



Sole Source Justification Form

This form must be completed for all Sole Source purchase requests prior to submitting for Board approval or entering a requisition in the County's financial system.

Instructions: Please complete the form and provide as much detail as possible. Sign the form electronically and return completed form to MeckPro@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov for review. Once a decision is made the form will be returned to you.

Date: 3/9/26

North Carolina General Statute 143-129(e)(6) requires that Mecklenburg County procure all apparatus, supplies, materials and equipment ("Goods") totaling \$30,000 or more by competitively bidding unless:

- i. Performance or price competition for a product is not available;
- ii. A needed product is available from only one source of supply; or
- iii. Standardization or compatibility is the overriding consideration.

1. Requestor Information

Name: Jeffrey Smithberger Title: Solid Waste Director
Phone Number: (980) 314-3863 Department: LUESA

2. Recommended Supplier

Supplier Name: **Fire Rover, LLC**
Address: 24505 Indoplex Circle City, State, Zip: Farmington Hills, MI 48335
Contact Name: Ryan Fogelman Telephone: 614-327-3744 Email: rfogelman@firerover.com

3. Sole Source Justification

- a) Is the recommended supplier also the manufacturer? X Yes No
b) Does the manufacturer sell the item(s) through distributors? Yes X No

c) Please explain why performance or price competition (i.e. only one source can supply the items or meet the requirements) is not available for the desired commodity.

Mecklenburg County has made a significant investment in equipment and building improvements for the Pence Road Material Recycling Facility and the Amble Drive Material Recovery Facility (MRF) to allow for the processing of curbside residential recycling material. In an effort to best protect the investments against the fire risk presented by lithium-ion batteries and other combustible items in the recycling stream, the Solid Waste Division needs to install an advanced fire suppression system to supplement the traditional wet sprinkler suppression systems.

Fire Rover, LLC manufactures, installs, and monitors a proprietary fire suppression system that is designed to remotely detect, the presence of a fire and then quickly extinguish a fire at a solid waste facility. Each remote monitoring and suppression system consists of a containerized unit that stores several thousand gallons of suppression liquid, numerous thermal cameras, flame detectors, spray nozzles, and human monitoring 24-hours per day, seven days a week.

The Fire Rover system uses a complex system of equipment installed at our facilities, supplemented by remote staff to monitor and extinguish fires once a fire is detected at solid waste facilities; through the use of thermal and high-definition cameras. Fire Rover will supply the equipment to detect fires and remotely extinguish the fires; they will also supply the specialized extinguishing media and ensure the system is 100% operable at all times. The ability to provide 24/7 remote monitoring of our Material Recovery Facility (MRF) tipping floor will allow a fire to be instantly identified and extinguished before the fire reaches a level that results in significant damage to the building or equipment. Fire Rover is the only vendor that provides this unique and specialized monitoring to Material Recycling Facilities. They are the industry standard across the United States for this specialized service. Mecklenburg County is making a total investment of over \$30 MM for the MRF and this type of fire protection system is necessary and critical to protect the asset.

The solid waste program has typically experienced two-fires each week from Li-ion batteries and needs this higher level of protection to better protect our assets and staff.

d) Please explain why compatibility and standardization are the overriding considerations for this purchase.

The Fire Rover system is the only known industry standard for early detection and immediate suppression of fires at MRF's. Fire Rover designs, manufactures, and maintains the system to meet industry specific specifications and performance standards and will be customized to each facility.

e) The specific supplier is the only source of the required item because (check all that apply):

- A specific item is needed to be compatible or interchangeable with existing hardware.
- X A specific item is needed as spare or replacement hardware.
- A specific item is needed for the repair or modification of existing hardware.
- A specific item is needed for technical evaluation or test.
- X There is a substantial technical risk in contracting with any other contractor, thereby making that an unacceptable course of action (e.g., where only one contractor has been successful to date in implementing a difficult manufacturing process). In a brief explanation, provide supporting evidence of other contractors with relevant capabilities and emphasize their inability to overcome the substantial technical risk.

Solid Waste staff contacted multiple MRF owners across the United States, as well as engineering consultants in the solid waste industry in an attempt to identify a vendor that could provide services equivalent to Fire Rover. Fire Rover was the only identified firm used at other Material Recycling Facilities.

Only one other firm, MoviTherm, was identified that offers a similar detection equipment. County engineering staff discussed with them the applicability of their products; however, MoviTherm did not offer the same or equal level of protection that the Fire Rover system does. MoviTherm provides early detection monitoring equipment; however, their service doesn't include any live-monitoring and suppression response services. MoviTherm's thermal cameras and high-definition cameras can provide early detection of fires but not the second necessary step of extinguishing the fire. MoviTherm's system is not an equivalent offering to the Fire Rover system and was deemed non-responsive.

f) Why are the requested goods the only item that can satisfy your requirements? Indicate the unique features of the product that are not available in any other product. Provide specific, quantifiable factors and qualifications.

The growing presence of Lithium-ion batteries in residential curbside recycling materials presents a significant fire risk to Mecklenburg County's MRF's. Lithium-ion battery fires often start as small

fires, on the tipping-floor, that are too small to trigger the traditional fire sprinklers mounted near the roof. As a result, fires quickly grow to a fully engulfed state (before activation of the sprinkler system). The Fire Rover system is designed to extinguish the fire early in the combustion process specifically at solid waste facilities. Remote monitoring allows for 24/7 monitoring and response capabilities during periods when the MRF is closed or staff can't immediately notice a fire. During these periods, the Fire Rover system will allow small fires to be detected and extinguished on the tipping-floor before reaching a level that poses severe risk to workers, equipment, and the building. Fire Rover provides an unmatched combination of equipment, monitoring service, and remote suppression capabilities. There are no other vendors or systems that offer the technical and service capabilities that are warranted to reduce the risk of fire at the Mecklenburg County's MRF's.

g) Were alternative goods evaluated? Yes No

a. If yes, what were they and why were they unacceptable? Please be specific regarding features, characteristics, requirements, capabilities and compatibility.

See above responses.

b. If no, why were alternatives not evaluated?

TERM: One Time Purchase Ongoing Purchase

I certify that the above information is true and correct and that I have no financial or other beneficial interest in the recommended vendor or deliverable services.

Jeffrey Smithberger, Solid Waste Director
(Enter name), Department Manager Signature
(Electronic signature is sufficient)



Date: March 9, 2026

Ebenezer Gujjarlapudi, LUESA Director
(Enter name), Department Director Signature
(Electronic signature is sufficient)



Date: March 11, 2026

Leslie Johnson, Deputy County Manager
(Enter name), Deputy County Manager Signature
(Electronic signature is sufficient)



Date: March 11, 2026

Approved Denied

Approval or Denial Reason: Equip cost = \$450K of total, thus SSJ applies
Total cost includes equip plus \$150K annual monitoring

Procurement Signature (electronic signature is sufficient):

Teresa Rausch

Smithberger, Jeffrey

From: Johnson, Leslie
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2026 8:44 AM
To: Gujjarlapudi, Ebenezer S
Cc: Smithberger, Jeffrey
Subject: RE: Sole Source Determination Form - Fire Rover

Good Morning.

Yes, the conference is going well. One workshop discussion included Miami-Dade's response to its incinerator being offline and strategies to minimize impact to landfill capacity.

And yes, I support proceeding with the RFBA given the Fire Rover system is the only known industry standard for early detection and immediate suppression of fires at MRF's.



Leslie Johnson
Deputy County Manager
County Manager's Office | 600 E. Fourth St - 11th Floor
Mecklenburg County Government
980-314-2910 | MeckNC.Gov



From: Gujjarlapudi, Ebenezer S <Ebenezer.Gujjarlapudi@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2026 7:31 AM
To: Johnson, Leslie <Leslie.Johnson@mecklenburgcountync.gov>
Cc: Smithberger, Jeffrey <Jeffrey.Smithberger@mecklenburgcountync.gov>
Subject: FW: Sole Source Determination Form - Fire Rover

Good morning Leslie. Hope the conference is going well.

Please find attached a sole source justification for a roving fire monitoring system for the Pence Road MRF. If you concur, please let us know so we can work on the RFBA.



If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to reach out.

Ebenezer S. Gujartapudi, P.E.

Director

LUESA

Mecklenburg County Government

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Mecklenburg County Confidentiality Statement

From: Smithberger, Jeffrey <Jeffrey.Smithberger@mecklenburgcountync.gov>

Sent: Monday, March 9, 2026 12:14 PM

To: Gujartapudi, Ebenezer S <Ebenezer.Gujartapudi@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov>

Cc: Smith, Ryan P. <Ryan.Smith@mecklenburgcountync.gov>; Hack, Joe <Joe.Hack@mecklenburgcountync.gov>; Sanford, Martin <Martin.Sanford@mecklenburgcountync.gov>

Subject: Sole Source Determination Form - Fire Rover

Hi Ebenezer,

Attached, please find the form needed for the Fire Rover sole source determination. We will attach this to the RFBA and are targeting the April 7 meeting.

Please add the date you concur and then pass along to Leslie J. for her concurrence.

If any questions, please let me know.

Jeff



Jeffrey M. Smithberger
Solid Waste Director

LUESA | Solid Waste Management
Mecklenburg County Government
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