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February 12, 2018

NOTE: This letter contains important information regarding trash and recyclable collection.

Dear Clear Lake Friends and Neighbors:

We hope this letter finds you warm and healthy no matter where you are this time of year!

As you may recall, late in 2017 we asked for your feedback as we evaluated our new waste collection contract for 2018. Over 200 of you generously provided important input on our survey – thank you! The primary issue was whether the Town of Clear Lake would switch to uniform garbage and recycling carts instead of our current unlimited waste container status. Our current contractor, Washler Sanitation, told us that if we continued our current unlimited trash pickup our rates would increase by approximately 30%. In addition, two other possible providers, Republic Services and Waste Management, told us they would not consider providing unlimited collection, they would only consider using company provided carts. According to the survey, 68% of respondents favored the change to carts. Due to the results of the survey and wishing to avoid an unnecessary rate increase, we decided to switch to carts for the collection of trash and recycling. We also hope that carts will help reduce rainwater and animal intrusion, in addition to offering an efficient and cost-effective service for residents.

Town Council published a request for bids for a new three-year contract in mid-January and Washler Sanitation was the successful bidder. Washler offered an increase of 3% per year over current rates. The new contract offers residents three “Unlimited Trash” days per year, instead of our current two, and bi-weekly recycling instead of twice a month. While we always hope to hold costs down, it is worth noting that the 3% increase represents the first increase in cost for waste collection at Clear Lake since 2009. For 2018, the Town will absorb the increase in cost so residential rates will not increase. Town Council plans to approve the Washler contract at the February Council meeting and switch to waste and recycling carts.

Under the new contract, each resident will receive a Black Washler 96/gallon cart for trash collection and a grey Washler 96/gallon cart for recyclables collection. If you do not want to receive a cart for recycling, you must notify the Town Hall by phone, email, or mail by February 28, 2018. Emails should be sent to billing@townofclearlake.org. These new carts MUST be used and only trash and recyclables in these Washler carts will be collected. Trash and recyclables in trash cans, garbage bags, or other carts will NOT be picked up. The current recycling tubs cannot be used and they should be returned to Town Hall at your earliest convenience.

Washler Sanitation has agreed to dispose of old trash cans, old trash carts, and old trash corrals. Any of these materials placed roadside on the morning of collection during May and June will be picked up.

If residents find that the 96/gallon cart is not large enough they have a couple of options:

Option #1 – Residents may purchase stickers at the Town Hall for \$1.00/ea. Garbage bags with a sticker applied placed roadside on the morning of collection will be picked up. ONLY garbage bags WITH A WASHLER STICKER APPLIED will be picked up.

Option #2 - Residents may contract directly with Washler Sanitation to obtain a second cart. Residents need to contact Washler Sanitation for rates and details. Their phone number is (260) 925-8427 and their website address is <http://www.washler.net> .

One concern relayed to us in the survey is that the 96/gallon cart is too large. Washler has addressed this concern by offering a 65/gallon cart for both trash and recycling. If you wish to receive a 65/gallon cart for trash and/or recyclables instead of a 96/gallon cart, you must notify the Town Hall by phone, email, or mail by February 28, 2018. Emails should be sent to billing@townofclearlake.org .

One of the biggest concerns voiced by our community via the survey is that carts will be left out during the week when seasonal residents leave the lake. Under the current ordinance, trash containers can be placed roadside 24 hours prior to pick up. In the past, garbage can “corrals” have allowed residents to store their containers by the road. Washler Sanitation has agreed to allow the use of roadside corrals, but the corral must be three sided so the carts do not need to be lifted in or out. Most existing corrals are four sided and/or too small for the new carts and they will have to be replaced.

The “Unlimited Trash Collection” days will be in June, July, and September. It is our intent to have them the first collection day of the month to coincide with the three major holidays. When the contract is signed the dates are finalized, the information will be posted on the calendar on the Town’s website. The bi-weekly recycling will begin April 2nd and recycling dates will also be on the Town’s website calendar.

Please remember that if you do not want a recycling cart or if you want to receive a 65/gallon trash and/or recycling cart, you must notify the Town hall before February 28, 2018.

Thank you for your assistance with this project.

Town Council, Town of Clear Lake

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