

August 18, 2014

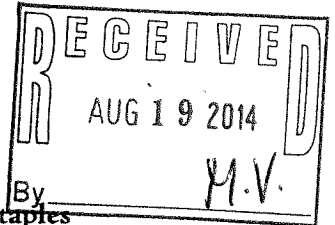
## Advocates for the Environment

A non-profit public-interest law firm  
and environmental advocacy organization



Los Angeles City Council  
c/o Los Angeles City Clerk  
Council and Public Services Division  
200 North Spring Street, Room 395  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Item #10



via U.S. Mail and fax to (213) 978-1050

**re: Los Angeles City Council Meeting of August 19, 2014: Item 10 – Staples  
Contract Amendment to Buy More Paper**

Dear Los Angeles City Council:

Item 10 on your agenda for tomorrow's meeting is an authorization to amend DWP's contract with Staples Print Solutions to spend a large additional amount – almost \$7 million – on paper to be used for sending out DWP bills. Under this program, DWP will bill monthly instead of bi-monthly. The paper to be used is not recycled – it has only 1% recycled content. It will therefore be made by cutting down trees.

\$7 million buys a lot of paper. The documents attached to the City Council agenda state that the price is \$87 per hundredweight, and a hundredweight is approximately a hundred pounds.<sup>1</sup> At a price of \$0.87/pound, \$7 million buys just over 8 million pounds, or 4 thousand tons of paper. Since the yield of paper from wood is approximately 50%,<sup>2</sup> the contract will require the destruction of 8,000 tons of trees.

Destroying 8,000 tons of trees is a potentially significant environmental effect, requiring CEQA review. The exemption cited in the documentation attached to your agenda is based on CEQA Guidelines § 15061(b)(3), which applies to projects “where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment.” That is not the case here. Unless DWP can find a way to mitigate the environmental effects of tree destruction – which include increased global warming – into insignificance, it must produce an Environmental Impact Report.

It appears that DWP has backed itself into a corner by purchasing fancy inkjet printers requiring special paper without considering the environmental consequences of that purchase,

<sup>1</sup> Wikipedia: Hundredweight <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hundredweight>

<sup>2</sup> How Stuff Works: How many sheets of paper can be made from a single tree?  
<http://science.howstuffworks.com/environmental/green-science/question16.htm>

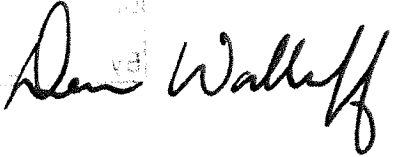
*Los Angeles City Council*

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namely that those printers would require non-recycled paper to function properly. It has exacerbated the environmental effects of this decision by deciding to switch from bi-monthly to monthly billing. Now it must comply with CEQA and either adopt mitigation measures to eliminate or compensate for these environmental impacts, or produce an EIR documenting in detail the effects.

Regards,  
Advocates for the Environment



Dean Wallraff  
Attorney at Law

Cc: City Council Members ( by email)