

CONTRA COSTA TIMES

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Bay Point looks for solutions to illegal dumping

By Paul Burgarino
Contra Costa Times

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A town-hall meeting is scheduled this week to brainstorm ideas for addressing the ongoing problem of discarded trash piling up on roadways and other open areas in Bay Point.

Plastic bags filled with discarded waste, tires and large furniture can be spotted along some of the town's busiest roads and near neighborhoods.

Charles Tremaine, who sits on the Bay Point Municipal Advisory Council, can easily rattle off about a dozen places likely to have trash, including Driftwood Drive near Port Chicago Highway, Evora Road near Concord, Solano Road, Canal Road and North Broadway Avenue.

"It's a pretty good-sized problem; it seems like it's just about every place you go," said Sterling Stevenson, who also sits on the Bay Point MAC.

Several abandoned boats, refrigerators, toilets, mattresses and countless bags full of trash have been discarded throughout the community in recent weeks.

Stevenson and others say illegal dumping is something that many hadn't paid attention to in the past. However, the problem has grown recently.

Public works crews used to drive around Contra Costa County looking for junk, but when the annual cost for that topped \$1 million a couple of years ago, administrators decided to scale back and wait until enough trash collects to make it worth the time and effort, county officials have said. Instead, the efforts go toward road safety improvements.

Supervisor Federal Glover, whose district includes Bay Point, said significant resources were put into curbing trash problems in Bay Point and North Richmond years ago but illegal dumping has returned.

The county cutbacks and higher landfill fees likely have contributed to the increase in dumping, Glover said.

Tuesday's meeting at 6 p.m. at the Ambrose Community Center is designed to share measures already in place and to discuss what to do about the problem.

"We continue to have enforcement after the fact, but there are things we can do as a community to patrol and monitor the area ourselves," Glover said.

"The biggest piece is to change the mind-set" and be more active in spotting and stopping illegal dumping, Glover said.

Dealing with illegal dumping in Bay Point is an issue of pride, Stevenson said.

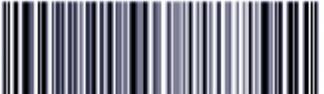
"This is the community we live in. The question is how do people want Bay Point to look and be represented. It could have tree-lined streets and look real clean or have garbage of the side of the road and have a bad reputation," he said.

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Paul Bugarino covers Pittsburg and Bay Point. Reach him at 925-779-7164.

IF YOU're GOing What: Town hall meeting on illegal dumping, hosted by county Supervisor Federal Glover **When:** 6 p.m. Tuesday **Where:** Ambrose Community Center, 3105 Willow Pass Road, Bay Point **DETAILS:** Call Glover's office at 925-427-8138.

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