

Solid Waste Management

LOB #354:

RESIDENTIAL AND GENERAL COLLECTION

Purpose

The Residential and General Collection (R&G) Program provides curbside refuse and recyclable collection services to County residents who reside in designated Sanitary Districts.

- Collection of refuse and recyclables from approximately 44,000 residences in designated Sanitary Districts;
- Removal of oversized piles of trash through the *Clean Streets Initiatives* and *MegaBulk* programs;
- Assistance in the removal of materials damaged by storms, floods or other emergency situations; and
- Public outreach and education on recycling, household hazardous waste and solid waste management to County customers.

Description

The R&G Program is funded by a fee of \$345 per year that is billed semi-annually on the resident's real estate property tax bill.

For the base fee, SWMP collection customers are provided with:

- Weekly collection of refuse and recyclables, which are collected on the same day of the week;
- Weekly collection of yard waste from March 1 to December 24 on the same weekday as other collection services;
- Five special collections per year at no extra charge;
- Separate containers for refuse and recyclables;
- Reusable yard waste containers are distributed to customers upon request based on availability; and,
- Annual statement of service which describes the details of the County collection system and how to take advantage of program benefits.

The SWMP operates a fleet of about 18 rear-end packer trucks and 13 automated collection trucks to service the refuse and recyclable collection routes. The trucks are operated by County staff that drive the trucks and collect the waste from the container placed at the curb on collection day. The automatic collection trucks utilize a mechanical arm that grabs the container and dumps it into the collection vehicle without the need for the container to be manually emptied by staff. This equipment significantly reduces the potential for injury of staff on the collection routes. This LOB is performed with 123/123.0 FTE positions.

Special Collections - Customers can take advantage of requesting up to five special collections each year. Special collections are available for large items or large piles of yard waste and are provided in the base service fee of \$345/year. The SWMP uses a fleet of six crane trucks that employ grapple cranes to collect and move the oversized materials. When oversized items or large piles of yard waste exceed certain sizes, the *MegaBulk* program is available to the customer for an additional fee.

MegaBulk - The *MegaBulk* Program was originally established for County refuse and recycling customers in Sanitary Districts to collect oversized piles of refuse and yard debris. Customers schedule this service and pay an additional fee for the collection of oversized quantities of materials that are not part of the basic level of service for routine weekly collections based upon equipment and available personnel.

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Clean Streets Initiative (CSI) - Working in conjunction with the Fairfax County Health Department, the SWMP's *Clean Streets Initiative* is designed to address complaints from residents about piles of refuse that are placed in neighborhoods where the property owner does not take responsibility for its timely removal or where no responsible party can be found. Under this initiative, the property owner is notified that the refuse must be removed and if he or she fails to do so or otherwise cooperate, the SWMP removes the refuse and bills the owner for removal of the material. If the property owner refuses to pay that bill, a lien is placed on the property.

Benefits

The benefits of the R&G Program include:

- Collection routes are consolidated into specific geographic areas for collection. This reduces truck traffic resulting in improved road safety from reductions in accidents and personal injury and eliminates air emissions associated with the operation of diesel equipment.
- Provides a public option with competitively priced disposal services; The *MegaBulk* and the *CSI* programs are available to all County residents and aid in keeping Fairfax County clean.
- Provides the County with equipment for emergency response and recovery efforts such as floods, hurricanes, snow events, and other emergencies.

Mandates

The weekly collection of refuse and recycling is mandated under Chapter 109.1, the Fairfax County solid waste management ordinance.

Authority for solid waste collection is provided under the authority of the Code of Virginia as provided below:

§ 15.2-843. Department of public utilities.

The department of public utilities, if and when established, shall be under the supervision of a director of public utilities. Such department shall be in charge of construction, operation, maintenance and administration of all public works coming under the general category of public utilities, owned, operated and controlled by any such County or district or any sanitary district of such County. Such department shall be responsible for the administration of the affairs of the sanitary districts, including but not limited to water systems, sewer systems, sewage disposal systems, garbage and any other sanitary district functions not assigned or administered by other departments or agencies.

§ 15.2-858. Creation, enlargement, contraction, etc., of sanitary districts

C. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the board shall have the power and authority with regard to the creation, enlargement, contraction, merger, consolidation or dissolution of small districts and local districts within such County that is granted to the circuit court for the County in connection therewith by Title 21 and by Chapter 161 of the Acts of the Assembly of 1926 as amended.

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Trends and Challenges

Trends

- The continued purchase of automated collection trucks with mechanical side arms;
- Customers continued support of the County's collection service as a reliable and cost-effective service;
- Equipment and staff used at this location is the same equipment and staff used to respond to emergencies such as flooding, storm events and other natural or man-made disasters in the County. The SWMP coordinates with the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue and the Police Department during emergency events to provide assistance such as roadway clearing. They are also used for snow and ice control during winter months.

Challenges

- The Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council has identified increased truck traffic due to the lack of designated collection areas as an environmental issue affecting the quality of life in the County. The Council has requested that SWMP examine possible remedies for this issue.

Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
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FUNDING			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$9,201,739	\$8,835,813	\$9,148,085
Operating Expenses	6,674,638	7,282,897	7,083,159
Work Performed for Others	(1,420,048)	(1,448,847)	(1,631,805)
Capital Equipment	2,542,390	1,557,284	1,040,000
Total Expenditures	\$16,998,719	\$16,227,147	\$15,639,439
<u>Transfers Out:</u>			
Transfer Out to General Fund	\$535,000	\$535,000	\$548,000
Total Transfers Out	\$535,000	\$535,000	\$548,000
Total Revenue	\$16,861,164	\$15,930,205	\$16,918,343
POSITIONS			
Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	129 / 129	124 / 124	123 / 123
Total Positions	129 / 129	124 / 124	123 / 123

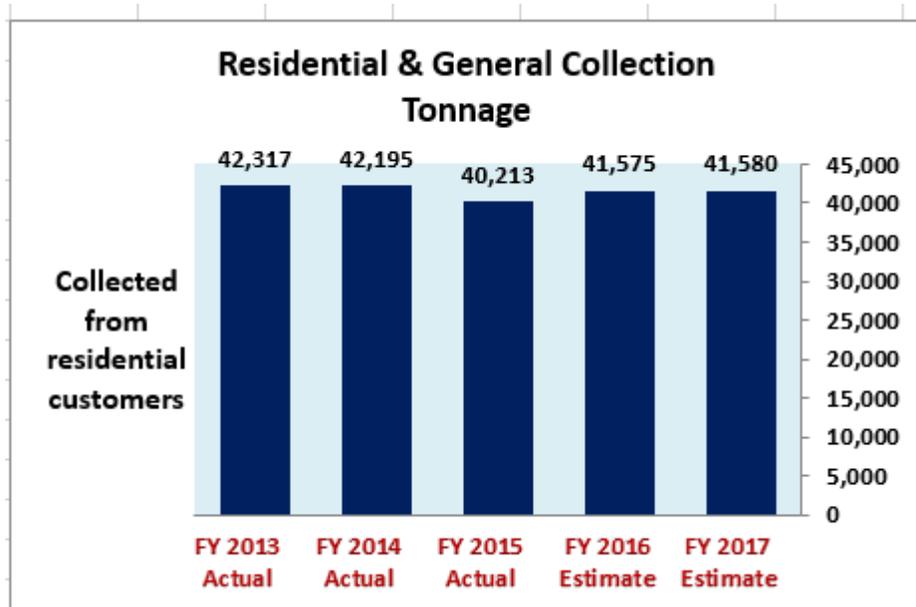
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Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Tons of refuse collected from residential customers	42,317	42,195	40,213	41,575	41,580
Net cost per ton for residential refuse collection	\$325	\$374	\$389	\$342	\$342
Percent of residential refuse customers rating services good/better	98.40%	96.30%	97.90%	95.00%	95.00%

Residential and General Collection - Tonnage

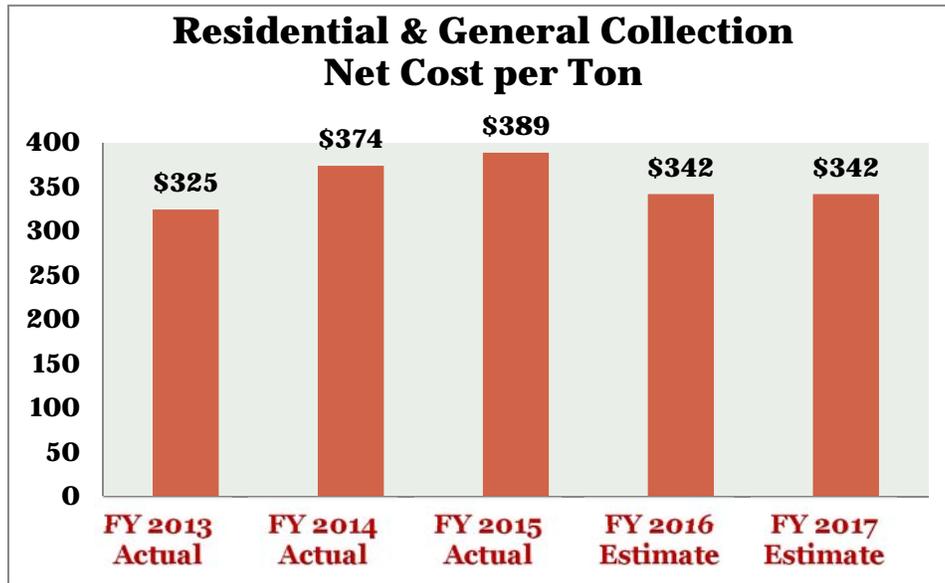
This measure reflects the tons of refuse collected from residential customers who reside in a designated sanitary district where refuse collection services are provided by Fairfax County Solid Waste Management Program (SWMP). Tonnage has been relatively consistent over the past few years and the program has experienced minimal expansion. In FY 2015, tonnage decreased 5 percent from FY 2014 from sanitary district customers. While gauging the actual tonnage can be difficult, declines in requests for special collection services indicate that the trend could be possibly linked to changing economic conditions. The SWMP will continue to monitor tonnages and adjust forecasts if the trend continues in FY 2016 and beyond. Minimal expansion of the County sanitary district collection routes has occurred over the past several years and is expected to continue. The SWMP does not actively market its collection service to County residents.



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Residential & General Collection - Net Cost per Ton

This metric measures the net cost per ton for the Solid Waste Management Program's (SWMP) residential refuse collection LOB. This measures the cost of the refuse collection program which has increased upward in recent years. Fees for residential collection have remained constant for the past five years and no rate increases are forecasted in FY 2017. The SWMP anticipates lower cost per ton in the future due to internal cost controls put in place on its operational expenses, more accurate allocation of program costs to other SWMP programs that utilize equipment and services from the residential collection program, and a managed reduction in the purchase of vehicles and other capital equipment that is based on a change in management philosophy. The SWMP has also introduced automated collection vehicles and is reconfiguring its trash collection routes to gain more efficiency. Both of these measures are anticipated to contribute to additional cost savings and maintain current service levels at the existing fee level.



Residential & General Collection- Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

This measures customer satisfaction with refuse services. These results are used to assess the current service/initiatives and identify priorities for future action. The survey respondents from the Fairfax County's sanitary districts demonstrated a relatively high degree of satisfaction with the collection of refuse. The SWMP strives to provide quality and on-time refuse collection services, as well as increase education efforts to meet the customer's collection service demands. The absence of price increases is appreciated by customers who continue to rate service as good or better in the annual surveys. The factors that contribute to performance are the newly-reconfigured collection routes that reduce collection time and the automated collection vehicles with mechanical side arms that reduce collection times and the potential for worker injury.