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Solid Waste Rates Likely to Rise

By Andrea A. Firth

Residential 32-Gallon Rate Comparison

Jurisdiction Monthly Cost (\$)

Orinda	30.75
Martinez	27.45
Lafayette	24.98
Moraga	23.60
Concord	23.00
Danville	19.81
Walnut Creek	17.80

The Contra Costa County Solid Waste Authority plans to increase Orinda's average customer rate by 9.3% due in large part to the fact that residents are producing less solid waste. The Authority's Executive Director, Paul Morsen, told Orinda's City Council that residents have heard the recycle message and responded to the financial incentive to move to the smaller blue can contributing to a decrease in revenue for the Authority. Both homes and businesses have been reducing waste and downsizing their bins. A decline in home construction and remodeling over the past 18 months has also contributed to a decrease in commercial service revenue.

Orinda pays among the highest rates of the jurisdictions in the County serviced by the Solid Waste Authority, only El Cerrito and Kensington pay more (see table). It seems that the hills that are so dear to Orinda's residents are a large part of the reason the waste rates are on the high side. Morsen explained that with Orinda's hilly topography, the trucks pull fewer cans per route. In addition Orinda has more hard to serve areas that require a special, small truck. There are five of these small trucks needed to service Orinda versus just two needed for the rest of the District.

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