

Mission Statement

Thurston County and participating jurisdictions provide citizens with efficient, reliable, and affordable solid waste collection, handling, recycling and disposal services in order to improve the quality of life while protecting and preserving human health, environmental quality, and natural resources.

Goals

Infrastructure & System

- Manage waste in a cost-effective manner that promotes, in order of priority, waste reduction, reuse and recycling.
- Enhance and improve the overall efficiency of waste and recyclables collection and transfer.
- Build the infrastructure needed to provide maximum recycling and waste diversion opportunities.
- Ensure collection infrastructure is flexible and adaptable to changing recycling and waste diversion practices.
- Ensure the County solid waste system is in full compliance with the appropriate rules and regulations.

Economic Sustainability

- Manage waste as a resource to increase local job opportunities and support economic development.
- Consider environmental impacts to climate, air, water and land that are associated with waste generation, transportation, handling, recycling and disposal.
- Ensure County's solid waste system has an equitable and sustainable funding mechanism.
- The County's development community is aware of and invested in less wasteful and more sustainable building and development practices.
- In the County, edible food is eaten and inedible food is composted or processed into other value-added products.

Education

- Encourage people in the County to act on the basis of their understanding of the societal, environmental, health, and financial impacts of their consumption and disposal choices. This includes their impact on climate change.
- Encourage people and businesses to make responsible choices about what they produce and consume, and what they generate as waste.

Outside Influences

- Manage waste in a manner that promotes Washington State's waste management priorities presented in Ecology's Moving Washington Beyond Waste and Toxics document.
- Promote and support life cycle product stewardship and industry advancements in packaging standards that lead to less waste generation.
- Support changes to federal and State regulations and policies that support increased recycling opportunities and waste diversion.
- Incorporate principles of equity of social justice into solid waste system planning.

Recommendations

Collection, Transfer & Disposal

- Continue to require MSW to be routed through the County-owned facilities.
- Review and update County Ordinance 13696 related to residential recycling collection.
- The WARC, Rainier Drop-Box Site, and Rochester Drop-Box Site will comprise the designated disposal system.
- Implement proposed improvements to the County facilities to ensure high-quality service delivery in a fiscally responsible manner.
- Issue a Request for Proposals for operations, maintenance, transportation and disposal to ensure continuation of solid waste services at the County facilities.
- Monitor developments and progress in waste processing and conversion technologies utilized and support the continued use of landfill gas to energy operations at the disposal site.

Recommendations continued on next page.

Recommendations (continued)

- Proposals for disposal facilities, anaerobic digestion, incinerators and other waste conversion technologies should be evaluated for Plan consistency, cost to benefits and environmental compliance.

Education & Outreach

- Refresh educational materials and harmonize messaging throughout communications tools.
- Refresh residential food waste prevention campaigns.
- Collaborate with the certificated hauler to develop and implement a residential education program.
- Enhance the multi-family toolkit and provide targeted technical assistance.
- Promote business technical assistance.
- Continue to support school waste reduction and recycling strategies and develop measurement metrics.
- Provide education for reducing Construction & Demolition debris prevention and diversion.
- Adopt a Contamination Reduction Outreach Plan (CROP).

Waste Reduction, Recycling & Organics

- Adopt the updated list of designated materials & maintain it through updates.
- Focus recycling and diversion efforts on organics, glass, mixed paper and waste streams.
- Conduct a waste composition study to provide data for tracking and analysis.
- Continue to provide support for recycling at public events.
- Expand recycling drop-off opportunities.
- Support private sector programs, forums, etc. to facilitate material exchanges.
- Increase promotion of existing reuse programs.

- Promote and support food collection and distribution programs in the County.
- Support the Thurston Climate Adaptation Plan, and additional climate action plans adopted by local jurisdictions, through programs that target a reduction in landfill waste, transportation, improved handling methods, and recycling.

Special Wastes

- Continue to dispose special wastes through a cooperative effort.
- Monitor Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Washington State guidance regarding pharmaceutical waste and implement changes as needed to comply with the statewide medicine take-back program.
- Promote proper reuse, recycling and disposal of Construction & Demolition debris.
- Implement the After-Action Report – Improvement Plan developed as part of the Thurston County Debris Management Plan.

Administration, Financing and Enforcement

- Consider additional funding strategies that can be implemented by the County directly and independently from other alternatives.
- Adopt a county-wide flow control ordinance for MSW to promote consistent service and funding levels for management of the solid waste facilities.
- Adopt interlocal agreements between the County and the cities and towns to provide for flow control of MSW.
- Develop a dashboard report to centralize solid waste data and make accessible to the public.
- Conduct a rate study to ensure rates are covering system costs at an adequate level.

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