



An Environmental Justice Analysis on Why the Houston One Bin for All Recycling Plan Should Be Dumped

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This presentation focuses on solid waste facilities siting in Houston from the 1930s to present and uses a socio-historical context to frame an environmental justice analysis of the One Bin for All Recycling Proposal.

Environmental Justice Principle



- Environmental justice embraces the principle that all people and communities are entitled to equal protection of our environmental, health, employment, education, housing, transportation, and civil rights laws

Healthy Places and Healthy People

DUMPING IN DIXIE



**Race, Class, and
Environmental Quality**

Robert D. Bullard

- Where you live affects your health and chances of leading flourishing lives:
 - Important indicator of an individual's health:
Zip Code
- Wealth and health are correlated:
 - The poorest people within the U.S. have the worst health and the most degraded environments

Executive Summary

Major flaws in the Houston One Bin for All Proposal:

- Not take into account Houston's sorry history of waste disposal facility siting
- Unfair and discriminatory criteria that gives preference to siting "at or near existing landfills," a "grandfather clause" that disadvantages black and brown Houston neighborhoods where waste facilities have been historically sited
- Lack of diversity on the One Bin Advisory Committee, with most glaring absence of any Latinos
- Experimental plan that promises the world, but provides no solid documentation or empirical evidence where the "experiment" has worked or is working
- Does nothing to advance tried and true single-stream recycling that is used successfully in other Texas cities and large cities all across the country

Recommendation:

- Move beyond tokenism and select a One Bin advisory committee that is representative of our diverse city--which includes having Hispanics/Latinos on committee
- Add "just, fair and equitable" to the criteria City used to evaluate feasibility of One Bin plan
- Make public the five companies that are One Bin finalists
- Dump One Bin for All and go with a real recycling plan

The Houston Backdrop - 1978



- Houston Protests against the Whispering Pines Sanitary landfill (1978)
- *Bean v. Southwestern Waste Management* (1979)

Bean v. Southwestern Waste



- The 1979 *Bean v. Southwestern Waste Management Corp.* case was the nation's first lawsuit to challenge environmental discrimination using civil rights law
- Research for the Bean case was conducted at Texas Southern University, resulting in the groundbreaking *Houston Waste Sites and Black Community Study* (1979)

**WHISPERING PINES
SANITARY LANDFILL**



WELCOME TO
THE LAND OF OGG
COMPLEMENTS OF
SENATOR-JACK OGG





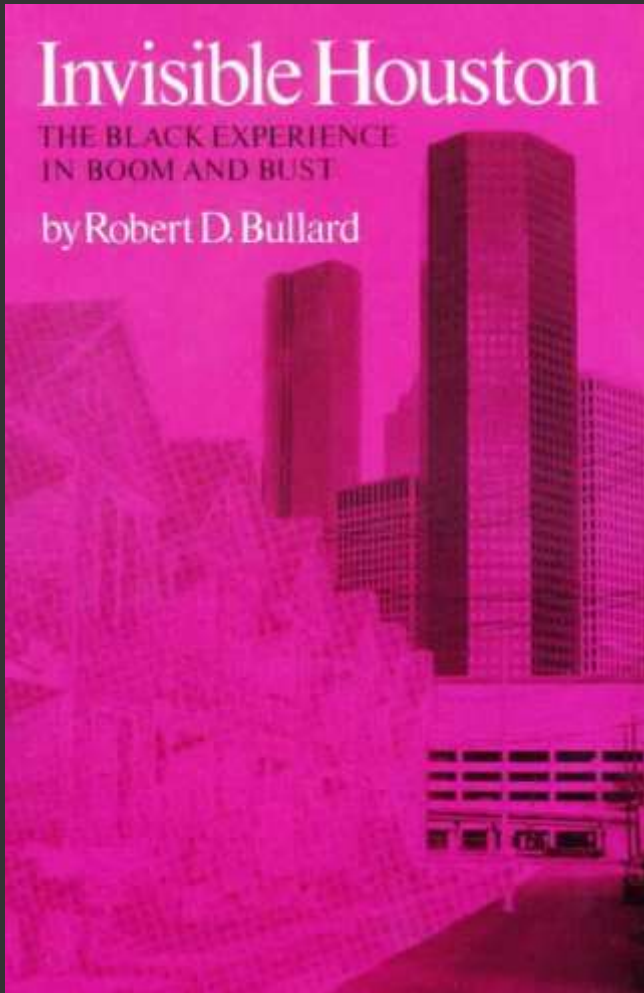




635-6660
90084

 **Waste
Systems**
Waste Management Solutions
Waste Transfer Station
Waste-to-Energy Plant

Dumping on Black Houston



- All five of Houston-owned landfills were located in black neighborhoods
- Six of eight (75%) city-owned incinerators were located in black neighborhoods
- Three of four privately-owned landfills were located in black neighborhoods
- Over 82 percent of waste disposed in Houston went to mostly black neighborhoods, even though blacks made up only 25 percent of city's population

City of Houston Municipal Landfills and Incinerators

Facility	Neighborhood	Landfill	Incinerator	Neighborhood Ethnicity	Council District
Fourth Ward	Fourth Ward	1	1	Black	C
Holmes Road	Sunnyside	1	1	Black	D
Reed Road	Sunnyside	1	-	Black	D
Kirkpatrick	Trinity Gardens	1	-	Black	B
West Donovan	Acres Homes	1	-	Black	B
Northwest	Carverdale	-	1	Black	A
Patterson Street	Cottage Grove	-	1	Black	C
Kelley Street	Kashmere Gardens	-	2	Black	B
Navigation	Second Ward	-	1	Hispanic	H
Westpark	Larchmont	-	1	White	J

Privately Owned Houston Sanitary Landfill Locations by City Council Districts 1970-1978

Landfill Site	Year Permitted	Council District	Percent Minority
Holmes Road	1970	D	81.0%
McCarty	1971	B	93.0%
Holmes Road	1978	D	81.0%
Whispering Pines	1978	B	93.0%

Type I Landfills Used by Houston That Are Not in the City

Type I Landfills	Year Permitted	Zip Code	% Minority (Census Tract)
Coastal Plains	1985	77511	46.61%
Waste Management	1981	77346	76.63%
Atascocita	1991	77396	86.05%
BFI Blue Ridge	1993	77545	85.75%

STOP

← ONE WAY

BANTAM



Houston Mini-Incinerator Experiment



- Houston experimented with a pilot “pollution-free” mini-incinerators project in the early 1970s
- The city invested \$1.9 million with a contract with Houston Natural Gas Company to operate the incinerators
- Mini-incinerators were sited on Kelly Street (Kashmere Gardens, black), Northwest Service Center on Sommermeyer Road (Carverdale, black), and on Westpark (Larchmont, white)

Garbage Transfer Station



- The City of Houston's first garbage transfer station was sited in predominately black Carverdale neighborhood at the Northwest Service Center mini-incinerator on Sommermeyer Road
- The transfer station was paid for with \$1 million in tax monies under Mayor Kathy Whitmire, Houston's first women mayor

SOLID WASTE TRANSFER STATION NORTHWEST SITE
 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT OF SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
CITY OF HOUSTON
 UNDER
 THE SUPERVISION
 CONTRACTOR
 ROBERT J. WITKOSKI

CONTRACTORS		CONTRACTORS	
JOHN W. BROWN	FRANK A. BROWN	WILLIAM W. BROWN	ROBERT WITKOSKI
DAVID W. BROWN JR.	JOHN W. BROWN	WILLIAM W. BROWN	ROBERT WITKOSKI
JOHN W. BROWN	FRANK A. BROWN	WILLIAM W. BROWN	ROBERT WITKOSKI
DAVID W. BROWN JR.	JOHN W. BROWN	WILLIAM W. BROWN	ROBERT WITKOSKI

ALL WORK SHALL BE DONE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SPECIFICATIONS AND CONDITIONS OF THE CONTRACT AND THE CITY OF HOUSTON STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS FOR ROAD AND BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION.

THIS PROJECT IS POSSIBLE BECAUSE
 HOUSTONIANS VOTED FOR IMPROVEMENT BONDS

SOLID WASTE TRANSFER STATION	1941,000.00
CONTRACTORS	
JOHN W. BROWN	FRANK A. BROWN
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DAVID W. BROWN JR.	JOHN W. BROWN

Sunnyside Elementary School







Child Drowning at Dump Sparks Riot



- The drowning of an eight-year old black child at the Sunnyside Landfill was one of the incidents that sparked the so-called "TSU Riot," the only major civil disturbance in Houston during the turbulent 1960's, according the 1968 National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders
- More than 500 students were arrested

First Black Houston Councilman



- Houston was founded in 1866
- Judson Robinson, Jr. became the city's first black city council members
- One of the first official acts in office, Councilman Robinson had to quell a near-riot over the opening of the Kirkpatrick Landfill in the mostly African American Kashmere Gardens neighborhood

Dumps Attract Garbage - 1978





Illegal Dumping District B - 2013



Illegal Dumping “Hot-Spot” Areas

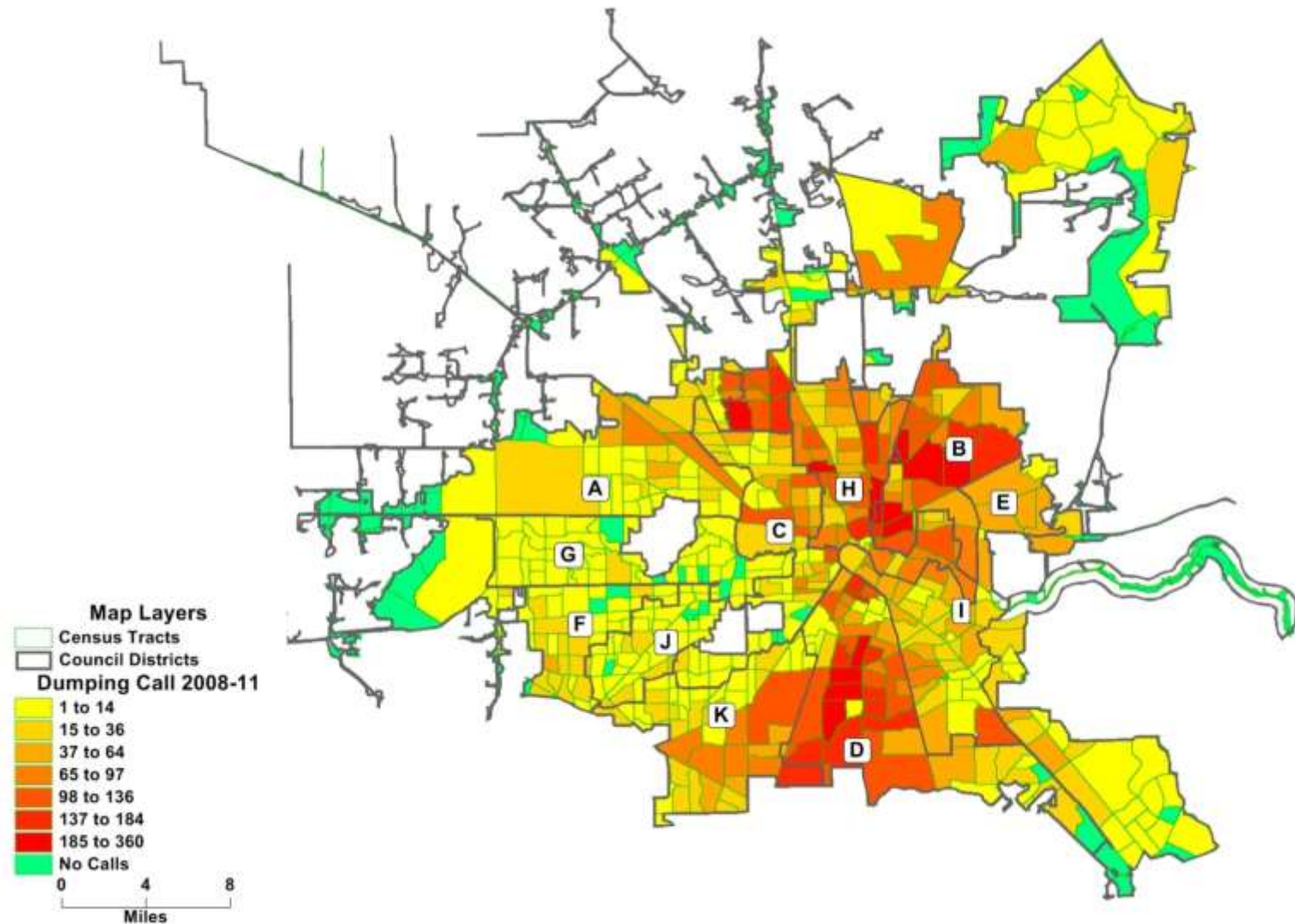


- Illegal dumping was identified as a problem 25 years ago in *Invisible Houston*, and remains a problem
- Between 2008-2011, a total of 18,367 non-emergency '311' illegal dumping calls were registered with the Houston Solid Waste Department
- The predominantly Black and Latino council districts **B**, **D** and **H** received a disproportionately large share of the illegal dumping calls for each of the four reporting years—59 percent of calls in 2008 and 66 percent of the calls in the 2009-2011 period.

Illegal Dumpsite 311 Calls by Council District 2008-2011

Council District	Percent Minority	Calls 2008	Calls 2009	Calls 2010	Calls 2011
A	75%	158	260	238	198
B	94%	796	1312	1226	1115
C	39%	358	506	414	337
D	87%	672	1517	1251	904
E	47%	105	128	145	69
F	84%	93	120	120	98
G	37%	39	50	40	28
H	87%	514	1002	889	669
I	91%	322	466	388	309
J	88%	49	90	69	44
K	83%	249	350	349	314
Total		3355	5801	5126	4085

Illegal Dumpsite Incident 311 Calls by Council District and Census Tract 2008-2011





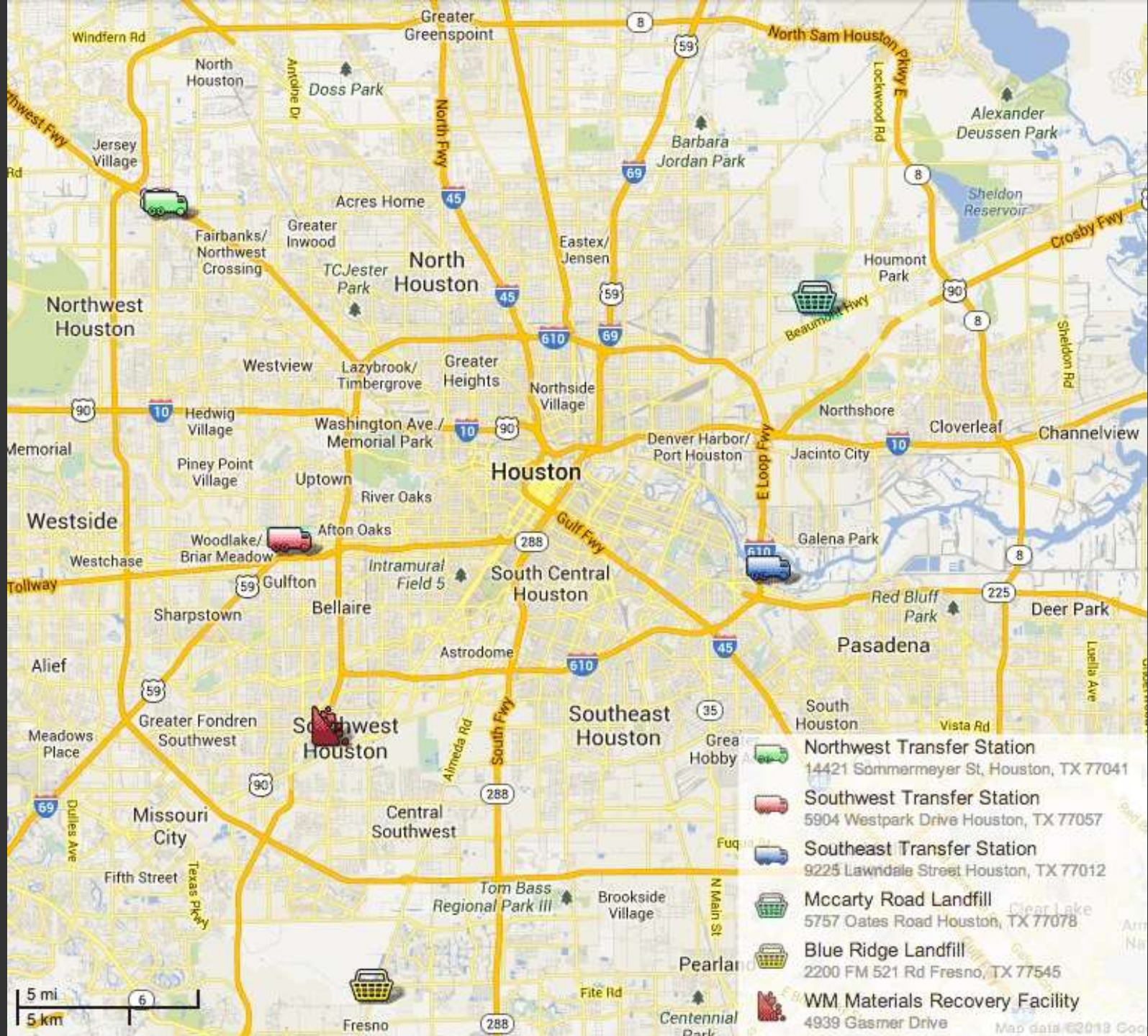
ONE BIN FOR ALL

RECYCLING REIMAGINED IN HOUSTON

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

“LOCATING THIS FACILITY AT AN EXISTING LANDFILL WILL CREATE HARDSHIPS ON LOW-INCOME RESIDENTS WHO LIVE NEARBY.”

The City of Houston will not implement a program that would harm any citizens. The City will work with vendors and neighborhoods to ensure accurate information and updates are shared proactively. The new facility will likely be located at or near an existing landfill. But less waste will go into the landfill, which means there will be lower methane emissions. Additionally, a visitor education center will be located at the new facility. That means school children and community leaders can take ownership of the program, and all Houstonians will feel a sense of pride from participating in One Bin For All. Also, the City of Houston can require that a portion of the new jobs that are created to build and operate this facility be filled by people from the neighboring communities.



-  **Northwest Transfer Station**
14421 Sommermeyer St, Houston, TX 77041
-  **Southwest Transfer Station**
5904 Westpark Drive Houston, TX 77057
-  **Southeast Transfer Station**
9225 Lawndale Street Houston, TX 77012
-  **Mccarty Road Landfill**
5757 Oates Road Houston, TX 77078
-  **Blue Ridge Landfill**
2200 FM 521 Rd Fresno, TX 77545
-  **WM Materials Recovery Facility**
4939 Gasmer Drive

FACILITY	AFRICAN-AMERICAN POPULATION (CENSUS TRACT 2010)	LATINO POPULATION (CENSUS TRACT 2010)	CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT (Percent Minority)
Blue Ridge	54.02%	22.18%	N/A
McCarty Road	18.56%	67.27%	B (93%)
Hardy Road Transfer Station	36.2%	53.1%	B (93%)
Waste Management Humble	33.6%	41.32%	N/A
Southeast Transfer Station	2.51%	85.47%	I (92%)
Southwest Transfer Station	10.78%	71.17%	F (85%)
Northwest Transfer Station	18.48%	66.34%	A (76%)

One Bin Advisory Committee Members

- Jim Blackburn – Partner, Blackburn & Carter; and Professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Rice University
- Winifred Hamilton, Ph.D. – Director of Environmental Health, Baylor College of Medicine
- Barry L. Lefer, Ph.D. – Associate Department Chair and Associate Professor of Atmospheric Sciences, University of Houston
- Jim Lester, Ph.D. – President, HARC
- Cheryl Mergo – Sustainable Development Program Manager, H-GAC
- Laurie Petersen – Sustainability Champion, NASA JSC
- Lalita Sen, Ph.D. – Professor of Urban Planning and Environmental Policy, Texas Southern University
- Adrian Shelley, III – Executive Director, Air Alliance Houston
- Alan Stein – President & CEO, A&E Interests
- Jeff Taylor – Vice President, Freese and Nichols, Inc.

One Bin Committee Lacks Diversity



- Males = 7
- Females = 3
- Non-Hispanic Whites = 8
- Blacks = 1
- Asians = 1
- Hispanics = 0
- City = Non-Hispanics whites make up only 25.6 percent of the Houston population; blacks 23.7 percent and Hispanics 44.8 percent.

Questions for Today:

1. Where do Houston's Mayor and Councilmembers live and how close are their homes to landfills and garbage transfer stations?
2. How far are these elected officials homes from the "dirty MRF" sites proposed in the five respondents to the One Bin RFP?
3. How far are One Bin for All Advisors' homes to landfills, transfer stations and the proposed "dirty MRF sites?"

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