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## **Waste Management recycling workers strike East Bay facilities over disrespectful treatment**

A strike by 130 recycling workers will hit Waste Management's East Bay facilities in Oakland and San Leandro beginning at 4am on Friday morning, October 24. Workers and community supporters will march in picket lines at the company's headquarters at 172 98<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Oakland, and at 2615 Davis Street in San Leandro.

Workers say their action was sparked by a company manager who was disrespectful and discriminatory in his treatment of union workers at the facility. A majority of the workers are immigrants who speak Spanish.

Workers voted to strike on Thursday afternoon, October 23, following the incident with a company manager. Prior to the strike vote, the company was contacted in an effort to avert the conflict.

Waste Management recycling workers in Oakland have been seeking better pay and benefits for several years. Workers recently won approval from the City of Oakland to improve wages and benefits for workers at Waste Management and California Waste Solutions – both City franchisees. Workers say Waste Management is arrogant and heavy-handed toward the recycling employees. Similar complaints were voiced by Oakland City Council members during recent negotiations with Waste Management over an extension of the firm's lucrative franchise agreement.

Waste Management locked-out employees from the East Bay facilities for a month in July, 2007. While directed at members of the Teamsters and Machinists Union, the lockout picket lines were honored by low-wage recycling workers who remained off the job without pay until the dispute was settled. The company subsequently retaliated against ILWU members by outsourcing dozens of customer service jobs and initiating legal action against ILWU members.

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