



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Waste Management of Alameda County (WMAC) Deploys Temporary Substitute Workers**

**Oakland, CA, July 2, 2007** – After months of unsuccessful attempts to bring Teamsters Local 70 to the table to negotiate a new contract, the union’s continued refusal to bargain and refusals for labor peace have left Waste Management of Alameda County (WMAC) with no contract and no choice but to bring in temporary drivers to ensure that garbage is picked up in Bay Area communities. Effective 5 pm today, the company instructed Local 70 members not to report to work until such time that the union comes to the table and the parties can agree on a new contract. The size of the Local 70 work force and their continued strike threats in support of locals like Los Angeles created too large a risk of garbage in the streets.

“It’s unfortunate that Local 70 is unwilling to even discuss a new contract that balances the needs of our employees, customers and our communities,” said James Devlin, area vice president. “We want the union to discuss finding a solution to safety issues that protect our employees and safeguard our communities.”

Devlin said that the company worked over the past three months to negotiate an agreement fair to everyone. The union has maintained that they are not required to negotiate over the company’s proposals and refused to offer their own proposal for consideration unless the company agreed to withdraw all proposals from the table.

The company’s current proposal includes above-market increases to wages, pension contributions and health and welfare premiums. The company also has proposed a safety program designed to prevent serious accidents and fatalities in an effort to protect its employees and safeguard the communities it serves. Lastly, the company’s proposal incorporates standard arbitration and “no strike – no lockout” language used in other Teamster agreements throughout the country, ensuring labor peace during the term of the agreement.

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On average, WMAC's Local 70-represented drivers earn over \$75,000 per year in wages alone. Health and welfare is fully paid by the company, at a cost of \$16,500 per year, with no employee contributions and no co-pays. Employees receive almost \$14,000 per year in company funded pension contributions in addition to a host of other benefits.

According to Larry Dias, lead spokesperson for Local 70, the union's position at the bargaining table is to support Teamsters Local 396, which has an agreement with a different Waste Management entity in Los Angeles. That agreement is set to expire on September 30, 2007.

"It's unconscionable that the Teamsters International is selling out their members and making our East Bay communities pawns to be used as leverage in contract negotiations in other cities, such as Los Angeles," said Devlin.

Devlin stated that, without a new agreement, WMAC customers and communities are vulnerable to a surprise strike and other tactics that can interrupt waste collection services. The company's services are vital to public health and safety, and, according to Devlin, WMAC has already experienced questionable absences that have hampered service to its customers.

Effective today, WMAC will deploy temporary substitute workers to provide services to its communities. These substitute workers are professional, experienced drivers from around the country, whose safety record, on average, is 246 percent better than that of the Teamsters Local #70 employees.

Devlin restated the company's hope that the union would return to the bargaining table to negotiate in good faith by discussing the company's proposals or offering its own proposal for consideration. Once an agreement is reached between the parties, workers will return to work.

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