

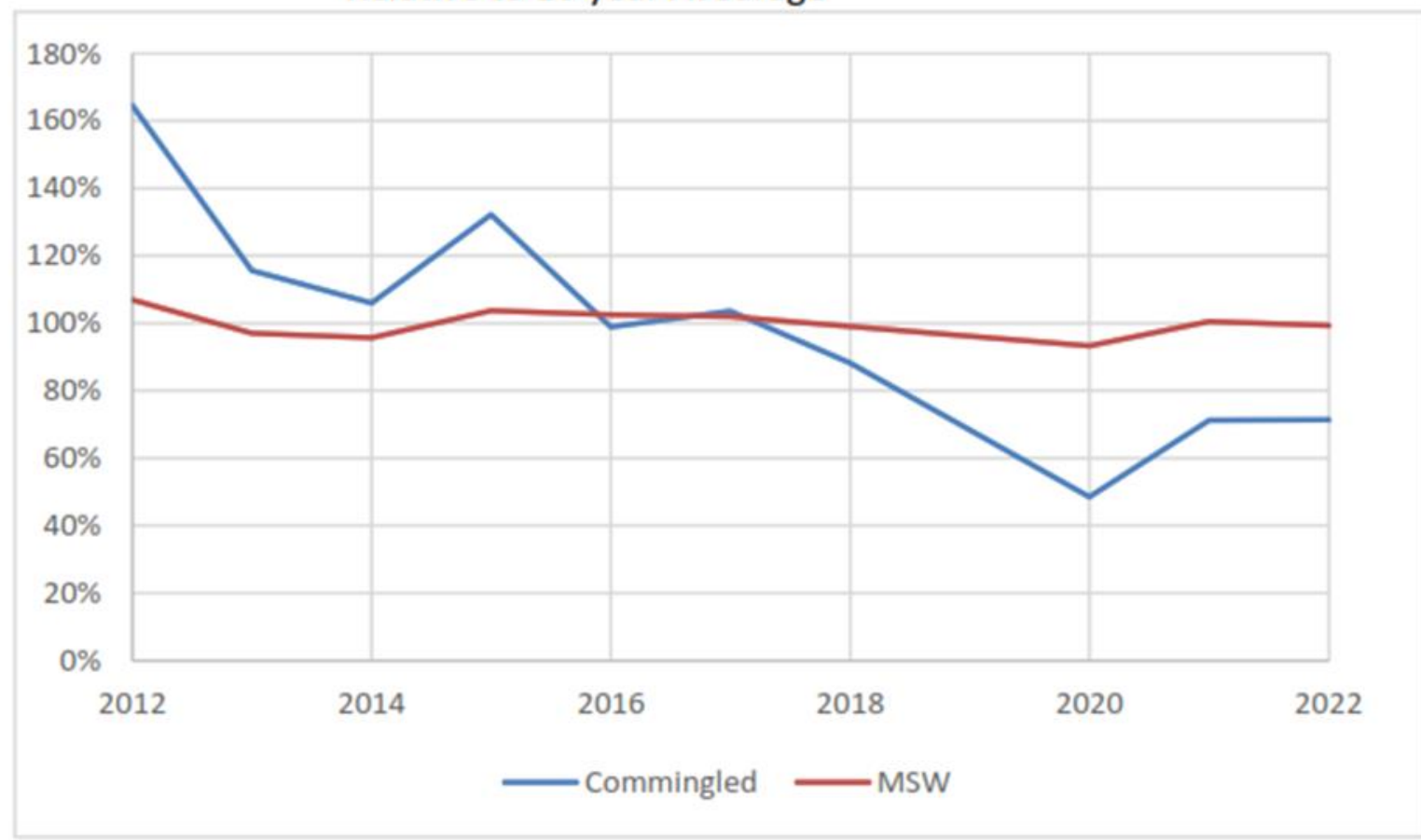
Waste Chapter

Issues and Recommendations

- Curbside recycling is low and going down
- Zero Waste Plan – adopted but slow.
- Collection Changes Proposed
- Recommendations
 - Extend and Budget Zero Waste
 - Obtain Legislative Authority for Zero Waste
 - Institute better data collection
 - Institute litter control
 - Establish Environmental Purchasing numeric targets
 - Do not cancel leaf collection this year

Total Municipal Waste (Commercial +Residences is Stable) Curbside Recycling is Down –Below Our Neighbor

10-Year Historic MSW and Commingled Waste
Relative to 10 year Average



2021-2030 BOS Zero Waste Plan

- 24 Strategies for Fairfax Government and Schools to achieve:
 - Diversion of 90% of waste from disposal
 - Reduce total waste to 75% of 2018 levels
 - SWMP Staff opine outreach strategies limited in effectiveness
- Addresses only 2% of the total County solid waste
- Under Procurement and Material Management
- Action being taken by PWES and others, data not ready
- Hiring consultants

Collection Changes under consideration

- 10% of the County is collected through PWES
 - County is proposing to contract out this service
- BOS is considering establishing extended franchising Districts that would provide a single private collection hauling to collect in that district.
- County staff have proposed cancelling leaf collection for 25,000 residences this fall

Recommendations

1. Budget and Establish an Accountable Zero Waste Plan for the public and private sector.

Ten percent of the schedule to achieve zero waste by 2030 is expended and the actual recycling rate has decreased since the BOS called for Zero Waste. A specific action plan with deadlines and realistic reduction targets for each action are needed. A re-evaluation of how waste is addressed is needed. Food waste diversion will be required on a large scale. Restaurants, commercial firms, and institutions will need to be required to implement specific actions. Practical means of recycling will be needed for multi-family residents. Haulers and recycling processors will need to be a part of the solution. Outreach will be insufficient to obtain the goal

2. Utilize Existing County Authority or Obtain Legislative Authority to:

- Implement the Zero Waste Plan for all public and private waste.
- Efficiently enforce solid waste regulations and policy
- Modify existing ordinances as practicable.
- Collect Accurate Data Efficiently
- Institute Sanitary Collection Districts.

If it is possible to proceed to the zero waste goal with existing County Authority, it should be done now. However, it will be necessary to obtain additional authority through the legislature to achieve the zero waste goal.

3. Institute Recycling Data Collection and Reporting

Data indicate that countywide residential curbside recycling is low. To obtain the cultural change needed to meet the board's goals, the county is encouraged to continue improving outreach, but to also to require private haulers to report to their customers their annual percentage of curbside collection that is recycled. In addition, institute outreach requirements and accurate data reporting policies on private waste haulers that result in increased recycling.

4. Institute Litter Control

- Support Virginia law changes for a container redemption fee (“bottle bill”) Stalled
- Enforce litter control requirements on Waste Haulers (Two year)
- Complete the Hunting Creek Trash Collection Pilot and institute a permanent installation.

County streams and public land continue to be impacted by illegal dumping and litter.

Complaints about litter around dumpsters have increased substantially.

5. Establish Environmental Purchasing Numeric Targets

The county has expanded staff to improve environmental purchasing. However, without specific goals and reporting, it is difficult to assess how successful and worthwhile this investment is.

6. Do Not Cancel Leaf Collection This Fall

- It is too late to inform people they are going to lose this service
- This could be a repeat of the plastic paper bag edict
- It is unclear that there is an environmental benefit
- It reduces the flexible blue-collar staff available for emergencies
- It needs to be assessed against the One Fairfax Policy

RPA Tidal Wetlands Permitting Outreach

Land Development or Water?

Stella, George, or Separate EQAC Letter

Resource Protection Area

RPA's are regulated shorelines of streams, rivers and other waterways associated environmentally sensitive land that lie alongside or near the which drain into the Chesapeake Bay. RPA's protect water quality, filter pollutants from stormwater runoff, reduce the volume of stormwater runoff, prevent erosion, and perform other important biological and ecological functions. In Fairfax County, RPA's include any land characterized by one or more of the following features:

- 1) Tidal wetland;
- 2) Tidal shore;
- 3) Water body with perennial flow;
- 4) Nontidal wetland connected by surface flow and contiguous to a tidal wetland or water body with perennial flow;
- 5) Buffer area that includes any land within a major floodplain and any land within 100 feet of a feature listed in 1-4.

Development is generally not permitted when there is sufficient buildable area. Accessory structures like sheds, gazebos, pools, etc. require approval via a public hearing and fees. Neither Clear-cutting or lawns are permitted. While LDS has engaged in outreach to RPA property owners, many are unaware of their responsibilities to protect the RPA land.

Tidal Wetlands

Fairfax County has extensive tidal wetlands that provide important ecosystem services. They serve as nursery and feeding grounds for waterfowl, fish, and shellfish; protect against flooding and erosion; and provide for recreational and aesthetic opportunities. Since 1972, Commonwealth Law and later County Code have long called for tidal wetlands to be protected. The County Wetlands Ordinance was updated to coincide with the 2020 Commonwealth update to the Law including a requirement living shorelines be used for shoreline erosion protection wherever suitable. Living shoreline methods use natural elements to create effective buffers for absorbing wave energy and protect against shoreline erosion. In 2022 the Fairfax County Wetlands Board developed specific County guidelines at the request of the Board of Supervisors to preserve and protect tidal wetlands. Concerns have been raised by the Mount Vernon Community Council and others about the impact of the new law, ordinance, and guidelines. It has been difficult for County Staff and the Fairfax County Wetlands Board to communicate the actual impact of the new County wetlands Ordinance property owners.

Outreach Recommendation

Conduct outreach to RPA and Tidal Wetlands Property Owners to convey the responsibility to protect these resources and obtain permits for modifications where required.