



City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL **DATE: NOVEMBER 19, 2024**

FROM: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT **WARDS: ALL**

SUBJECT: SEPTIC RECEIVING STATION RECEIPT OF DOMESTIC AND COMMERCIAL SEPTIC WASTE; ADOPT AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 14.12.120 AND 14.12.295 OF THE RIVERSIDE MUNICIPAL CODE

ISSUES:

Adopt an Ordinance to amend the Riverside Municipal Code (RMC) Title 14, Public Utilities, and Discharge of Wastes into the Public Sewer and Pollutants into the Storm Drain Systems, Sections 14.12.120 and 14.12.295 to allow receipt of specific non-industrial/non-automotive commercial septic waste.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Adopt an Ordinance to amend the Riverside Municipal Code Title 14, Public Utilities, and Discharge of Wastes into the Public Sewer and Pollutants into the Storm Drain Systems, Section 14.12.120 Definitions, to include definitions for Commercial Septic Waste and Commercial Wastewater; and
2. Adopt an Ordinance to amend the Riverside Municipal Code Title 14, Public Utilities, and Discharge of Wastes into Public Sewer and Pollutants into the Storm Drain Systems, Section 14.12.295 (M) Liquid Waste Haulers, to include Commercial Septic Waste.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE:

On November 5, 2024, the City Council introduced an Ordinance to amend the Riverside Municipal Code Title 14, Public Utilities, and Discharge of Wastes into the Public Sewer and Pollutants into the Storm Drain Systems, Section 14.12.120 Definitions, to include Commercial Septic Waste and Commercial Wastewater and Section 14.12.295 (M) Liquid Waste Haulers, to include Commercial Septic Waste.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Riverside Public Works Department, Wastewater Division, is responsible for the collection, conveyance, and treatment of wastewater for over 93,000 customers within City limits. The facilities consist of over 800 miles of gravity sewers, 400 miles of City laterals, 20 wastewater lift stations, 16,000 sewer manholes, and the Riverside Regional Water Quality Control Plant

(RWQCP) which has the capacity to treat 46 million gallons per day. Additionally, under agreements with the City, the RWQCP provides wastewater treatment for the Edgemont, Jurupa, and Rubidoux Community Services District.

RWQCP also operates and maintains a septic receiving station in which permitted liquid waste haulers dispose of domestic septic waste. This domestic septic waste comes from residential septic tank systems in which quantities and constituent loading are similar to household septic waste conveyed through the collection system. The septic receiving station is located at the Headworks area of the Water Quality Control Plant and consists of a card reader, receiving hopper, pH and conductivity meters, and automated open/close valve. The septic receiving station is open to any domestic septic waste from any of the 24 permitted liquid waste haulers.

Acceptance of Domestic and Non-Industrial/Non-Automotive Commercial Wastes

Riverside Municipal Code Title 14, Public Utilities, and Discharge of Wastes into Public Sewer and Pollutants into the Storm Drain System, section 14.12.295, only permits liquid waste haulers to dispose of domestic septic waste into the septic receiving station at RWQCP. Domestic wastewater is defined under section 14.12.120 as “wastewater from residences, offices, institutions or from other premises resulting from the use of water for personal washing, sanitary purposes or the discharge of human excrement and related matter.” Additionally, the Liquid Waste Hauler permit issued by Environmental Compliance (EC) staff, under Discharge Requirements (#7) states “name and signature of the driver certifying the information included on the Liquid Waste Manifest Form is accurate and only domestic sewage is being dumped at the City of Riverside’s dump station.”

Upon conclusion of the Septic Receiving Station audit conducted by EC staff in January 2023, instances of liquid waste haulers bringing commercial septic waste to the RWQCP were identified. This is in violation of section 14.12.205 of the Riverside Municipal Code. To protect the RWQCP against illicit discharges to the system, staff immediately gathered samples from these locations and set up a meeting with the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 8 (RWQCB-R8) to discuss the findings. RWQCP and RWQCB-R8 staff agreed that additional control measures were needed to maintain compliance and that the best avenue for receiving non-industrial and non-automotive commercial waste was to put those liquid waste haulers delivering commercial septic waste under a Compliance Order.

As of September 2024, one liquid waste hauler has entered into a Compliance Order with City. This Compliance Order will be rescinded upon adoption of a Resolution and Ordinances.

DISCUSSION:

Acceptance of Commercial Septic Waste

Commercial septic waste accounted for 15% of the total septic waste received. RWQCP is capable of receiving and treating approved septic waste from non-industrial/non-automotive commercial sources, pursuant to the above-mentioned Municipal Code amendments and additional safeguards put in place to deter illegal and illicit discharges to protect the wastewater treatment process. These safeguards include:

- 1) Initial and quarterly sample analysis for Oil & Grease, Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), and TSS taken from each commercial site, paid for by the Liquid Waste Hauler.
- 2) Initial and annual submittal of the Grease Interceptor Inspection Form for all commercial sites not within the City’s jurisdiction. The inspection form must be signed by a licensed contractor who is a subject matter expert in the field and will describe the condition, maintenance schedule and list of recent repairs made.

- 3) Initial and annual submittal of a self-certification statement stating that to the best of their knowledge no hazardous waste or chemicals have been dumped or disposed of into their septic system. The self-certification form must be signed by the commercial business owner and the liquid waste hauler.
- 4) Staffing the Septic Receiving Station during normal operating hours.

To verify compliance with the Liquid Waste Hauler permit, random samples will be taken by EC staff and analyzed against the permit’s pollutant limitations. Septage and Commercial wastes are both held to the same pollutant and concentration limits. The Pollutants and Concentration Limits listed in the Liquid Waste Hauler Permit are displayed in Table 1.

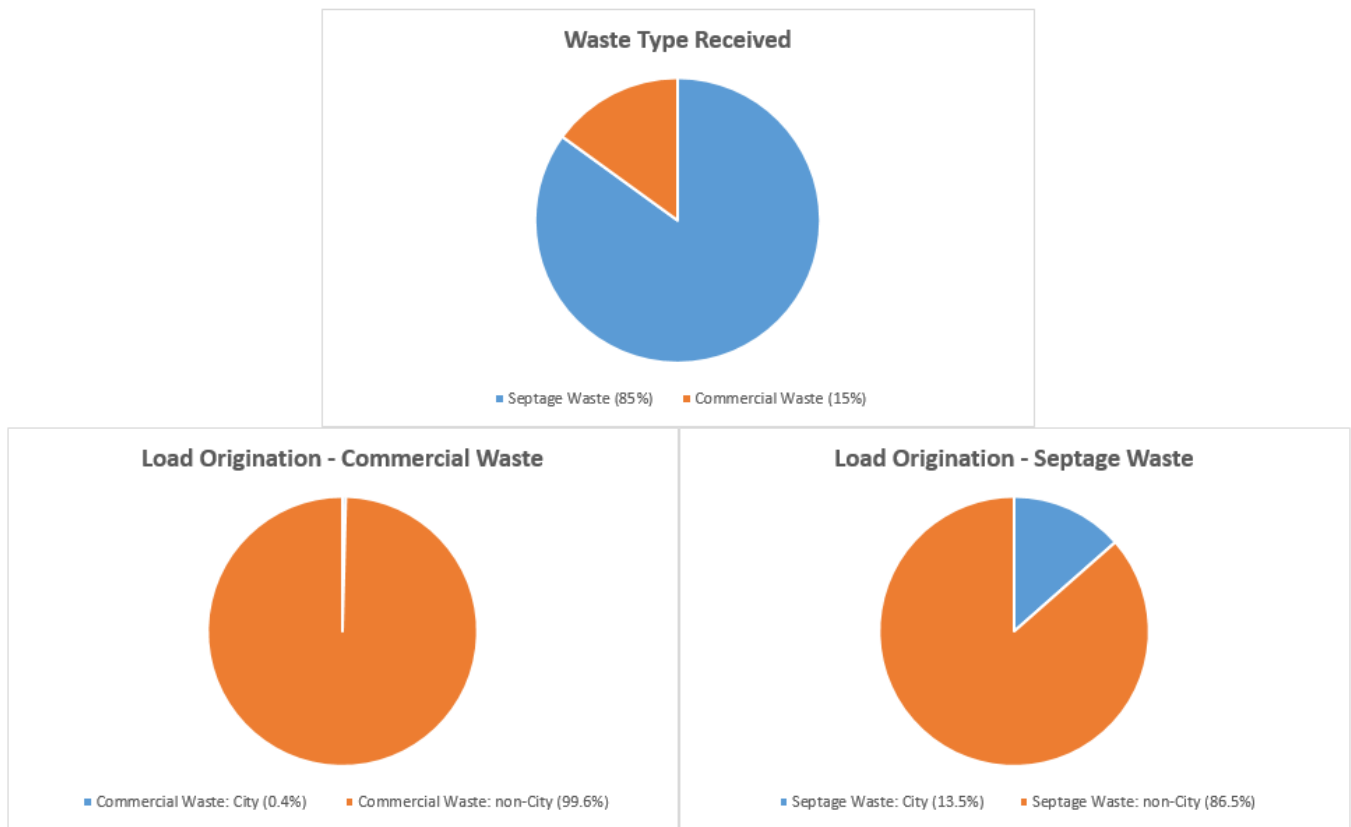
Table 1 – Pollutants and Concentration Limits

Pollutant	Concentration Limit
pH	6.0 – 9.5
Electrical Conductivity	3,000 umhos/cm ³
Chromium	1 mg/L
COD	10,000 mg/L
Copper	3.3 mg/L
Lead	0.75 mg/L
Oil/Grease	500 mg/L
Oil/Grease (Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons)	100 mg/L
TDS	1,210 mg/L
TSS	8,700 mg/L
Zinc	12.5 mg/L

Waste Type and Load Origination

The RWQCP is one of only three wastewater treatment plants in the Inland Empire that accepts domestic septic waste from inside and out of its service area. Chart 1 demonstrates the percentages of septage vs commercial waste volume and the comparison of where the loads originated from information identified in septic receiving station manifests for 2023.

Chart 1 – Origination of Loads



STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This item contributes to **Strategic Priority 4 – Environmental Stewardship** and **Goal 4.4 – Implement measures and educate the community to responsibly manage goods, products, and services throughout their life cycle to achieve waste reduction outcomes**, and **Strategic Priority 5 – High Performing Government** and **Goal 5.4 – Achieve and maintain financial health by addressing gaps between revenues and expenditures and aligning resources with strategic priorities to yield the greatest impact.**

This project aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

- 1. Community Trust** – The proposed rates will allow the city to significantly improve the septic receiving station for residents and regional customers on septic systems.
- 2. Equity** – The proposed tipping fee increase provides that every member of the community pays the same rate to treat sewer and that rate payers do not subsidize the cost of septic receiving customers.
- 3. Fiscal Responsibility** – Adopting new rates will minimize revenue losses to the Sewer fund and allow for critical investment in service.
- 4. Innovation** – Adopting the new rates will facilitate innovative technologies to improve septic load delivery and monitor influent streams for illicit and illegal discharges to the sewer treatment system.

5. Sustainability & Resiliency – The new rates will allow the City to continue to meet compliance requirements of federal, state and local permit requirements.

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Approved as to form: Jack Liu, Interim City Attorney

Attachments:

- 1.
4. Ordinance 14.12.120
5. Ordinance 14.12.295