

David Duong and California Waste Solutions Approach 35 Years of Recycling and Global Environmental Infrastructure

Founded by David Duong in 1992, California Waste Solutions nears 35 years of recycling, municipal service and global environmental infrastructure.

OAKLAND, CA, UNITED STATES, September 11, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- [California Waste Solutions](#), Inc. (CWS) is approaching its 35th year as a leader in the international recycling, resource recovery and environmental infrastructure business with operations in California and Vietnam.

Headquartered in Oakland, the company serves more than 343,000 customers across Oakland and San Jose and operates six Bay Area recycling facilities. Through its wholly owned subsidiary Vietnam Waste Solutions (VWS) it also manages large-scale waste infrastructure in Ho Chi Minh City.

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Because we were using American technology and know-how, we were able to effectively plan for Ho Chi Minh City's growth decades ahead of time.”

*David Duong, Founder & CEO,
California Waste Solutions*

“Approaching our 35-year milestone in business means more to us than just a number. It's a testament to what immigrant entrepreneurs can achieve if they put time and work into their passions in this country,” said [David Duong](#), Founder and Chief Executive Officer of California Waste Solutions.

David Duong founded California Waste Solutions in Oakland in 1992. The company received its first City of

Oakland franchise in 1993 and has served Oakland continuously since. California Waste Solutions later expanded into San Jose while building a broader operating network around collection, processing, material recovery, customer service and the marketing of recovered commodities.



California Waste Solutions Recycling Collection in San Jose, California

“When we started, we had eight used trucks and a family willing to work. That was it! The company is much larger today, but the responsibility and the mindset here has not changed. People count on us every week. We have to do the work safely, take care of our employees, serve our customers well, and keep finding better ways to recover materials instead of wasting them. It’s a community business at the end of the day,” said David Duong, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of California Waste Solutions.

California Waste Solutions now operates across two countries and manages the daily work behind municipal recycling systems that hundreds of thousands of residents and businesses rely on every week.

The scale of the company today is closely tied to David Duong’s own history. After arriving in the United States as a Vietnamese refugee, Duong and his family rebuilt their lives through the recycling business they already knew well, beginning again in California with recovered paper, cardboard and other recyclable materials. David Duong founded California Waste Solutions in Oakland in 1992 with eight used collection trucks and spent the following decades expanding the business through municipal recycling, material recovery and environmental infrastructure in Oakland and San Jose. He later brought that experience back to Vietnam through Vietnam Waste Solutions, where the family developed large-scale waste and environmental infrastructure serving Ho Chi Minh City. His path from refugee resettlement to building environmental businesses across the United States and Vietnam is also documented in [The King of Trash](#), a film about David Duong, the Duong family and the experiences that shaped their work across both countries.

An “Integrated Municipal Service Operating Model”

California Waste Solutions provides residential recycling collection in Oakland through Oakland Recycles and in San Jose through San Jose Recycles. The company also serves commercial



The Duong Family Leadership Team: Kristina Duong, David Duong, Victor Duong and Michael Duong



California Waste Solutions Fleet Providing Recycling Collection Service in the Bay Area

customers, including manufacturers, offices, retailers, restaurants and multifamily properties.

Collection was where the family business began, and it remains the part of California Waste Solutions most visible to customers. But collection is only the first step in a larger system that includes sorting, processing, material recovery, logistics and commodity marketing.

After recyclable material reaches a processing facility, mixed loads are separated into usable streams of paper, cardboard, plastics, metals and glass. The materials are then prepared to meet the specifications of mills, processors and other buyers before they can return to manufacturing facilities.

That process depends on an operating network that reaches well beyond the curb. Drivers manage collection routes. Mechanics keep trucks and processing equipment in service. Facility teams operate conveyors and sorting systems, remove unwanted material and monitor quality. Customer service employees work with residents, businesses and property managers. Supervisors coordinate people, equipment, safety requirements and daily service performance.

For a municipal recycling operator, scale matters only when the system works together as a single unit. A route completed on time can still create problems if material is poorly sorted downstream. Processing capacity has little value if equipment is unreliable. Technology adds little if employees cannot use the information it provides. California Waste Solutions has built its operating model around the connection between collection, processing, service and material recovery.

“What we’ve developed here at California Waste Solutions can be best described as a tightly-knit integrated municipal operating model. Waste collection and recycling is a community business and communities don’t work in linear ways. People throw out different things at different times



David Duong during an interview at a The King of Trash screening event



California Waste Solutions Recycling Facility in Oakland, California

in the year, and they're not always predictable in their habits. Technologies change over time too. Three decades ago people used to throw out videotapes and cassettes; today they throw out smartphones. The nature of what you're recycling isn't always the same, but by building a system that accounts for these changes, we've been able to consistently improve the quality of our output," said David Duong, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of California Waste Solutions.

Nearly 35 years after David Duong founded California Waste Solutions, the company remains family-owned and operated, with the next generation now holding leadership responsibilities across the business. Michael Duong serves as President, Johnny Duong as Chief Operating Officer, Kristina Duong as Chief Financial Officer and Victor Duong as Executive Vice President of Public Affairs. Their roles span operations, finance, public affairs, municipal relationships and long-term planning, giving the company continuity between the business David Duong built in Oakland and the organization now operating across California and Vietnam. The leadership structure reflects years of the next generation working inside the business alongside David Duong rather than a sudden transfer of responsibility.

Reinvesting in Safety, Systems and Operational Performance

The recycling industry has undergone enormous changes since California Waste Solutions began operating in 1992. Material streams are more complex, commodity specifications are tighter, cities expect greater visibility into service performance, and batteries and electronic devices have created new safety risks for collection vehicles and processing facilities.

California Waste Solutions has continued to reinvest in the systems behind its daily operations every year. The company has invested more than \$2 million in upgrades to current operating systems designed to improve coordination, efficiency, safety and service performance across collection and processing activities during the time it has been in business.

Safety technology is another area of constant focus. California Waste Solutions is evaluating infrared cameras, smoke and heat detection systems and fire-extinguishing components for collection vehicles to improve early detection and response when batteries or other hazardous materials enter collection vehicles or processing facilities. The company is also evaluating electric and lower-emission collection vehicles as part of its longer-term fleet planning.

Inside its recycling facilities, California Waste Solutions continues to modernize sorting and processing systems while giving employees better information about material flow and equipment performance. The objective is to identify problems earlier, respond faster and improve the consistency of the operation without separating technology from the people responsible for using it.

International Operations Through Vietnam Waste Solutions

California Waste Solutions operates internationally through Vietnam Waste Solutions, its wholly owned subsidiary in Vietnam. Vietnam Waste Solutions develops and operates integrated waste management infrastructure, extending the company's experience from municipal recycling in

Northern California to large-scale environmental systems serving Ho Chi Minh City.

At the center of that international operation is the Da Phuoc Integrated Solid Waste Facility (DPI) in Ho Chi Minh City. The 341-acre facility receives more than 6,500 tons of waste per day and handles approximately 2.4 million tons annually. Da Phuoc is Southeast Asia's first and only integrated solid waste facility and Vietnam's largest landfill operation. A World Bank environmental assessment has also described the Da Phuoc complex as Vietnam's largest solid waste processing complex.

Da Phuoc combines recycling and material recovery, sanitary landfill management, composting, industrial leachate and wastewater treatment, treated-water reuse, landfill-gas collection and electricity generation within one operating complex. Those systems were developed over time to manage not only where municipal waste is placed, but also what can be recovered from it and how the water and gas produced by landfill operations are controlled.

The Da Phuoc landfill dates back more than two decades. As relations between Vietnam and the United States normalized in the 1990s, Ho Chi Minh City began looking for more advanced approaches to municipal waste treatment. California Waste Solutions agreed to develop the project under a structure that gave the company ownership of the facility and required it to be built to U.S. environmental standards.

Building Da Phuoc to U.S.-standard environmental requirements meant investing in engineered liner systems, dedicated leachate and wastewater treatment, landfill-gas collection and other controls that went well beyond the cost of a conventional disposal site. For David Duong, that additional investment was essential to creating a facility designed to serve Ho Chi Minh City reliably for decades.

Da Phuoc became one of the first major catalysts for Vietnam's new energy-efficiency in an economy that is growing at nearly 8% a year.

"California Waste Solutions and Vietnam Waste Solutions became overnight pioneers in clean, renewable energy and in installing best-of-breed American and European technologies in Vietnam at the very start of the country's huge growth curve," said David Duong, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of California Waste Solutions. "Because we were using American technology and know-how we were able to effectively plan for Ho Chi Minh City's growth decades ahead of time."

Today, only one American employee remains on the ground, while the operation is run overwhelmingly by Vietnamese engineers, employees and technical personnel. Da Phuoc remains the only landfill in Vietnam developed to U.S. Subtitle D standards, according to company records, and its landfill-gas recovery and environmental systems support Vietnam's broader efforts to improve waste management and reduce greenhouse-gas emissions on the path toward net zero by 2050.

For California Waste Solutions, Vietnam Waste Solutions represented a significant expansion of the business David Duong had built in Northern California. The collection routes and material recovery facilities in Oakland and San Jose operate in a different environment from Da Phuoc, but both businesses depend on the same operating fundamentals: reliable infrastructure, material recovery, environmental controls and systems capable of performing every day at city scale. Through Vietnam Waste Solutions, that experience expanded into sanitary landfill engineering, recycling, composting, leachate and wastewater treatment, landfill-gas recovery and energy generation. Da Phuoc gave California Waste Solutions experience managing environmental infrastructure at a scale far beyond a conventional recycling operation.

Together, the California and Vietnam operations give California Waste Solutions experience across the full chain of environmental services, from neighborhood collection and material recovery to integrated waste infrastructure. That international operating footprint has become a defining part of the company as it approaches its 35th year.

A Community Relationship That Goes Beyond Collection

Long-term municipal service also requires communication outside the truck and the processing facility. Residents, property managers, schools and other institutions need clear guidance on which materials belong in recycling and which require another collection or disposal route.

California Waste Solutions produces recycling guides, multilingual communications, property-manager resources and conducts school visits and public outreach. Recent activities have included the Lakeshore Street Festival in Oakland, the Oakland Housing Authority Summer Block Party and recycling education with a local Daisy Scout troop. The company also participates in programs serving seniors, young people and multifamily communities.

“Good recycling service is not only about picking up a cart,” said Michael Duong, President of California Waste Solutions. “It is also about helping people understand what belongs in that cart and why it matters. Our employees, city partners, residents and businesses are all part of the same system. The company’s operations and the community which they serve are co-dependent in that way. That’s why we value our place in the local community so much.”

The same operating logic is behind a planned residential household battery recycling program in San Jose for 2027. California Waste Solutions is collaborating with the City of San Jose on a service intended to make household battery recycling easier while keeping batteries out of the conventional recycling stream, where damaged or improperly handled batteries can create serious fire risks.

The company's community record also extends beyond recycling education. In December 2024, David Duong committed \$5 million to the scholarship fund at Fulbright University Vietnam in Ho Chi Minh City through Vietnam Waste Solutions. One million dollars has been contributed, with the remaining \$4 million structured as a matching commitment intended to encourage additional donations and expand financial aid for students facing financial hardship.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a manufacturing operation established in Vietnam produced masks and hand sanitizer that were distributed in California through local governments and community organizations. Millions of units were donated, and the Duong family also sent 1,200 oxygen concentrators to hospitals in Vietnam. Other support has included Vietnamese language and culture schools, assistance for California cancer patients, humanitarian relief following Typhoon Yagi in northern Vietnam and support for the Oakland Dynamites youth football program.

These programs are separate from California Waste Solutions' municipal service work, but they reflect the company's long-term presence in the places where it operates. The business has grown across California and Vietnam, and so has the scale of the responsibilities it has chosen to take on outside its core operations.

Approaching 35 Years With a Larger Operating Footprint

California Waste Solutions will mark its 35th anniversary in 2027. The milestone comes at a time when recycling and waste management are becoming more demanding operational businesses. Cities expect reliable service, stronger safety systems, more accurate data and continued investment in infrastructure capable of handling changing material streams.

California Waste Solutions enters its mid-thirties chapter with six Bay Area facilities and more than 343,000 customers across Oakland and San Jose. Its international operations in Vietnam extend that experience into large-scale environmental infrastructure.

The company that began in Oakland in 1992 is now responsible for a much larger system. Its future will be judged the same way its municipal work has always been judged: by whether it performs safely, consistently and over time.

About California Waste Solutions

California Waste Solutions, Inc. is a family-owned and operated recycling, resource recovery and environmental infrastructure company headquartered in Oakland, California. Founded in 1992 by David Duong, the company provides recycling collection, processing, customer service and material recovery services for residential, commercial and municipal customers in Northern California, including Oakland and San Jose. California Waste Solutions operates six Bay Area recycling facilities and serves more than 343,000 customers. The company also operates internationally through its wholly owned subsidiary, Vietnam Waste Solutions, which manages the Da Phuoc Integrated Solid Waste Facility in Ho Chi Minh City.

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