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Building boom in Toyon

Cal-Waste moves into new transfer, repair complex

By Nick Baptista

The skyline in Toyon, for years dominated by the water tower, has a new feature.

Cal-Waste Recovery Systems has been moving its transfer facility from rented space on the south side of State Route 12 to an eight-acre company-owned site on the north side that includes a newly constructed 14,000-square-foot building now competing as a

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Dave Vaccarezza, left, and Ken Kimmel of Cal-Waste Recovery Systems inside the 41-foot-high, 14,000-square-foot structure in Toyon that will serve as the hub of the company's transfer station for Calaveras County.



Donna Martin Whitaker is the owner of the new storage facility being built in the Toyon area. Units in the first phase of construction are expected to be available in a month.

New storage center has recreation needs in mind

By Nick Baptista

Toyon has been a hub of construction activity lately and one of those projects is Toyon Smart Storage being built at the crossroads of State Routes 12 and 26.

Toyon Smart Storage is the dream of Donna Martin (See Page 2)

Cal-Waste

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focal point in the mixed use area between San Andreas and Valley Springs.

Cal-Waste's new transfer facility wedged between State Routes 12, 26 and Double Springs Road is expected to be nearly finished by the first quarter of next year, said Cal-Waste President Dave Vaccarezza.

Dominating the site is the large white, vinyl-sided structure that will serve as an indoor transfer station. The 41-foot-tall building took 14 days to erect and features better lighting and temperature control than a steel structure, Vaccarezza added.

He is awaiting final approval from state regulatory agencies

before the building is put to use. In the meantime, sorting waste for its final destination is occurring outside.

Vaccarezza and Ken Kimmel, Cal-Waste's Director of Operations for the Mountain Division, explained the importance of the Toyon transfer station in Cal-Waste's overall operations in Calaveras County.

The usual garbage truck has a capacity of three to eight tons and instead of sending them on a round trip directly to the dump or a recycling facility, they come to Toyon where the loads are consolidated and shipped off to their final destination in trailers that contain 23 tons - thus saving on both time and fuel.

Before being shipped off, the waste is sorted into three different categories - trash, recyclables and construction/

demolition materials.

Trash is taken to the Forward Landfill in the Stockton area, while recyclables are shipped to Cal-Waste's state-of-the-art Materials Recovery Facility in Galt and construction/demolition debris is dropped off at Calaveras County's Rock Creek Solid Waste Facility.

Cal-Waste is always looking to improve efficiency and minimize its footprint and the new facility helps accomplish those goals, Vaccarezza said. The site also has solar panels that produce more than 100 percent of the energy needed to run the operation.

All of which benefits the customer by keeping rates lower, he added.

While the indoor transfer facility is the largest building at the site, another key

component is the three-bay indoor repair facility for maintenance of Cal-Waste's fleet of trucks.

Kimmel called it "The Taj Mahal" compared to the company's former repair area across the highway.

The transfer station operates 14 trucks on a daily basis and has 25 employees, 24 of whom live in Calaveras County, Kimmel said. The lone out-of-county employee lives in neighboring Amador.

Just outside of the repair facility is an elevated wash rack to clean Cal-Waste's trucks.

The investment in the new facility is beneficial to Cal-Waste's work force and the company's expanding Calaveras customer base, Vaccarezza said, which has nearly doubled in the past few years.

Storage

From Page 1

Whitaker who has worked in the corporate world for the past 30 years and is returning to her roots to open a family business.

Whitaker attended Mokelumne Hill Elementary School and Calaveras High School before entering the world of commercial appraising

and management.

It was when her father Doug passed away three years ago that she decided it was time to move back. He was a barber in Mokelumne Hill and San Andreas and loved this county, she said. Her mother Nadine worked for the Calaveras County Assessor's Office and still resides here.

"It was time to do something to help myself and be a part of this community," Whitaker said

about her return and decision to go into the storage business.

She purchased the five-acre site in-between State Route 12 and Double Springs Road and has plans for 245 units, the first of which may be available in a little more than a month.

Reservations are now being taken for 10-by-10 and 12-by-25-foot units. The phone number is (209) 340-9664. In the near future, 5-by-10, 10-by-15 and 12-by-30 units will be available.

With the nearby lakes, including the Fiddleneck boat launch just down the road at New Hogan Reservoir, extra wide and big units for boats and RVs seem to be in large demand and difficult to come by, Whitaker said, which sparked her attention in offering those wider units. Twenty percent of her units will be 12 feet wide and the spaces are taller with 11 feet in clearance.

Access to Toyon Smart Storage is off a newly paved private road she installed. The official address is 3603 Freedom Way and that is off Double Springs Road.

With the novel coronavirus

outbreak in mind, Whitaker has concentrated on making rental and use of the storage units "no contact" as far as possible. You can rent and pay for a unit online. In addition, you can enter the facility through a cellphone application.

She is also looking into using no-touch locks that can be opened and closed with the use of your cellphone.

In addition to the automatic no-contact gate control, Toyon Smart Storage will feature top-notch video surveillance, fencing and site lighting.

She is using locals to do most of the work and services to open the business, including Tusk Construction out of Mountain Ranch, George Reed Construction, Gold Electric for installation of the solar system, Tea Break Design and Consulting out of Arnold, Weber-Ghio & Associates out of San Andreas and Eugene Weatherby out of Jackson for engineering and Terra Firma Surveying.

"It's been a good experience so far," she said of her new endeavor. "The planning stage was very long, but the building phase has been incredibly fast."

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