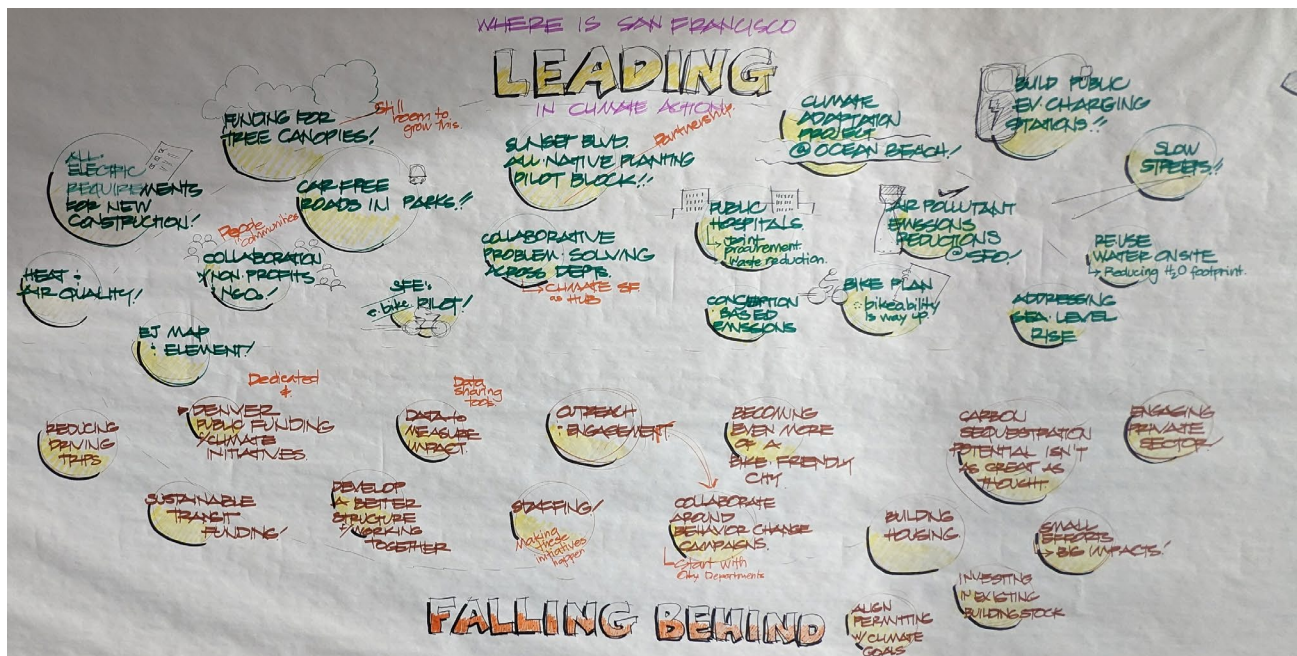
On November 2, 2023, nearly 50 staff from key city departments convened at the Southeast Community Center (SECC) for an afternoon of connecting with colleagues, reflecting on challenges and successes, and creating inspiration for the climate action work that lays ahead. Following is a brief summary of the day:

1. Grounding Us In Place

SF Environment Director Tyrone Jue delivered a land acknowledgement and welcomed and thanked staff for their work and dedication. Emily Rogers-Pharr, Executive Director of the Southeast Community Center, offered a brief history of the area with a focus on past environmental injustices the neighborhood has faced over many decades, and local advocacy that led to the development of the SECC as a healthy and positive place to serve the needs of the community.

2. Celebrating our Climate Action Work

With the help of a graphic facilitator, the group shared achievements to be celebrated, as well challenges and gaps where the City could be doing more.



3. Decompressing and Sharing Hard Truths

This section of the retreat was designed to provide a space for participants to connect on a deeper level, decompress, and share their experiences in the realm of working in climate for city government. Attendees broke into pairs and shared personal reflections.

4. Guest Speaker: Dr. Tendai Chitewere, SF State University

Building on her research of ecological cohousing communities, Dr. Chitewere shared provocative thoughts and considerations at the intersection of climate change and the environmental and social justice movements, and offered hope in creating new ways to engage with each other and the environment at the individual, neighborhood, and government levels.



5. Looking to the Future

After viewing a [video about equitable community engagement](#) created by SFE, attendees reflected independently on the following questions:

- *How do we keep the communities we serve front and center in climate work?*
- *How can we include the community in decision making?*
- *How do you consider environmental justice as you do your work?*

6. San Francisco as a Climate Leader

Robert Stupka, C40's Head of Climate Action Implementation, North America, [presented](#) on the organization's role in advancing local government climate action, as well as observations about gaps and opportunities for San Francisco to consider for its 2025 CAP update. Attendees then moved to small tables to discuss the following questions:

- *What must SF do to be a leading city in climate change?*
- *How can we work together to realize this vision over the coming years?*

As the end of the year approaches, here are some activities planned for the beginning of 2024:

- January: SFE to initiate data collection for annual CAP implementation and indicator updates, and reconvene CAP technical working groups for early discussions on work plans, schedules, and roles.
- February: Webinar featuring Dr. Chris Jones from LBNL, who will present on consumption-based inventories and best practices and tools to support behavior-based climate action programs.
- March: bi-annual CAP update meeting for city staff, which will feature a new climate model (for projecting impacts), a preview of the 2022 GHG inventory, and 1-2 department spotlights.

SF Environment extends its sincere gratitude for city staff participation in the retreat and for the ongoing partnerships to make San Francisco a leader in climate action, equity, and community resilience, and looks forward to continuing to advancing this work with all involved in the coming year and beyond.