



March 31, 2020

The Honorable Peter T. Gaynor
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20472

RE: Funding for Solid Waste & Recycling Services During COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear Administrator Gaynor,

The Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) supports the request that FEMA establish a system to compensate the public and private sector solid waste and recycling industry for providing essential collection and disposal services that may otherwise go unfunded through this COVID-19 pandemic. Solid waste management was identified as an essential critical infrastructure workforce in the Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency's (CISA) March 19, 2020 memo, and has been listed as essential in every emergency order issued at the state-level in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This means that the job of managing America's waste and recycling must continue during the pandemic because of the industry's critical role in protecting public health and safety.

This request was made initially in a March 26 letter to FEMA from the National Waste & Recycling Association (NW&RA). Although NW&RA represents some of the companies involved in providing solid waste and recycling services, SWANA is the professional association that represents more than 11,000 individuals employed at both municipal sanitation departments and private companies throughout the United States. Our members, who are located in the field, facilities, and offices in all fifty states, are ensuring that this critical work is completed. About sixty percent of SWANA's members work in the public sector.

The solid waste and recycling industry is united in its commitment to continuing to provide these essential services. We also share a concern about the likely economic consequences of the pandemic. Both the public and private sectors of the solid waste industry will be affected by tightened revenue streams and increased quantities of residential waste due to millions of Americans being under stay-at-home orders. We will continue to meet these demands, while simultaneously incurring additional costs for more worker protections, as our workers on the street and at disposal facilities provide essential collection and disposal services.



SWANA requests that FEMA ensure funding is made available across the country to municipalities and their private sector partners to cover all of the costs incurred to provide these essential services during this national emergency. It is imperative that solid waste management continue uninterrupted at this critical time. FEMA can help protect public health and safety by committing to cover the costs of essential services provided that aren't paid by the service recipients (e.g., customer bad debts).

Thank you for your attention to this letter. If you have any questions, please contact me at (240) 494-2254 or dbiderman@swana.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David Biderman'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

David Biderman
Executive Director & CEO
Solid Waste Association of North America