

This document was authored in 2004. For the latest information on the County's Solid Waste Management Plan, please review the 2015 – 2035 update.

Appendix

B

**1990 Fairfax County
Municipal Waste
Composition Study**

In 1990, the county conducted a municipal waste composition study to estimate the percentages of specific material types in the waste stream. Fifty representative samples were categorized in each sampling event, one in August and one in November. The samples were manually sorted into 35 refuse categories. The study determined that 76 percent of the MSW stream in the county is made up of paper (44 percent) and organics (32 percent), including yard waste. The remainder of the waste stream includes plastic (9 percent), glass (6 percent), and metals (6 percent). Table B-1 shows the results of the study.

Table B-1. Fairfax County Waste Stream Composition (%)

Category	Subcategory	County residential mean	County commercial mean	County MSW mean
Paper	Corrugated cardboard	6.4	16.3	10.9
	Newsprint	5.9	4.4	5.2
	Office computer	0.8	5.9	3.1
	Glossy/magazines	5.5	2.3	4.1
	Mixed paper	23.4	21.2	22.4
	Total paper	39.8	48.7	43.8
Plastic	Exp. Polystyrene	0.4	0.9	0.6
	HDPE container	1.0	0.7	0.9
	Bags	3.7	4.0	3.8
	PET container	0.5	0.2	0.4
	Other rigid containers	0.5	0.4	0.5
	Other plastic	2.0	3.5	2.7
	Total plastic	8.1	9.7	8.8
Yard waste	Brush	1.9	0.4	1.2
	Leaves	12.3	2.0	7.7
	Grass	0.8	0.0	0.4
	Other yard waste	0.1	0.0	0.4
	Total yard waste	15.2	2.3	9.4
Organics	Lumber/wood	1.7	4.7	3.1
	Textiles/rubber/leather	2.7	4.5	3.5
	Fines	2.9	2.1	2.5
	Diapers	3.9	0.8	2.5
	Food waste	6.3	7.4	6.8
	Miscellaneous organics	4.9	3.6	4.3
	Total organics	22.3	23.1	22.7
Glass	Colored glass containers	2.1	1.1	1.7
	Clear glass containers	4.2	2.4	3.4
	Other glass	0.2	1.3	0.7
	Total glass	6.5	4.9	5.8
Aluminum	Beverage cans	0.6	0.7	0.6
	Other non-ferrous	0.4	0.3	0.4
	Total aluminum	1.0	1.0	1.0
Ferrous metal	Ferrous container, tinned	2.1	0.8	1.5
	Other ferrous metals	1.8	5.0	3.2
	Total ferrous metals	3.8	5.8	4.7
Bimetal		0.1	0.1	0.1
Misc. inorganics		2.7	3.6	3.1
Other waste	Poisons	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Paint/solvent/fuel	0.2	0.1	0.2
	Dry cell batteries	0.1	0.0	0.1
	Medical (household)	0.0	0.1	0.0

	Miscellaneous HHW	0.4	0.5	0.4
	Total other waste	0.6	0.8	0.7