



LOCAL GOVERNMENT CASE STUDY:

PASQUOTANK COUNTY - COMMERCIAL RECYCLING PROGRAM

Jurisdiction:

Pasquotank County

Best Management Practice:

Commercial Recycling Program

Purpose:

By offering recycling services to local businesses and government agencies free of charge, the county Solid Waste Department hopes to reduce the amount of commercial waste sent to the landfill and help to meet local waste reduction goals.

Ordinance:

None

Contact:

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DESCRIPTION

For the past 10 years (since 1993), the Pasquotank County Solid Waste Department has offered a commercial recycling service to local businesses and government agencies. There are 161 businesses and public institutions that are included in the commercial recycling program. Private businesses, government agencies and not-for-profit organizations in both Pasquotank and Camden counties are eligible to receive this service. Through the commercial recycling program, the Pasquotank County Solid Waste Department accepts mixed office paper, newspaper and magazines. In addition, the county collects a commingled mix of containers including #1 and #2 plastics, steel and aluminum cans, as well as clear, brown and green glass. This no-cost service was established in an attempt to decrease the amount of materials sent to the landfill from commercial sources. The source of funding for the program comes from tipping fees administered on the transfer station.

IMPLEMENTATION

Upon deciding to implement the commercial recycling program, the county Solid Waste Department purchased 64- and 96-gallon roll-out containers, two fully-automated recycling trucks with hydraulic arms to pick up containers, five-gallon recycling bins (for indoor use), and signage. The signs included stickers to label the bins and magnets for the trucks to indicate they are county recycling trucks. The county also advertised for the program through department flyers, existing Keep America Beautiful advertisements, business expos, civic presentations and PSAs on the public access TV channel. Two full time employees and one half-time staff member are

required to run the program. The total annual operating costs for FY 01/02, including staff salaries, fuel and insurance for the trucks was approximately \$40,000.

Two collection routes exist for servicing customers, who can receive weekly, biweekly or in some cases once monthly service depending on the amount of recyclable materials generated. The initial route configurations were established by both county Solid Waste Management employees and collection staff. However, in most cases, alterations in collection routes due to changes in materials generated or the addition of new customers is left to the discretion of the drivers. In addition, the driver introduces himself to every new customer and all bins are clearly labeled with the Solid Waste Department contact information to make it easy for customers to report missed pickups or overly full containers.

Businesses in Pasquotank and Camden counties can be added to the program by contacting the Solid Waste Department. New additions are provided with the appropriate bins and educational materials and are then added to existing collection routes. The county has a limited number of bins so customers are encouraged to share where possible. The number of customers serviced and spaces available to new businesses varies. Bins are returned if a business closes, the county feels a particular customer does not produce enough materials, or if a particular customer has high contamination rates on a regular basis. In cases of high contamination, the county will use education to try to fix the problem prior to removing a customer from the program. Currently, the county has enough extra bins available to add 20-30 new customers. The program is not mandatory but participating businesses receive a financial incentive by reducing the level of service needed from their contracted waste hauler.



RESULTS

For FY 01/02, there were 25.88 tons of newspapers, 84.78 tons of office mix paper, 75.31 tons of magazines, and 15 tons of telephone books recycled through the commercial recycling program. The total amount of containers collected in FY 01/02 including glass, and steel and aluminum cans was 87.98 tons.

Since July 2002, the commercial recycling program has generated \$1,221.60 from office mixed paper, \$447 from magazines, and \$294 from newspaper. There are currently 161 businesses included in the program, with around 140-145 that actively participate in either weekly or bi-weekly recycling pickup. The program, which has overall been well received by local business, has been in operation for 10 years and continues to grow.



The N.C. Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance provides free, non-regulatory technical assistance and education on methods to eliminate, reduce, or recycle wastes before they become pollutants or require disposal. Call DPPEA at (919) 715.6500 or (800) 763-0136 or e-mail nowaste@p2pays.org, or visit DPPEA's Web site at www.p2pays.org for assistance with issues in this case study or any of your waste reduction concerns.
