



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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In Control: City Council B Session

DEPARTMENT: Solid Waste Management Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: David McCary

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Pay As You Throw Collection Program

SUMMARY:

This update provides City Council information on the progress of the City wide roll-out of the Pay As You Throw Collection Program.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In June 2010, City Council adopted a 10-Year Recycling and Resource Recovery Plan (Recycling Plan). On January 31, 2013, the Recycling Plan was revised to a multi-year Recycling Plan and adopted by City Council. The strategic goals outlined in the Recycling Plan are to ensure that all single-family and multi-family residents have access to convenient recycling programs, to improve recycling opportunities for businesses, and to recycle 60 percent of all residential curbside materials collected by SWMD by the year 2025.

The Department has undertaken a variety of initiatives in order to reach these goals. Since the adoption of the Recycling Plan, the Department has revamped the brush and bulky collection process to increase brush recycling, constructed and opened a new brush recycling center in the City's South Side, increased blue cart recycling outreach, increased recycling education to schools, opened four bulky drop off centers, and obtained City Council approval of an ordinance requiring multifamily complexes to provide recycling. Since the implementation of the Recycling Plan, the Department has increased the amount of materials recycled from 7% to 33%. Currently, the Department is implementing the next major steps to achieve 60% recycling, Pay As You Throw (PAYT) and the Organic Collection Program.

In FY 2016, the Department began the PAYT conversion roll-out (which also includes the Organic Collection Program). Conversion to PAYT is a major driver in achieving the 60% residential recycling goal by 2025. The PAYT conversion roll-out program includes education and outreach as well as enforcement as major components to the program. Residents select from 3 garbage cart sizes, and monthly Solid Waste rates vary according to cart size. The larger a garbage (brown) cart a resident desires, the higher the assessed rate will be. The rate structure is designed to incentivize residents to divert more waste to the organics (green) and recycling (blue) carts. The rate structure also creates equity between solid waste customers by having customers who throw away less trash pay a lower rate. Also in FY 2016, the City transitioned away from a subscription-based Organics Recycling Program. The green organics cart is now automatically available to customers within the PAYT Program.

Beginning in FY 2016, the new garbage collection rates for Pay As You Throw went into effect. Pricing is based on the size of the garbage cart. The rates are designed to provide funding for the additional personnel and equipment needed for PAYT conversion and to incentivize recycling behavior. The table below reflects the rates for PAYT customers. Customers in areas where PAYT is not yet available continue to pay a monthly Solid Waste Fee of \$20.93 until all customers are incorporated into the PAYT program which is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2017.

Monthly Solid Waste Rates for the Pay As You Throw Program

Cart Size	Monthly Solid Waste Rate	Monthly Environmental Rate	Total Monthly Rate
Small	\$ 18.19	\$ 2.24	\$ 20.43
Medium	\$ 18.69	\$ 2.24	\$ 20.93
Large	\$ 19.94	\$ 2.24	\$ 22.18
Pending Conversion	\$ 18.69	\$ 2.24	\$ 20.93

The monthly Solid Waste Fee is billed and collected by CPS Energy along with the monthly Environmental Fee (currently \$2.24 per month). The Department worked with CPS Energy and the City's ITS Department throughout FY2015 to update billing and financial systems in order to accommodate for the new PAYT fee structure.

For the roll-out of the PAYT Program, the Department's communication plan included meeting with each council office to provide a general overview of the process and address any questions or concerns as well as conducting a series of community meetings each month within the targeted areas. At these community meetings, the Department used a comprehensive approach and provided residents information via informational video, group questions and answer periods and one-on-one breakout sessions. As neighborhoods are transitioned to the PAYT program, the Department will host informative community meetings for the residents. The residents are also provided information in the form of welcome packets and informational door hangers. Responsive customer service by the Department's Customer Service Group is playing a key role in gaining feedback and addressing residential concerns. The primary message to residents is that the transition to PAYT is easy to understand, convenient and benefits the community.

The results thus far have been 95% of the residents have retained the large cart. This is likely due to the rate differential between cart sizes not being large enough to drive behavior change. The Department will reassess the rate differential for future years to determine price points that will drive behavior change to recycle more and therefore encourage residents to move to a smaller cart.

Residents who previously subscribed to the Organics Recycling Program no longer pay the \$3.00 per month subscription fee as of the beginning of FY 2016. The curbside collection of the green organics cart for the

Organics Collection Program is now included in the monthly Solid Waste Fee. Overall, the Organics Collection Program continues to experience good participation. However, some residents are placing non-compostable materials in the cart and the Department is working to educate these residents. The Department may resort to enforcing the \$25.00 fine for those residents who continue to abuse the program with non-compostable contaminants.

ISSUE:

A Briefing on the roll-out of the City's Pay As You Throw Garbage and Recycling Collection Services program. The City should continue to support the Pay As You Throw Program in order to reach the 60% residential recycling by 2025. Should the PAYT Program lose support, the City may not reach its goal.

ALTERNATIVES:

This presentation is for informational purposes only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This presentation is for informational purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for informational purposes only.