

## A Background Regarding The Dumpsters

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First of all, I want to thank everyone for their input and concerns regarding the dumpsters. Before we received the new ones, that have only been here about one week, we were pretty much having the same postings. I said previously, that the new dumpsters would not solve all the problems. And, they didn't.

I feel compelled to try one more time to help our new and some not so new residents to understand the history of our dumpsters and bears.

Before Twin Enviro, Trinidad had 2 trash services; Waste Management and Right Way. Waste Management has since left our area and no longer services Trinidad. That left Right Way and they were SFTR's trash service for quite some time. I believe they did a good job at first, but when I joined the POA Board in 2009, we were having real issues with them NOT picking up as agreed. Sometimes they wouldn't show up for 2 weeks. People left their trash on the ground – bears had dinner. Twin Enviro came to Trinidad. After in-person meetings with them, seeing their stock of bear proof dumpsters (the original ones with the small and large lids) I fired Right Way and hired TE. Their containers were great, but the bears managed to get the small lids open as the dumpsters had only bear bars for the large lids. TE came and welded clips and small cables for the small lids. Long story short – emptying the dumpsters continued to damage lids, clips and cables. A few of our volunteers repaired them as best as they could, but soon the damage was irreparable. By now – Twin Enviro had changed ownership. When I requested new dumpsters, I was told they no longer stocked bear proof containers. The previous owners were ordering the ones we had from an inmate program at the Walsenburg prison. The prison closed and the program closed, as well. That left the SFTR holding the short straw. So, bless our volunteers, they got back to trying to salvage the lids. In the meantime, I am searching for a new trash service. Any service within 100 miles did not come to Trinidad, did not have bear proof containers, or only had open ended rollofs. Again, long story short – after several new meetings with TE, they agreed to find a bear proof container supplier – for us!! Covid hit and the supply chain slowed way down, so again, we were waiting – and they were waiting. I know some of you were voicing your frustration on why it was taking so long, but so was Twin Enviro. Honestly, TE has worked hard to keep us happy and I'm sure they did their best in choosing the containers we now have. The new dumpsters are considered bear proof – and for the most part they are. It's just that SFTR bears are smart – really smart. And we cannot blame them for wanting to survive the winter and figuring out that this ranch has some very lazy people that don't secure the lids. Now the new containers are here, and nothing has changed.

Neighbors – we live in the wilderness!! Our great little town of Trinidad is just that. A small town with very little choices on anything. But what it does have is sufficient for all our daily needs. We have lots of new neighbors coming in from the big city and it is a culture shock for sure. However, even coming from city life, common sense should be at the forefront when living with nature. We have to co-exist with wild life, snow storms, lightning strikes, potential wild land fires, wind, and rainfall that can take out some of our roads. Life in the wilderness is challenging – but the rewards are priceless. Our POA Board is constantly working to keep this a safe place for wildlife and people alike – examples: just to name a few: a new bridge that replaced a very old and dangerous one – new security cameras – a gate at Exit 2. Our dumpster issues will, in the near future, be resolved. There are several options that will be considered and put into motion, if plausible. In the interim, let's try to educate those new residents that need help in understanding the wilderness code. Take the time to check all the cables and lids when you drop off your trash. We can all do our part to help alleviate the bear's hometown buffet. And a huge, huge thank you to the residents that do take their time to check lids, clean up a mess, and/or repair the clips/cables. Remember, this community belongs to all of us and it's a great feeling to be one that helps keep it the treasure that it is.