

Solid Waste Management Program



Mission

To protect the public interest through solid waste management planning and regulatory oversight of the County's refuse ordinances by providing efficient and effective collection, recycling, and disposal of solid waste for customers in an environmentally responsible manner.

Focus

The Solid Waste Management Program is responsible for the management and long-range planning for all refuse and recycling within the County. Operations include a County-owned and operated refuse transfer station, a privately owned and operated Energy/Resource Recovery Facility (E/RRF), two closed municipal solid waste landfills, a regional Ashfill operated by the County, two recycling and disposal facilities, eight drop-off sites for recyclable materials, and equipment and facilities for refuse collection, disposal, and recycling operations. The operation of the Solid Waste Management Program is achieved through the Division of Solid Waste Operations and the Division of Recycling, Engineering, and Environmental Compliance. The Administrative Services Branch performs the tasks associated with the overall administrative, technical and management functions for those funds that comprise Solid Waste Management.

Fund 40130, Leaf Collection, provides curbside vacuum leaf collection within Fairfax County's 38 approved leaf collection districts. For FY 2016, approximately 25,000 homes are included within these districts. Revenue for Fund 40130 is derived from a levy charged to homeowners within leaf collection districts. The FY 2016 leaf collection levy will remain as it has for several years at a rate of \$0.015 per \$100 of assessed real estate value.

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Fund 40140, Refuse Collection and Recycling Operations, provides for collection of waste and recycling from approximately 44,000 individual households within Fairfax County's approved sanitary districts. Revenue to support residential collection operations is derived from the refuse collection fee. In FY 2016, the annual collection fee of \$345 for sanitary district residents will remain at the same level as it has for several years.

The fund also supports collection of waste and recycling from properties owned and occupied by Fairfax County. Revenue for this service is collected from County agencies to which the service is provided. The SWMP also provides funds for management of the solid waste collection services for General Fund programs including Community Cleanup, Court/Board Directed Cleanups, Evictions and Health Department Referral operations.

The County's Recycling Program is also funded through Fund 40140. This program consists of all outreach and education about the County's entire solid waste management program; operation of the eight County recycling drop off centers; opportunities to recycle items not collected at the curb such as computers, televisions, rechargeable batteries, and compact fluorescent lamps; document shredding opportunities for County residents; and participation in all major County events. Funding for the recycling programs derives from Funds 40150 and 40160.

Fund 40150, Refuse Disposal, provides for delivering refuse collected throughout Fairfax County to the Energy/Resource Recovery Facility (E/RRF), the Prince William County Facility or other appropriate landfill; transferring yard waste to compost facilities; coordinating the facility use agreement between Fairfax and Prince William Counties; operating the County's automotive battery recycling program, white goods recycling program (i.e., refrigerators, dishwashers, washers and dryers, etc.), daily e-waste collection and Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) program; managing the Recycling and Disposal Centers; and providing brush mulching services.

Under the current industry environment, the County's competitive pricing system for Fund 40150, Refuse Disposal, has proven to be sufficient to cover the current disposal operation costs as well as the cost of the non-revenue generating programs. These non-revenue based programs include the countywide recycling education/outreach; the Household Hazardous Waste program; e-waste collection and recycling; maintenance and environmental monitoring of the closed I-66 landfill; and the Code Enforcement Program. In FY 2016, the system disposal charge and the Recycling and Disposal Center fee will remain at \$62 per ton. A contractual disposal rate for FY 2016 will be negotiated with private waste haulers, but will increase to \$56 per ton, from the FY 2015 level of \$54 per ton.

Fund 40160, Energy/Resource Recovery Facility (E/RRF), funds the contract with Covanta Fairfax, Inc. (CFI) for the operation of waste-to-energy facility which annually processes over 1 million tons of waste. This waste is used to generate electrical power in excess of 80 megawatts, enough to power approximately 75,000 homes annually. The County charges a tipping fee to all users of the E/RRF and subsequently pays the contractual disposal fee to CFI from these revenues. The formula-driven contract between the County and CFI will remain in effect until February 1, 2016. This new contract guarantees the County capacity to dispose of its waste through January 31, 2021 with two additional 5-year extensions available. This WDA covers the period of CFI's lease of the property to FY 2031. Moreover, the WDA affords the County stable pricing and sustainability for waste disposal. The County significantly reduced its risks and liabilities with the new agreement while maintaining performance guarantees and monitoring of the facility. Based on the uncertainty of disposal methods and rates in the future, the disposal rate of \$29 per ton will remain the same through FY 2016.

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Fund 40170, I-95 Refuse Disposal, funds the County's I-95 (Landfill) Ashfill which serves the solid waste disposal needs of the residents of Fairfax County, as well as the needs of participating jurisdictions utilizing the facility. The municipal solid waste (MSW) section of the I-95 Ashfill closed in December 1995, and since that time the facility has accepted only ash material for land burial. The I-95 Ashfill continues to operate as a model facility - meeting the availability requirements for the participating jurisdictions and customers of the facility. Increasing costs associated with maintenance and groundwater remediation related to the closed portion of the landfill are anticipated. The I-95 Complex also serves as the focal point for the management of non-combustible material, which is redirected to debris landfills or recycling facilities for final disposal. In FY 2016, the Refuse Disposal fee will increase to \$24.50 per ton from the FY 2015 level of \$22.50 per ton. It should be noted that the ash disposal rate at I-95 is anticipated to increase in future years to accommodate operational requirements and provide sufficient reserve funding for capital projects and post closure care. Offsetting some of these costs are the continued maintenance and expansion of landfill gas wells where methane is captured, processed and sold to generate electricity, provide fuel for heating other County facilities, and other environmental uses.

Specific description, discussion, and funding requirements for each fund of the Solid Waste Management Program can be found on the subsequent pages.

OPERATIONAL FEE STRUCTURE

Solid Waste Operations Fee Structure¹

	Fund 40130, Leaf Collection	Fund 40140, Refuse Collection and Recycling Operations	Fund 40150, Refuse Disposal	Fund 40160, E/RRF	Fund 40170, I-95 Refuse Disposal
FY 2016 Fee	\$0.015/\$100 Assessed Property Value	\$345 Curbside	\$62/Ton, System Fee \$56 Estimated (to be negotiated) Contract/Discount \$62/Ton, Recycling and Disposal Center	\$29/Ton	\$24.50/Ton
FY 2015 Fee	\$0.015/\$100 Assessed Property Value	\$345 Curbside	\$62/Ton, System Fee \$54 Negotiated Contract/Discount \$62/Ton, Recycling and Disposal Center	\$29/Ton	\$22.50/Ton
Who Pays	Leaf District Residents	Sanitary District Residents	Private Collectors, Residents and County Agencies through Fund 40140	The County through Fund 40150	E/RRF, Fund 40150, and Participating Jurisdictions

¹ There are numerous special rates that have been negotiated and implemented as needed which are not reflected in the structure above. Examples include varying miscellaneous charges for yard debris (brush, grass, and leaves), tires, and others.

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Key Performance Measures

Indicator	Prior Year Actuals			Current Estimate	Future Estimate
	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Estimate/Actual	FY 2015	FY 2016
Output:					
Total tons of sanitary district refuse and recyclables	79,806	77,439	78,000 / 75,586	78,000	77,000
Total County tons recycled (1)	571,116	647,456	500,000 / 518,575	500,000	500,000
Ton of material delivered to the E/RRF	1,038,812	946,791	1,020,000 / 947,080	983,841	865,000
Efficiency:					
Cost per ton of refuse and recyclables collected in the sanitary districts	\$185.47	\$178.59	\$210.07 / \$208.93	\$201.48	\$181.97
Disposal cost avoidance by recycling (\$ million)	\$30.30	\$34.30	\$26.50 / \$28.00	\$27.00	\$27.00
Cost per ton of material disposed (contract rate)	\$53.00	\$53.00	\$54.00 / \$54.00	\$54.00	\$56.00
Service Quality:					
Percent of customers or citizens rating refuse services as good or better	98.1%	97.7%	95.0% / 99.0%	95.0%	95.0%
Did the division meet the mandated recycling rate?	Yes	Yes	Yes / Yes	Yes	Yes
Tons delivered to E/RRF in excess of Guaranteed Annual Tonnage (GAT)	108,062	16,041	89,250 / 16,330	53,091	51,229
Outcome:					
Customer satisfaction deviation from 95 percent target	3.1%	2.9%	0.0% / 4.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Total County recycling rate	47.0%	51.0%	40.0% / 48.0%	45.0%	45.0%
Percent of GAT Met	111.61%	101.72%	109.59% / 101.75%	105.70%	106.30%

(1) VA DEQ requires annual recycling rate to be prepared on a calendar year basis.

Performance Measurement Results

The performance measures for the Solid Waste Management Program were met and exceeded in FY 2014. The program exceeded the service quality measure of 95 percent of its customer rating refuse services good or better by 4 percentage points and exceeded the state-mandated recycling rate by 23 percentage points. In FY 2014, the number of tons delivered to the E/RRF exceeded the Guaranteed Annual Tonnage by 16,330 tons or 1.75 percent. Decreases in the cost per ton of refuse and recyclables collected in sanitary districts is a result of the transition from three-man crews on standard refuse collection trucks to a one-man crew on automated collection vehicles. Future reductions in the material delivered to E/RRF are based on the new contract between Covanta Fairfax, Inc. and the County in FY 2016 and beyond.