

September 16, 2021

Madame Mayor, Latoya Cantrell
Council President, Helena Moreno
Council Vice-President, Donna Glapion
Councilmember, Joseph Giarusso
District "A"
Councilmember, Jay Banks
District "B"
Councilmember, Kristin Gisleson Palmer
District "C"
Councilmember, Jared C. Brossett
District "D"
Councilmember, Cyndi Nguyen
District "E"

A news report today in NOLA.COM stated that the City of New Orleans has contracted Ramelli Waste to handle emergency hauling for the service area handled by Richards's Disposal. This emergency hauling contract should have been directed to the New Orleans East area, as trash has not been picked up approaching three weeks in most areas. This is a blatant disregard to address the growing trash problem in this community, which is daily becoming an unsanitary dumping ground in residential neighborhoods. Why has the Mayor or City Council members not spoken up to direct this contract or any other in this emergency situation, to the New Orleans East area? Residents are fed up with the lack of attention directed to this problem and are angered at the idea of placing trash in their vehicles and driving them to the drop off location on Elysian Fields.

According to the State of Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, there should be a Debris Management Plan in place that can be executed immediately after a natural disaster. It states the following

Debris removal is considered Emergency Work within the FEMA Public Assistance Program – that which is performed to reduce or eliminate an immediate threat to life, protect public health and safety, and to protect improved property that is threatened in a significant way as a result of an emergency or disaster event.

- A direct result of the disaster;
- Within the designated disaster area; and
- On property and rights-of-way that are the legal responsibility of the Subrecipient (Applicant).

Typically, Subrecipients are local governments and eligible private nonprofits (PNPs). Eligible nonprofits are those that provide critical and essential governmental-type services.

Coupled with the delayed trash pick-up prior to Hurricane Ida and the aftermath of Hurricane Ida, the City's Debris Management Plan and the Office Sanitation policies have come into question by tax and sanitation fee payers.

Questions:

1. Does the City have a standing Debris Management Plan?

If not, why not?

If, so what is the City timeline and process in the execution of the plan?

Why is it taking so long to activate the Emergency Work within the FEMA Public Assistance Program?

2. Why has no company been contracted out to assist with the collection of trash and debris in the New Orleans East community?

3. Why has NO notification of a scheduled collection time and dates been provided by the City of New Orleans or Councilpersons over the past two months?

4. Will ratepayers be reimbursed for this service, collected monthly for a service that is not being provided?

5. Will collections of Trash/Debris be scheduled in New Orleans East until it is completely collected?

6. When can New Orleans East residents expect the return to two-day collection scheduled?

7. When will a return to the collection of Recycled items begin?

Yes, these are a lot of questions, but they require answering to your constituents. As a resident of New Orleans East and President of the East New Orleans Neighborhood Advisory Commission, I am reaching out to the Mayor and City Council Members to address the problematic issue of trash collection in New Orleans East. As of today, some neighborhoods have experienced no trash collection for over three weeks. As a result, unsanitary conditions are growing daily in our neighborhoods; children will be returning to school this week, being forced to walk/stand near the stench of trash and other debris not collected since Hurricane Ida.

On Saturday, September 11, 2021, trash was picked up in certain neighborhoods in New Orleans East. The observation by residents concluded that only trash cans and white trash bags were loaded onto the trucks. In addition, separations of trash, debris, and vegetation were made as requested. Due to the delay in trash collection, many residents placed the trash in the large black contractor bags. None were loaded on the truck. In addition, why was New Orleans East not on the collection schedule last week for pick-up?

In July, a special City Council Meeting addressing the problem, with the owner of Metro, Mr. Jimmy Woods, in attendance. He stated that trash collection would return to normal at the end of July. He did

state that there was a problem with staffing. Yet, this explanation is still a problem in September! At that meeting, the request was made to notify residents of an updated schedule of when trash would be collected. Although the city uses NOLAREADY, NextDoor, texts, and emails for daily updates, this request never occurred.

Residents paying for this service have not had regular trash collection for four months. Unfortunately, Hurricane IDA added to the amount of trash due to no electricity for several days and Property Damage, yet the City, State, or FEMA provided no additional services.

Hurricane Nicolas has brought another possibility of Flash Floods, yet residents have not recovered from Hurricane Ida. Trash/Debris will get soaked, adding to the unsanitary, unsightly, and smelly conditions in front of their homes or along with mediums.

The New Orleans East community is being negatively affected by this problem, yet other communities serviced by Richards Disposal will be addressed. Metro Disposal has not lived up to its contract and no consequences are being heard to penalize for breach of contract. Therefore, our community members request your leadership and immediate attention to remedy this problem and prevent future garbage collection failures.

Dawn Hebert
President
East New Orleans Neighborhood Advisory Commission