CLIMATE CORPS

A PROGRAM OF SEI

Organic Waste Diversion
County of Alameda

State Law and Procurement Requirements

California law SB1383 aims to reduce **organic waste** disposal in landfills. Organic waste such as paper and food scraps release a great amount of **methane,** a potent greenhouse gas when decomposed anaerobically in landfills.

Methane (CH4) is 84x more potent than carbon dioxide (CO2), playing an immense role in rapidly advancing the climate crisis!

To comply with SB1383, the County of Alameda is required to support organic waste markets through **purchasing ~11,800 tons of recycled organic waste product (ROWP)** such as:

- renewable gas
- mulch
- compost

The County is also required to ensure all **paper and paper product** purchases:

- **contain ≥30% post-consumer recycled content**
- **are recyclable**

(Exceptions allowed with justifications.)

As a fellow, I helped the County attain SB1383 compliance in our procurement and reporting practices through developing and implementing comprehensive compliance strategies.

Compliance Strategy

To support the County's ROWP goal, I coordinated with the landscaping team and emphasized the benefits of incorporating compost and mulch on County landscape projects. Landscape benefits include:

- increased water retention
- improved soil health
- improved weed control
- reduced green/organic waste
- carbon sequestration benefits

To help achieve paper and paper product compliance, I worked closely with the County's IT, Procurement, and Auditor's Office teams as well as other stakeholders to develop an effective compliance plan. Strategies included in this plan are:

- updating the County's financial purchasing system to better track paper and paper product purchases
- updating major paper-related County contracts to comply with regulations
- developing a compliance form for vendors selling paper and paper products outside of a County contract
- training and educating County staff with purchasing authority regarding the regulations

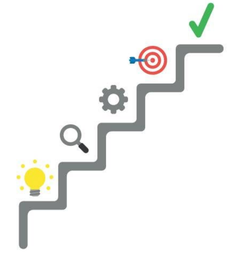
Key Outcomes + Next Steps

ROWP Procurement

Currently, the landscaping team is in the process of procuring mulch and compost for their upcoming projects which will provide small credit towards the County's ROWP target. To increase the County's ROWP procurement credit more effectively and quickly, the County will work towards gaining ROWP credits from other organization's large scale compost procurement through establishing direct service provider (DSP) agreements.

Paper and Paper Product Procurement

Currently, the County is in the process of receiving agreement on the compliance strategy from stakeholders. Once agreement has been reached, the next steps include educating the County staff on the SB1383 regulations, educating vendors regarding contract updates, and testing and implementing the technical updates on the financial purchasing system.



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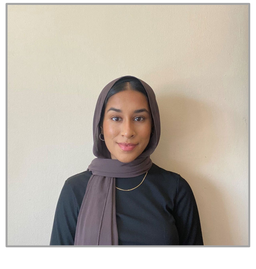
Samira Tootla, 2022-2023 Climate Corps Fellow

Background

Samira received her B.S. in Psychobiology from UCLA in 2020. Prior to working with Climate Corps, Samira worked as a pro bono environmental consultant and pro-bono project manager helping environmental organizations achieve their program goals.

Acknowledgements

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