

THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 1153
Author: Bonta (D)
Amended: 6/18/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE: 7-0, 6/17/26
AYES: Blakespear, Valladares, Allen, Dahle, Gonzalez, Hurtado, Menjivar

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26
AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 75-0, 1/29/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Illegal disposal site abatement

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill authorizes the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) to, upon appropriation, fund the disposal of abandoned recreational vehicles (RVs), and the development of enforcement strategies, including development of local enforcement teams and illegal dumping enforcement officers.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (The Act), administered by CalRecycle, generally regulates solid waste disposal, management, and recycling. (Public Resources Code (PRC) § 40050 et seq.)
- 2) The Act authorizes a local governmental agency to determine aspects of solid waste handling that are of local concern, including, but not limited to, fees to

charge and the extent of providing solid waste handling services. (PRC § 40058-4006)

- 3) Establishes the cleanup program for the cleanup of solid waste disposal sites and the cleanup of solid waste at codisposal sites (i.e., sites that contain both solid and hazardous waste) where the responsible party either cannot be identified or is unable or unwilling to pay for timely remediation, and where cleanup is needed to protect public health and safety or the environment. (PRC § 48020)
- 4) Establishes the Solid Waste Disposal and Codisposal Site Cleanup Trust Fund (trust fund). (PRC § 48027)
- 5) Requires CalRecycle to prioritize grants depending on the degree of risk to public health and safety and the environment posed by the site, the ability of the site owner to clean up the site, the ability of CalRecycle to clean up the site with available funds, maximize the use of available funds, and other factors determined by CalRecycle. (PRC § 48021)
- 6) Requires CalRecycle to pursue reimbursement from responsible parties in an amount equal to the amount expended for the cleanup, a reasonable amount to cover administration, and an amount equal to the interest that would have been earned on expended funds. (PRC § 48023)
- 7) Specifies that any costs or damages incurred by CalRecycle constitute a lien on the real property owned by any responsible party that is subject to remedial action, whether or not the party is insolvent. (PRC § 48023.5)
- 8) Prohibits a peace officer or unauthorized person from removing an unattended vehicle from a highway to a garage or any other place, except as specified. Specifies that the removal of a vehicle is a seizure under the Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution. (Vehicle Code (VC) § 22650)
- 9) Authorizes local governments to adopt ordinances establishing procedures for the abatement and removal, as public nuisances, of abandoned, wrecked, dismantled, or inoperative vehicles or parts thereof from private or public property. (VC § 22660)
- 10) Authorizes the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to administer a local jurisdiction's abandoned vehicle abatement and removal program (AVA Program) and establishes procedures for the abatement and removal of abandoned vehicles. (VC § 22665-22666)

- 11) Authorizes a county to establish a service authority for the abatement of abandoned vehicles (AVA authority) and allows a \$1 vehicle registration fee to be imposed, in the county. Authorizes the service authority to adopt an ordinance establishing procedures for the abatement, removal, and disposal of abandoned, wrecked, dismantled, or inoperative vehicle or part of the vehicle from private or public property and for the recovery of costs associated with the enforcement of the ordinance. (VC § 22710)

This bill:

- 1) This bill authorizes CalRecycle to, upon appropriation, fund the removal and disposal of an abandoned recreational vehicle (RV), the development of enforcement strategies, and the development of local enforcement teams and illegal dumping enforcement officers.
- 2) Requires CalRecycle to prioritize projects in disadvantaged communities when implementing this bill.

Background

- 1) *Illegal dumping.* Illegal dumping occurs when a person or business disposes of solid waste at locations other than permitted solid waste disposal facilities. Across the state, illegal dumping creates significant environmental, social, and economic impacts. Illegal dumping can contaminate soil and water when plastics, heavy metals, and other waste materials leach into the ground. Permitted landfills are designed to properly contain waste and prevent contamination of surrounding soil and water. In addition, landfills undergo continuous environmental monitoring to help ensure they do not pollute nearby areas.

Illegal dumping also creates substantial financial burdens. Local governments spend tens of millions of dollars each year removing illegally dumped materials. Private property owners may also bear cleanup costs when waste is dumped on their land or when they work to beautify and protect their communities.

Despite ongoing state and local efforts, illegal dumping continues to increase in many parts of California. For example, reports of illegal dumping rose sharply earlier this year compared to the same period in 2024. According to data compiled by Crosstown LA, reports of illegally discarded trash, furniture, and

other debris increased from 16,212 during January and February 2024 to 22,046 during the same two-month period this year.

A report commissioned by Sacramento County, the City of Sacramento, and the Sacramento Regional Solid Waste Authority found that Sacramento experienced a 32% increase in illegal dumping over the past three years.

- 2) *Illegal dumping technical advisory committee (IDTAC)*. In 2006, CalRecycle established a state and local technical advisory committee to assess the extent of illegal dumping and to develop recommendations to improve the effectiveness of local and regional responses to the problem. Originally established as a task force, the group developed recommendations that were presented to the former California Integrated Waste Management Board in 2007. IDTAC is composed of local government entities, state government entities, nonprofit organizations, and others. The Illegal Dumping Toolbox was created by the IDTAC to provide resources to local governments to help combat illegal dumping.

In 2020, IDTAC completed a Work Plan to develop new and expanded resources and objectives to address illegal dumping. The Work Plan includes priorities and objectives in three areas: enforcement, outreach, and standards. In addition to the Work Plan, the IDTAC has focused on, and provides information to local governments and the public about, the topics of homeless encampments and abandoned vehicles.

- 3) *Government Responsibility for Illegal Dumping?* Local and State policing agencies cite individuals that are caught illegally dumping, but those agencies are not usually responsible for cleanup programs. Instead, different branches of local governments may be responsible for abating and cleaning up illegal dump sites.

Every local government has a different strategy and capacity to address illegal dumping. For example, Los Angeles County has created a web portal for residents to report illegal dumping and prioritizes cleanups of dump sites based in part on the number of residents who report a given site. However, many more counties or cities have no system in place for residents to report illegal dump sites. In some local jurisdictions, local code enforcement is the primary mechanism for abating litter and enforcing cleanups: in others, public work departments have the primary role in organizing cleanups.

However they approach abatement and cleanup activities, local entities are supported in their efforts by CalRecycle, which provides direction, training, and certification of Local Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) that carry out many CalRecycle directives. CalRecycle also administers some limited funding for litter and illegal dumping cleanup projects. These funding opportunities include the Farm and Ranch Grant Program and grants for California Conservation Corps.

- 4) *Abandoned vehicles.* According to the US Department of Justice's Problem Oriented Guide for Police: Problem Specific Guides: Abandoned Vehicles (which includes all kinds of vehicles, not just RVs), factors that contribute to abandonment include the costs of operating and maintaining vehicles, regulation and licensing requirements, and other circumstances, such as using them for shelter and difficulty associated with removal.

Removing abandoned vehicles presents both operational and legal challenges. Vehicles are personal property, and there are constitutional and other laws governing their removal. Generally, abandoned vehicles must be tagged or cited, efforts must be undertaken to identify and notice the owner, and specified time periods must pass before they can be removed. Upon removal, they are generally stored for some time before being dismantled or disposed. RVs often require specialized towing and are more costly to remove and store than cars, and costs vary depending on their size, condition, and location. According to one removal service, costs vary from around \$500 to \$2500 for removal. Another removal service charged \$100 per foot (length), for motorhomes. Estimates for the dismantling of inoperable RVs range from approximately \$5,000 to \$9,000 per vehicle.

- 5) *Abandoned Vehicle Abatement Program.* The CHP's AVA Program was designed to provide guidance for counties that wish to develop and administer AVA authorities. The AVA Program provides a means to remove abandoned vehicles that create a public nuisance or a health and safety hazard. There are currently 37 counties participating in the AVA Program, and additional counties have expressed interest in sample plans to develop local plans that conform to program guidelines. Counties that participate charge a \$1 vehicle registration fee for all vehicles registered in the county, and that money funds removal of abandoned vehicles.
- 6) *Solid Waste Disposal and Codisposal Site Cleanup Program.* CalRecycle administers the solid waste disposal and codisposal site cleanup program, which

allocates \$1 million annually for public entities to fund illegally disposed waste removal and disposal, security measures (i.e., fences, signs, etc.), and health and safety measures associated with the cleanup. Grant awards are limited to \$50,000 per applicant per year. According to CalRecycle, the current balance of the Solid Waste Disposal Site Cleanup Trust Fund (SWTF) is \$1.2 million. The existing grant programs were oversubscribed by an average of 235% over the past three years, with the illegal disposal site abatement grant program oversubscribed by 323%. CalRecycle has utilized approximately 45% of its SWTF budget for department-managed projects, with \$5.3 million in projects currently under development and an additional \$4.2 million in projects under review and for future consideration.

Comments

- 1) *Purpose of Bill.* According to the author, “Across California, the growing number of abandoned recreational vehicles (RVs) is creating significant public health, safety, and environmental hazards in our communities. Currently, local governments lack adequate resources and authority to properly address the removal and disposal of these vehicles. The cost to dismantle and dispose of RVs can reach up to \$9,000 per vehicle, far exceeding what most cities can absorb in their illegal dumping budgets.

“AB 1153 the Funding Clean Streets Act ensures that local governments have the tools they need to tackle this growing issue by expanding CalRecycle’s Illegal and Abandoned Disposal Sites Program to cover abandoned recreational vehicles. This bill will help protect our communities, improve public safety, and ensure clean and accessible streets for everyone—especially in neighborhoods that have historically been overburdened by illegal dumping and environmental neglect.”

- 2) *What funds, expended how?* AB 1153 would tap in CalRecycle to, upon appropriation, develop regulations to specify how funds for removal and disposal of an abandoned recreational vehicle and enforcement strategies shall be expended in coordination with existing local enforcement activities. This will use state resources to address an emerging problem that currently rests primarily on the shoulders of local agencies.

Related/Prior Legislation

SB 1230 (Valladares, 2026) would increase the fines for the illegal dumping of waste matter for repeat offenders and requires the CalRecycle to act as a resource for cities and counties to address illegal dumping through the creation of a website. SB 1230 is currently on the Senate Floor.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

According to the assembly appropriations committee, SB 1230 will incur:

- Ongoing cost pressure of an unknown but potentially significant amount, possibly in the hundreds of thousands of dollars annually (Solid Waste Disposal Site Cleanup Trust Fund [SWTF]), to CalRecycle's cleanup program in order to fund the removal and disposal of abandoned RVs and for the other purposes stated in this bill.
- Unknown but likely significant ongoing costs, likely in the hundreds of thousands of dollars annually (SWTF or other special fund), for CalRecycle to promulgate regulations, develop grant program criteria and application materials, implement the grant program, and provide ongoing assistance to grantees, among other things.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/14/26)

Alameda; County of
California State Association of Counties
Californians Against Waste
City of Alameda
City of Milpitas
East Bay Municipal Utility District
Emeryville; City of
League of California Cities
Los Angeles County
Rural County Representatives of California
Yorba Linda Water District

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/14/26)

1 Individual

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 75-0, 1/29/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Arambula, Gipson, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Valencia

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8/14/26 15:13:15

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