



Bureau of Street Services

**STREET SERVICES INVESTIGATION & ENFORCEMENT DIVISION**

# City of Los Angeles



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## Illegal Dumping Enforcement Program

# Strategies for Prevention

Four components to reduce illegal dumping:

- Sufficient legal alternatives, convenient dump sites
- Education on the hazards & costs of illegal dumping
- Enforcing local laws and ordinances
- Rewarding and recognizing those that report illegal dumping crimes

# Strategies for Prevention

Enforcement includes recognition of other “quality of life” or code enforcement issues that contribute to illegal dumping:

- Illegal street vending
- Salvage and auto dismantling violations
- Waste tire operations
- Homeless encampments
- Illegal waste haulers

# Strategies for Prevention

During the mid 1990's, the City of Los Angeles initiated an enforcement program utilizing the resources of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) to provide surveillance and the pro-active apprehension of illegal dumpers in target areas.



The program involved the coordination of cleanup services with law enforcement actions. Target area information was based on the frequency of illegal dumping clean up by the City's Bureau of Street Services.



The LAPD successfully utilized reserve police officers to make numerous arrests and impounded vehicles used in the commission of illegal dumping violations.



While successful, the program eventually became a low priority for the LAPD as these resources had to be used to address more serious life threatening criminal activities. The Bureau of Street Services had to explore other enforcement alternatives.

The Bureau used existing inspectors to provide traditional code enforcement support through the issuance of administrative notices and in some cases perform surveillance or make arrests.

Traditional code enforcement had not made the same impact as LAPD's aggressive apprehension program.

# Enforcement Alternatives

The decision was made to establish a pilot program using Bureau code enforcement personnel to perform the same surveillance and apprehension functions formally provided by the LAPD.

# Enforcement Alternatives

Utilizing non-police personnel raised several concerns including:

- Safety
- Adequacy of training to make arrests
- Legal authority to make arrests
- Civil liability

# Safety

Special training provided for Street Services Investigators including POST certified courses related to arrest, search and seizure.



# Safety

Specially trained and certified investigators are provided ballistic vests, pepper spray and the Tasers as personal safety devices. On the advice of the City Risk Manager, a strict training and use of force policy was instituted for investigators.

# Training

The POST training program includes Basic Investigators School and several Advanced Officer Training classes.

Regular update training is provided by the Los Angeles City Attorney and the LAPD on booking and criminal case filing procedures. Refresher officer safety training is provided monthly.



# Legal Authority



A major issue is the legal authority of non-police employees to make misdemeanor arrests and detentions.

Local ordinance authorizes Street Services Investigators to act as “public officers” pursuant to CPC Section 836.5.

# Legal Authority

While this had traditionally been viewed as “citation” authority, nothing in the Section prevented public officers from affecting misdemeanor arrests when the violator did not qualify for cite and release as specified in CPC Section 853.6.

# Legal Authority

Based on the arrest authority granted by CPC Section 836.5, the Bureau of Street Services and the LAPD entered into a memorandum of agreement allowing Street Services Investigators to affect misdemeanor arrest for illegal dumping violations and book arrestees into LAPD facilities.

# Legal Authority

The City Attorney reviewed and approved the agreement. The City Attorney opined that the civil liability protection afforded public officers for cite and release type arrests, would also apply to physical detention, transport and booking by public officers.

# Legal Authority

The City Attorney also revised Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 61.07(a) to grant Street Services Investigators authority to enforce any “law of the State or any ordinance of the City” related to illegal dumping and littering. The revised ordinance also granted investigators the power to seize vehicles used in the commission of illegal dumping violations.

# Targeted Surveillance

Maximum effectiveness requires concentrated enforcement in the areas experiencing consistent illegal dumping and most frequently cleaned by city forces.

Working with the Bureau's cleaning divisions, the local police divisions, Neighborhood Prosecutors and City Council offices, key locations were selected for surveillance.

# Targeted Surveillance

This approach resulted in 92 arrests in one location (Doran Street). Nearly 1,500 cubic yards of debris had been removed from the area in the past year. The suspects were caught by Street Services Investigators unloading bulky items at the end of the cul-de-sac adjacent to the Los Angeles River that has long been vulnerable to illegal dumping.

Doran Street, which is along Los Angeles' border with the City of Glendale, is long known for being a dumping ground, as it is exclusively an industrial area that is somewhat secluded and uninhabited at night.

4560 Doran St.  
Border of Los Angeles / Glendale



# Targeted Surveillance

In the first year of this two-year sting operation, the City of Los Angeles Lot Cleaning Division reported 24 clean-ups, 2,105 cubic yards of debris removed and costs totaling \$43,650 on Doran Street. In the last year, the division reported 20 clean-ups, 1,144 cubic yards of debris removed and \$10,500 in costs related to clean up.

This accomplishment was given significant local exposure to further deter illegal dumping at this location.

# Targeted Surveillance

As part of the targeted surveillance approach, Street Services Investigators address other related code violations in a target area during the surveillance period.

Investigators will inspect the general area prior to starting the surveillance operations and address homeless encampments, residential or commercial placement of trash on public property, illegal vending operations (particularly food vending operations) and any other quality of life concern that may be a factor in the areas attractiveness to illegal dumping.

# Community Outreach/Education

Another component of the targeted area approach is to make a special effort to involve the community.

Investigators meet with local Council offices and attend neighborhood council meetings to educate the community about the problems associated with illegal dumping.

Investigators also inform the community about special bulky item pick ups provided free of charge by the City. Qualified community members are invited to participate in reserve investigator or other volunteer programs.

# Community Outreach/Education

Working closely with Neighborhood Prosecutors, Community Block Clubs and LAPD Senior Lead Officers, Investigators provide information on the City's \$1000.00 reward program for information leading to an arrest and conviction for illegal dumping.

# Commercial Enforcement

To prevent dumping, special attention is paid to those businesses that are more likely to contribute to the dumping of wastes on public property.

Investigators are pro-active in inspecting new construction projects and especially those with permits to import/export due to major excavation projects.





# Commercial Enforcement

Participation in the California Integrated Waste Management Board Waste Tire Enforcement Program is also a component of the pro-active commercial dumping prevention program.

Particular attention is paid to Waste Tire haulers.

# Choice of Codes

Another key factor is a good local illegal dumping ordinance. CPC 374.3 is an infraction or misdemeanor depending on circumstances specified in the Section with variable fines.

LAMC 66.25 is a misdemeanor and not a “wobbler.”

# Choice of Codes

Use of the LAMC has proved more effective than related Penal Code Sections due to the simplicity of the local ordinance.

LAMC 41.70.3 authorizes civil vehicle seizures.

# Dedicated Prosecution Team

Essential to the effectiveness of the program is the specialized Neighborhood Prosecutor Program of the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office.

Each police division is assigned a prosecutor that handles quality of life issues such as illegal dumping. By working with this special group of prosecutors, Street Services Investigators have maintained a 98% conviction rate on criminal cases filed.



# Dedicated Prosecution Team

Investigators and Prosecutors meet regularly to review cases and discuss enforcement strategies.

Field and prosecution activities are closely coordinated to ensure illegal dumping cases are given serious treatment by the courts.

# Restitution

One result of the cooperation between Investigators and Prosecutors is the sentencing of illegal dumpers to court ordered illegal sign removal work.

They are used to remove signs which result in increased fine recovery for illegal sign violations.

# The Surveillance Process

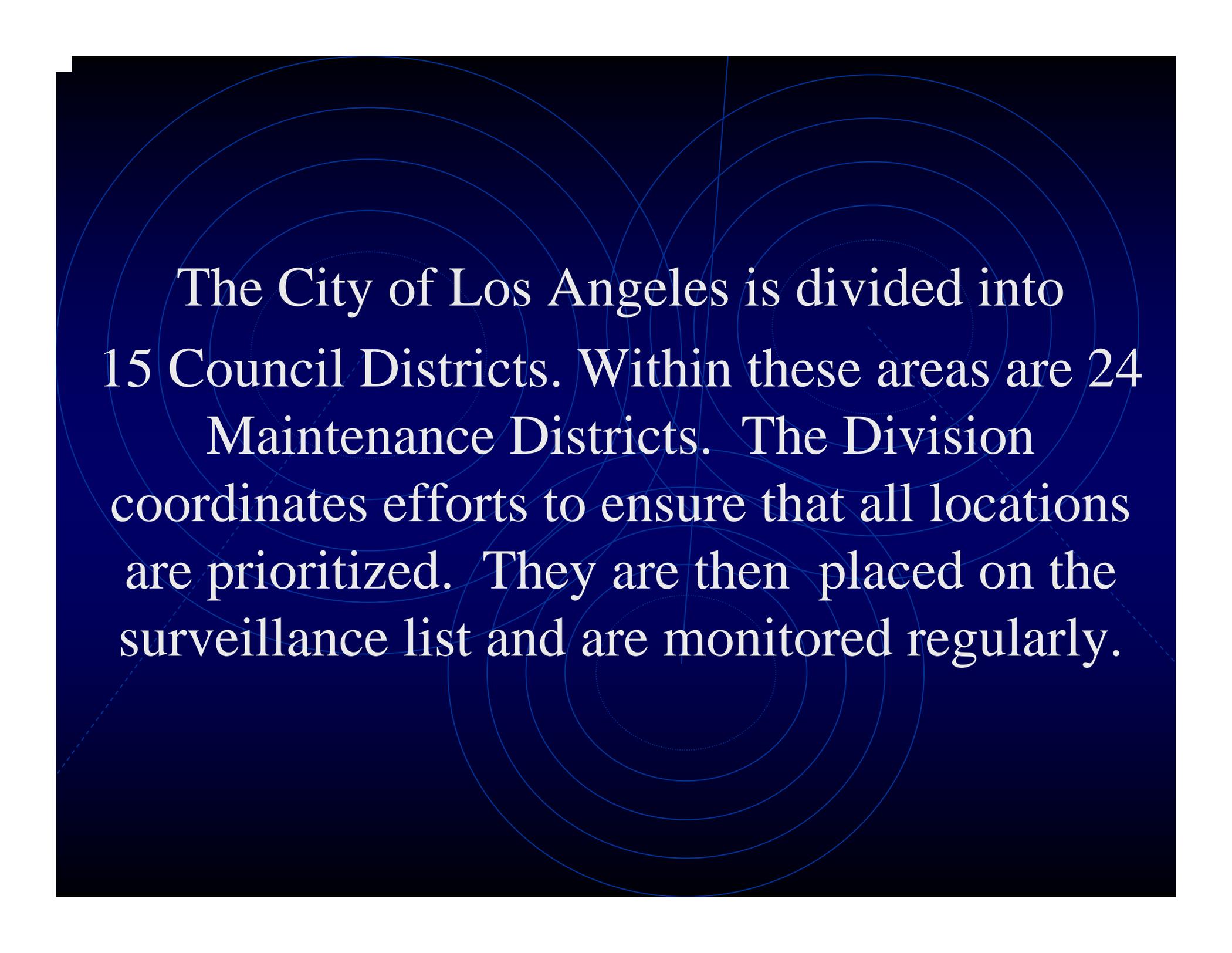


**Part Two**

**Rodney Lucas, Senior Investigator**

# Investigation and Enforcement Surveillance Team

The Illegal Dumping Task Force is comprised of Investigators and volunteer Reserve Investigators that are deployed at locations throughout the city which have been identified as areas with high incidents of illegal dumping.

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The City of Los Angeles is divided into 15 Council Districts. Within these areas are 24 Maintenance Districts. The Division coordinates efforts to ensure that all locations are prioritized. They are then placed on the surveillance list and are monitored regularly.

# NETWORKING

- Mayor's Constituent Services Office
- City Attorney's Office
- Council Offices
- Local Police Division
- Building and Safety
- Lot Cleaning Division
- Street Maintenance Division
- Neighborhood Services Councils

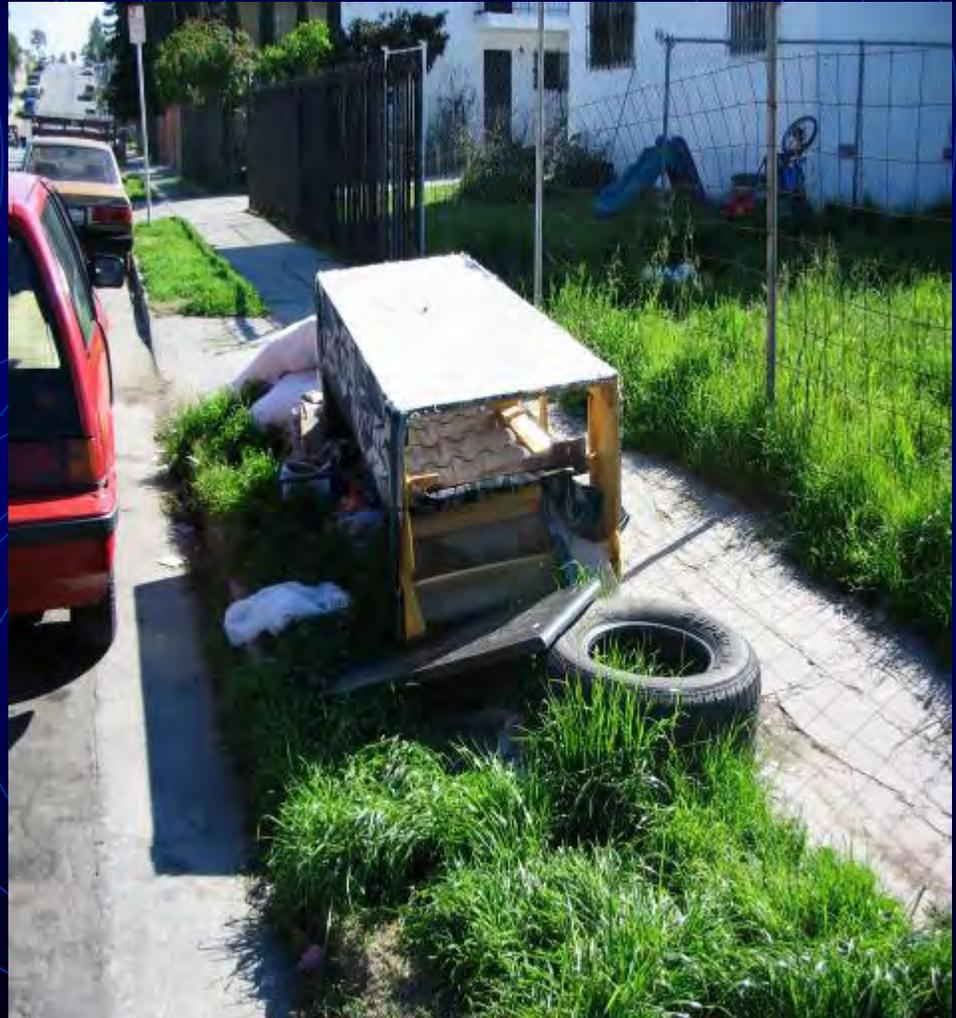
# Setting Up A Surveillance

- Inspection of reported illegal dumping site
- Obtain information from the requestor, police, Neighborhood Prosecutor and council district representatives.
- Rate location as:  
Low , Med or High
- Determine window of opportunity or time of most frequent occurrence of illegal dumping
- Set up an initial surveillance detail



# Setting Up A Surveillance

Locations are rated to determine how resources can be deployed at each location.



# Location Assessment Criteria

- Criminal Activity in Area
- Commercial or Residential
- Street, Alley or Vacant Lot
- Determine Window of Opportunity or Most Frequent Time Illegal Dumping occurs
- Frequency of Cleanup by City Forces

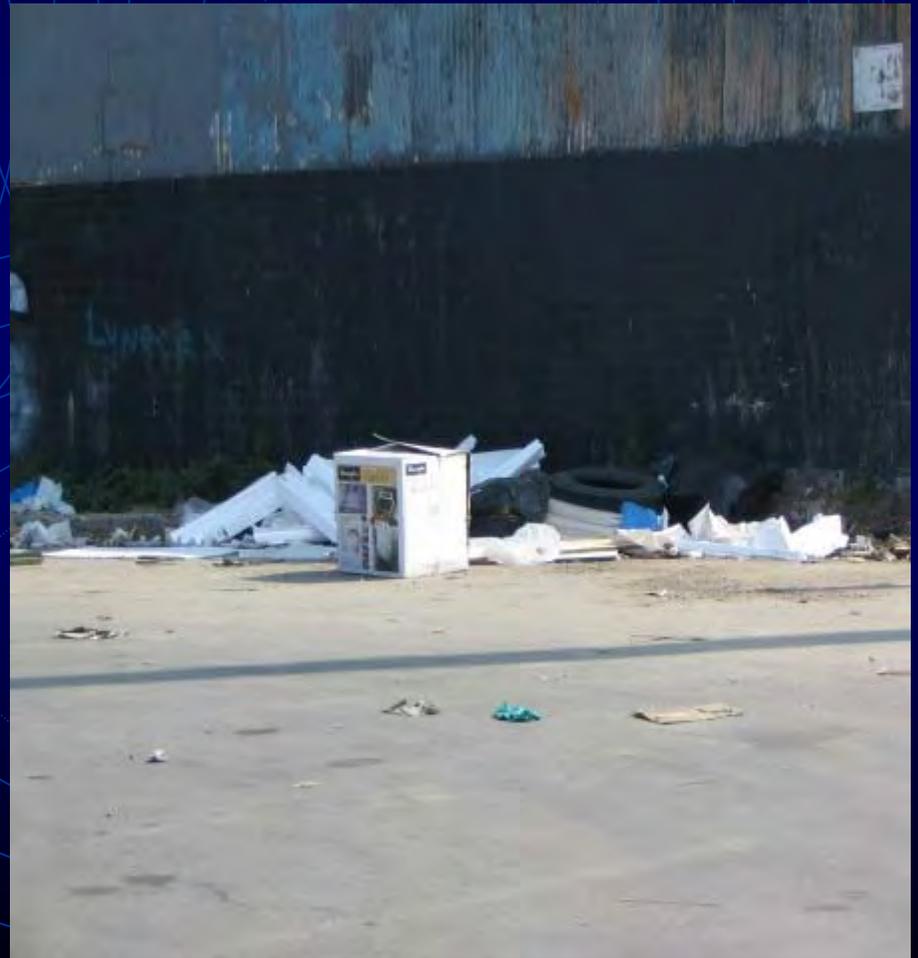
# Alley Dumping

Assessments are made to best determine when surveillance should be conducted.



# RESIDENTIAL

Waste tires are often among garbage discarded from homes, garages and storage facilities



# Team Meeting

Prior to starting any surveillance, a task force meeting is schedule to discuss surveillance plan details and to inform all investigators of the characteristics of the area.

In most cases only two investigators are assigned to an area. However, depending on the size and distance of the area, up to three or four investigators may be deployed.