



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
**OFFICE OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 14, 2023

**EPA Regional Administrator Voices Support for Sustainable Waste Management and “Zero Waste” during CNMI Visit**

*CNMI Zero Waste Visioning Workshops: April 18 to 19, 2023*

Senior officials from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) were recently in the CNMI to help launch activities related to CNMI Zero Waste Week, to tour solid waste facilities, and to assess ongoing EPA-funded solid waste projects on Saipan and Tinian. The visit coincided with ongoing efforts to develop the CNMI’s Comprehensive Integrated Solid Waste Master Plan.

On March 30, Regional Administrator of EPA Pacific Southwest Martha Guzman joined Governor Arnold I. Palacios, Lt. Governor David M. Apatang, and other dignitaries in proclaiming March 27 to April 2, 2023 as CNMI Zero Waste Week. The proclamation was part of the CNMI Zero Waste Visioning Kick-off Meeting, hosted by the Inter-island Solid Waste Management Taskforce (ISWMT). In their remarks during the event, Governor Palacios, Regional Administrator Guzman, Mayor of Saipan Ramon B. Camacho, and Mayor of Tinian and Aguiguan Edwin P. Aldan expressed their support for Zero Waste and shared relevant examples of initiatives under their offices that support achieving Zero Waste in the CNMI.

During the kick-off, the ISWMT presented on what Zero Waste is, ongoing Zero Waste initiatives on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, and the timeline for the upcoming months as the CNMI Comprehensive Integrated Solid Waste Master Plan gets developed. A significant next step is upcoming Zero Waste Visioning Workshops as well as island- and resource-specific follow-up meetings in the months ahead. Once submitted to and approved by the EPA, the plan will be the CNMI’s guiding document for solid waste management and will allow the CNMI to access \$56 million dollars in Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act (ASADRA) funding administered by the EPA to the CNMI to support critical solid waste disaster recovery projects.

During their visit, Guzman and the EPA delegation toured Cell 2 of the Marpi Landfill on Saipan and the Super Typhoon Yutu debris site on Tinian. Projects funded by the EPA through ASADRA are taking place at both sites. The rehabilitation of Cell 2 is expected to be completed in June this year.

Once completed, the rehabilitated Marpi Landfill Cell 2 will be more resilient to extreme weather events such as typhoons and will provide the CNMI with valuable space for its municipal solid waste



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for years to come. On Tinian, the emergency cleanup of the Yutu debris site following a fire in June last year is in its final stages. All potentially hazardous burnt waste and soil have been transported off Tinian and sent to Saipan for appropriate processing and disposal.

"Preserving our environment is a top priority for our islands," Governor Palacios said. "Achieving Zero Waste and implementing sustainable solid waste management practices in the CNMI is vital to the beauty and quality of life of our people. We are grateful for the partnership of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and their contributions to the development of our Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan and the incorporation of Zero Waste Practices. We hope to continue building upon this partnership for the benefit of our community and our environment."

"I want to applaud bringing together people and carefully thinking about what are the causes and what are the things that could be diverted and recycled," said EPA Pacific Southwest Regional Administrator Martha Guzman. "It takes more than all of us in this room. It takes a great collaboration of businesses, nonprofits, and communities with expertise— it's an incredible effort."

### **CNMI Zero Waste Visioning Workshops: April 18 to 19, 2023**

The ISWMT invites the community and solid waste management stakeholders to attend the upcoming CNMI Zero Waste Visioning Workshops, happening on April 18 and 19, 2023 virtually and in-person from 8:30am to 11:30am on both days.

During this two-day event, attendees and the ISWMT will review recent collection and survey data to discuss and identify the CNMI's solid waste management priorities and the steps the CNMI can take to achieve Zero Waste.

If you wish to attend, the ISWMT kindly asks you to confirm your in-person or virtual attendance before close of business on April 17, 2023 by sending an email to [joshua.santos@opd.gov.mp](mailto:joshua.santos@opd.gov.mp).

The ISWMT also encourages you to take the CNMI Waste & Recycling Survey, which is open until May 1, 2023. Your feedback will help ensure this process is addressing cross-cutting community waste management priorities!

Please take the survey and pass it along: [www.bit.ly/CNMI-waste-survey](http://www.bit.ly/CNMI-waste-survey).

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