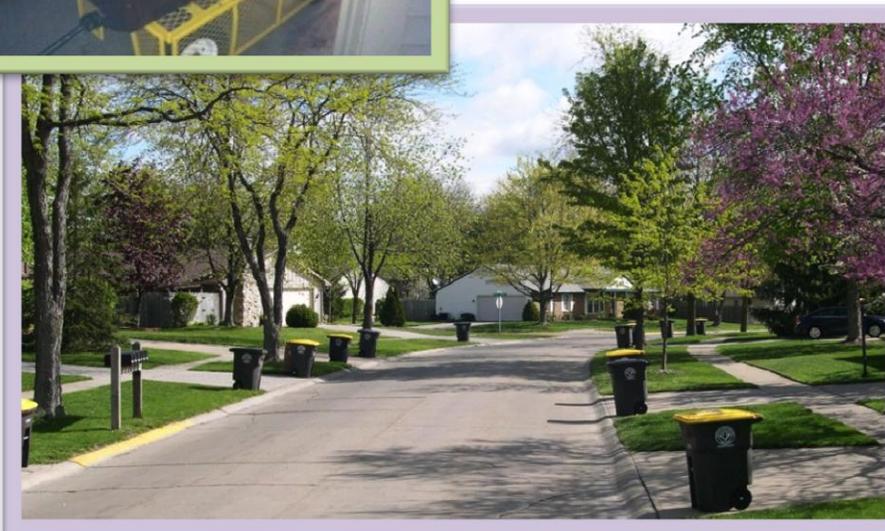


# SWANA Collection Systems

## Excellence Award Application



*It's Easy...*  
**One Cart Recycling**



April, 15, 2012

Presented by:

City of Fort Wayne  
200 E Berry St., Suite 210  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802  
(260) 427-2474



**Executive Summary**

The City of Fort Wayne has made great strides in its solid waste and recycling programs. Through recent contracts, the City has been able to improve program efficiencies through technological advancements in its recycling collection program. In 2011, a single stream recycling program was implemented in the City of Fort Wayne, Indiana. The program has been a huge success with participation rates increasing from 33% to 73% in one year. Through changes in the structure of collection and processing contracts, the City has made it easier for the residents to recycle while at the same time receiving revenue from the materials which incentivizes the program. In addition, new technology in the form of automated collection trucks has made it easier for the collection contractor to service homes and thus maximize efficiencies on their end. The City of Fort Wayne through communication and partnership with their contractor Republic Services is making tremendous strides towards improving services provided to their constituents.

## Design of Collections Facility/Management Systems

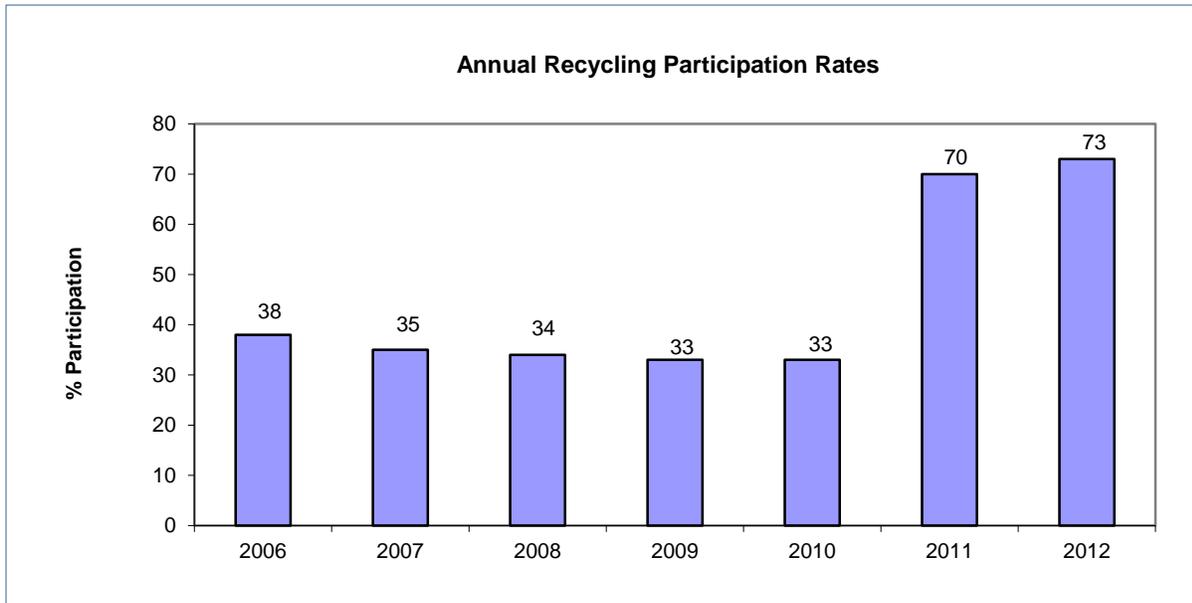
In January 2011 a single stream recycling program was developed and implemented for the City of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Automated collection began in 2006 for garbage service only. At that time, 96-gallon and 48-gallon garbage carts with wheels and lids were delivered to all 80,000 households. The success of the automated collection for garbage has led to the expansion of our new single stream recycling program.

Merits of the single stream recycling program are many. We have a new and improved Material Recovery Facility (MRF) to handle the processing of recyclables collected from the new program. A fleet of eight new automated and semi-automated collection trucks have been purchased by Republic Services-the current contractor for recycling collection. The new cart system has made recycling more convenient for residents and as a result participations rates have escalated rapidly. We also have the economic benefit of shared revenue when the recyclables are marketed. Another innovated aspect of this program is the use of radio frequency identification (RFID) technology. An RFID tag is a microchip that is embedded in each recycle cart and read by a computer scanner on the collection truck. From this system useful information and data is collected and used to enhance the over-all performance of the program. This modern state of the art system results in greater citizen involvement in the recycling program.

Some surrounding communities still require citizens to utilize recycling drop off centers. Programs of this type result in extremely low participation rates. Prior to single stream recycling, the city relied upon a dual-bin curbside recycling system. This program grew stagnant and peaked at a 33% participation rate over the course of fifteen years. Residents were required to sort paper in one bin and glass, plastic and metal in the other bin. These two 18-gallon bins did not have lids resulting in higher levels of contamination and neighborhoods littered with wind-blown debris. Additionally, the old bins held only one-third of the volume compared to our new carts; whereas, the new single stream recycling program has already increased to 73% participation in one year. In fact, City Council has just approved an additional \$345,000 to purchase over 6,390 more recycling carts to meet increase residential demand in this program.



We expect this number to continue to grow with the goal of 100% participation.



## Environmental Controls & Regulatory Compliance

The use of standardized carts for automated collection has provided citizens with a more convenient and clean method of recycling. No longer are they burdened with sorting paper materials from glass, plastics and metal into two separate bins. Now, the materials are conveniently contained in one cart that matches the existing trash carts; except for the recycle carts have a bright yellow lid. The amount of paper blowing down the street on a windy day from overflowing bins has reduced significantly; and, there is less water contamination from rain; as well as, reduced odor. In addition, we are now accepting new items for recycling that were not included in the two bin system. These items include plastic #3 - #7 and poly-coated cartons.

The new One Cart Recycling Program has required Republic Services to upgrade their fleet of collection trucks due to the automated system. As a result the process is more efficient, there is less trash blown from the trucks, and a safer work environment for the employees.

The new trucks meet the EPA's 2012 emission standards. The exhaust system uses Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) in a complex process that significantly reduces particulate emissions. Republic Services' Fort Wayne division was the first division to utilize the Heil Multi-Task automated side loader in a fleet application. Each vehicle is equipped with a Fleet-Mind service verification system integrated with RFID technology, GPS, and

the company's proprietary Info-Pro operating system. Republic Services made 27 improvements to the Multi-Task that was adopted into the design by the truck manufacturer (Heil). These modifications improved the vehicle reliability, durability, and efficiency. In addition, each vehicle is also equipped with an onboard Air Weigh scale system that shuts down the truck's PTO pump when the maximum gross legal weight is reached. Once the pump has been shut down, the driver is unable to add additional weight to the vehicle.

Republic Services offers a vertically integrated solid waste management system for the City of Fort Wayne. They provide collection, transfer, landfill, and material recovery and recycling. The sites for both the hauling division and landfill have never received a notice of violation (NOV) or consent order from any regulatory agency since at least 1998, when the current management team came on board. Republic Services conducts monthly facility inspections which are tracked and recorded electronically.

The Material Recovery Facility (MRF) meets all local, state and federal compliance regulations. The facility was inspected for the first time in January of 2012 by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). No violations were found and all zoning and code requirements are in compliance. Furthermore, the building meets all fire and safety regulations.



As a result of the single stream recycling program in Fort Wayne many surrounding municipalities in Allen County, Indiana have implemented new and innovative recycling programs. Republic has expanded its services to meet those demands. For example, New Haven and Hometown Indiana, separate municipalities bordering Fort Wayne, now offer single stream recycling to their citizens, whereas, one year ago citizens had to rely on the dual-bin recycling system or on drop off locations. Recyclables collected from these areas are processed at the new MRF.

## **Program Planning**

In March 2010 the Mayor of Fort Wayne, Tom Henry, established a committee to recommend what course of action to take. This began with the inception of the Solid Waste Contract Committee consisting of Neighborhood leaders, City Council members, and Public Works staff. This group was charged with the responsibility to make

recommendations that would shape the new garbage and recycling contract for the next seven years. Neighborhood representatives from each quadrant of the city were selected to provide different perspectives of problems they faced in their areas of the city. The committee worked very hard to gather as much input as possible on both the current services being offered and what changes citizens were interested in seeing implemented. This was accomplished by holding public meetings in all sections of the city and promoting a web based survey that could gather comments and suggestions.



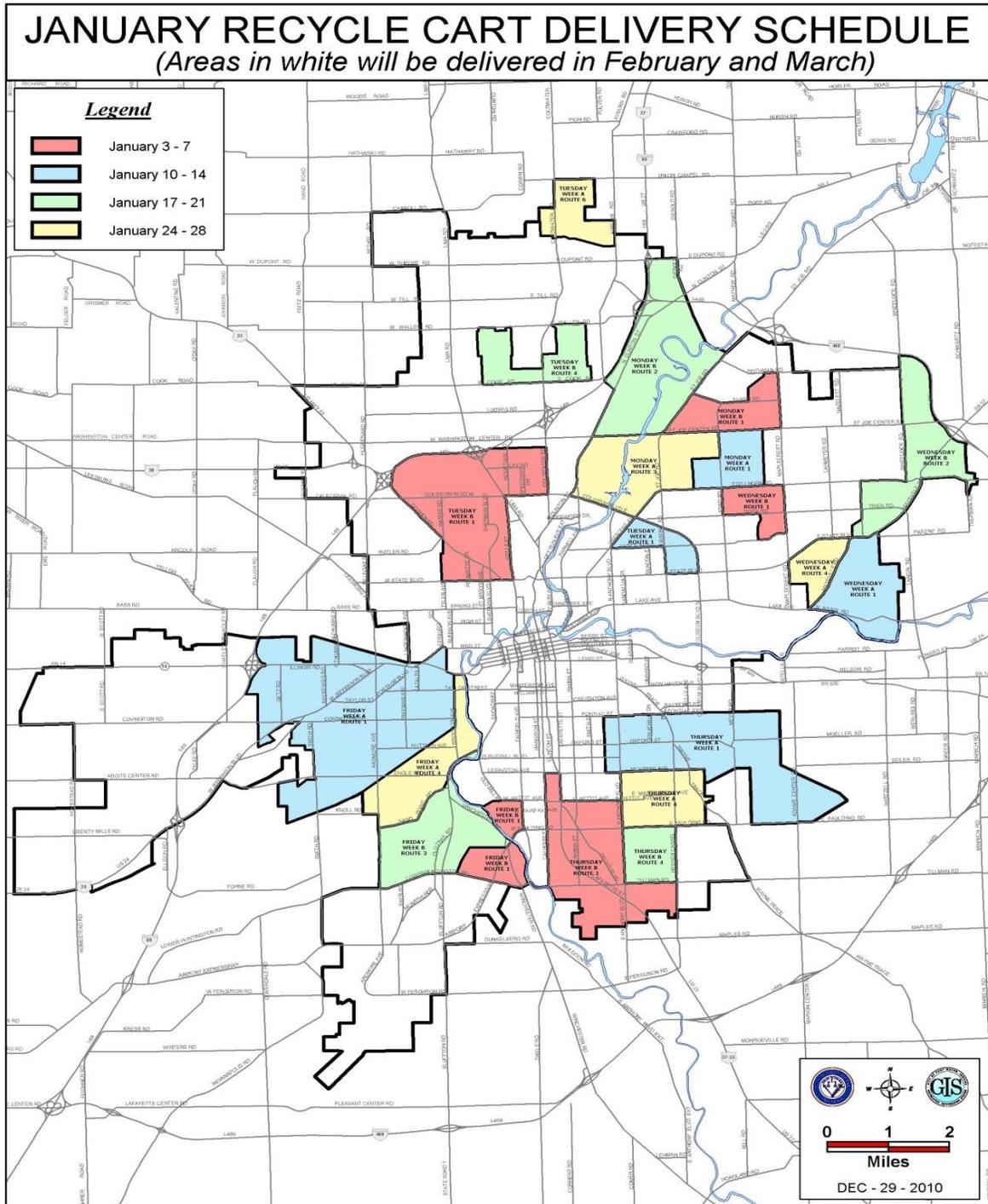
Based on the returned surveys the committee quickly realized that the two bin system for recycling was the main reason for the low participation. Several other complaints about the two bin system were: they were too small, they were difficult to carry, wind-blown debris and wet paper. The committee recommended moving to a single stream recycling program with a revenue sharing incentive that would give the city 50% of the revenues after the materials were marketed.



Recycling is voluntary in our community. Therefore the deployment of carts to registered households was strategically planned in efforts to be most efficient. Three cart deployments were scheduled over the course of 6 months. Intense planning was done to get people to sign up prior to the first deployment which started January 3, 2011. Routes were shared by Republic, and a contractor was hired with a crew of five men to deliver carts. A monthly map was placed on the webpage so residents knew when

they would receive their new recycle cart. Fliers attached to the new carts provided information regarding acceptable and unacceptable materials, recycling collection calendar and proper cart placement. Residents were also instructed to place their old recycle bins at the curb for collection 1-3 days after receiving the new cart. Most elected to keep their old bin for reuse, nonetheless over 10,000 old bins were collected. Some were donated to the local school and the rest recycled.

New automated recycle trucks were being phased in to service the new carts as they were delivered.



## **Performance, Economics and Cost Effectiveness**

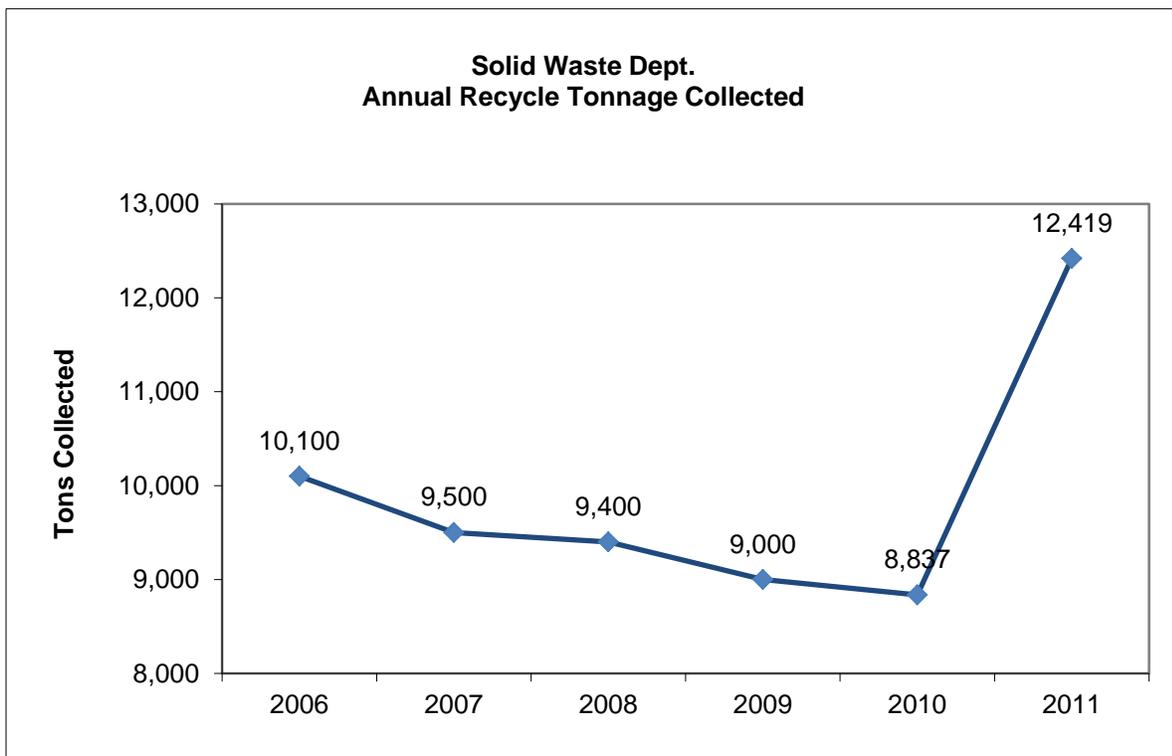
The new single stream recycling program has proven to be much more efficient in its day-to-day operations than the previous two bin program. Prior to automation, collection vehicles serviced approximately 68 homes per hour for recycling. Workers were required to manually dump the contents of recycle bins into the collection truck. Currently, under the new automated system a robotic arm extends from the truck, lifting the cart and dumping its contents into the collection vehicle. On average the trucks are servicing 108 homes per hour in trash collection and 125 homes serviced per hour in recycling collection. Approximately 30% of Fort Wayne Residents are serviced in the alley for collection. To better tackle this issue, rear load trucks are equipped with two cart tippers on the backend of the truck. This doubles worker productivity because it allows both-sides of the alley to be serviced at the same time. Additionally, automated side load trucks are also equipped with a cart tipper on the driver's side of the vehicle. This facilitates servicing both sides of a one-way street.

The success of the single stream recycling program has far exceeded our expectations. Prior to its implementation, goals were set to attain 65% participation within the first twelve months. Six months into the program those goals were met. Our most current rate of participation is at 73% and growing. The volume of material generated has increased by 50% while the amount of revenue earned continues to escalate. Last year the city estimated receiving \$250,000 in shared revenue, but were pleasantly surprised to receive \$428,000 instead. Additionally, the cost to process and collect recyclables has decreased significantly. In 2010, the city paid \$109.79/ton for a total of \$970,220 to collect and process recyclables from 33% of the population with no revenue incentive. In 2011, under the new contract with single stream recycling, the cost is \$19.87/ton to process and \$1.39 per occupied household for collection. Total cost of the program with 70% participation while taking into account the revenue share is \$884,248. These cost savings have been passed on to the citizens of Fort Wayne in the form of a rate reduction. The monthly garbage and recycling fee has been reduced twice in one year from \$11.24/month to \$9.95/month. It is exceptional to see rates being lowered in a time when other service fees are increasing. This has earned greater customer support for the program. Needless to say, it is uncommon for a city Public Works department to lower rates on a service.

The City of Fort Wayne and Republic Services work together to provide an efficient collection service for the community as well as excellent customer service. To achieve this requires excellent communication between organizations, as well as respect and an understanding of responsibilities. The City answers calls pertaining to our garbage and recycling services through our 311 Call Center. Customer input is shared with Republic

Services through daily reports, emails, meetings and phone conversations. It is in the best interest of both organizations to have a successful recycling program, and we all work together to make that happen. We have a successful team environment that resolves issues in a timely manner, by sharing information and communicating effectively. This allows us to respond quickly and efficiently to service complaints, damage reports, missed collections, etc. The purpose of this is to provide exceptional customer service.

The cost of doing business for Republic Service and the city is in constant flux. Increasing fuel prices have a heavy impact on budgets. In spite of meticulous planning for operation and budgeting many things must be considered. For example, a change in fuel prices has a significant impact on profitability. Furthermore, the ever changing commodities market continually impacts profitability, planning and budgets. Nonetheless, with these variables at play our program remains under budget and profitable. These economics are not typical of the industry and stand as testimony to the amazing team of professionals and the citizens of Fort Wayne who have made this program a success.



## Utilization of Equipment/Systems and Technologies

### Republic Services utilize the following fleet of vehicles to service our area:

- Twenty-one- Heil Multi-Task automated side load (ASL) trucks for trash and recycling collection.
- Six- Heil 5000 25-cubic yard rear load trucks for trash and recycling collection.
- One- Heil 4000 12-cubic yard rear load truck for trash collection in feeder alleys
- Two- Labrie dual-arm Helping Hand trucks for automated recycling collection.

Each 5000-series rear load truck is equipped with two cart tippers instead of one. This is typical for this type of truck. After years of experience, the division realized that productivity could be greatly enhanced with the addition of a second cart tipper. The second unit also serves as a spare tipper in the event that one tipper malfunctions or requires service. In the past, an inoperable tipper would render the vehicle out of service, as the Company requires that each cart be emptied using the tipper to reduce worker back injuries.

Each Multi-Task truck is also equipped with a cart tipper on the driver's side of the vehicle. This allows the driver to service both sides of a one-way street without having to pull carts across the street to the passenger side. Also, the low sill height on the hopper facilitates easier loading of bulky items, and with the city's unlimited garbage collection, this reduces the need to send out a different truck to collect bulk items. This feature also helps with large pieces of cardboard that are set out for recycling. Cardboard wedged in the recycle carts has been a cumbersome issue, but now residents are instructed to stack oversized or extra cardboard near the carts rather than over packing in the cart. The crusher panel feather serves two functions. First, it works



with the packing blade to reduce large bulky items to a smaller size. Second, it covers the hopper area during trips to the landfill to reduce the possibility of blowing litter.

## Worker Health & Safety

Automated collection has significantly reduced the health and safety risks that can potentially harm employees. Most of the time, drivers remain in the truck when servicing households. Drivers have less heavy, repetitive lifting to do, as well as fewer steps taken during a typical route. This has decreased the amount of injuries among staff.

Fewer injuries can also be attributed to frequent employee training for safety procedures. Each new employee is required to complete all four phases of the following safety training program:

- Phase 1- An initial 8-hour safety training program on their first day.
- Phase 2- The next two weeks are spent in “work hardening”, which combines safety training, customer service expectations, and develops physical fitness.
- Phase 3- Following the work hardening phase, employees are sent to an off-site regional training facility for one week. Here they receive additional safety training which includes OSHA-required training and job-specific training. They also learn basic skills training such as backing maneuvers, difficult turns, etc.
- Phase 4- Upon completion of this training, drivers are assigned to a mentor who conducts advanced skills training and route training for a minimum of two weeks. All training is conducted directly by (or supervised by) the Division Driver Trainer, who is a certified Smith System trainer.

We are proud to acknowledge that injury rates in Fort Wayne are very low. In 2011, the drivers and helpers whose work supports the City of Fort Wayne’s contract had a Workmen’s Compensation injury rate of only 0.8. This is the lowest rate in the history of the contract. The only two injuries that required medical treatment in 2011 were:

- Corneal abrasion to an employee’s left eye that occurred while handling a bundle of branches.
- A cut requiring four stitches to the right thumb of an employee who had a shard of glass penetrate his work glove.

**Public Acceptance, Appearance and Aesthetics**

The overall appearance of the vehicles, maintenance facility and yard is immaculate. Each truck is a model year 2011 and are washed professionally twice per week (Wednesdays and Saturdays). A large vacuum cleaner is situated near the fuel island to allow drivers to clean the interior of their vehicle on a weekly basis. The maintenance facility consists of eight (8) bays and is equipped with the latest technology: computerized wheel torque equipment, fully automated truck lifts, repair tracking on closed-circuit television monitors, and fully digitized parts tracking software. The maintenance shop recently underwent a three month remodeling project that vastly improved safety, productivity, working conditions, and overall appearance.

The new MRF is a newly renovated facility in an economically depressed sector of the city. The site which has set idle for years is now bustling with activity because of the new MRF. Dozens of jobs have been created to staff the operation. Public acceptance is overwhelmingly in favor of the positive economic growth, and environmental implications of the program. The facility is maintained and meets all current building codes and regulations. The site is safe, secure, sanitary and aesthetically pleasing.

The overall public acceptance to the new single stream recycling program is demonstrated by the public demand for the new recycling carts. In the beginning, to avoid over-burdening our 311 call center, registration was made simple with a user-friendly online sign up application that was created by the cities IT outsourcing partner. An electronic flyer was sent to over 20,000 email addresses containing a direct link to the online sign up application. The domain name [www.recyclefortwayne.org](http://www.recyclefortwayne.org) hosted the application in addition to providing detailed information about the new program on the City's website. This website was heavily advertised through all forms of mass media.



For those not technically savvy a pre-paid return postcard was mailed to all households that had not signed up on line.

A strong promotional campaign called “One Cart Recycling” was developed to educate the public about the new program and to encourage participation. Displays featuring the new carts were set up in major retail outlets and public places throughout the community. Most residents got a sneak peak of the new carts on their weekly trips to the grocery store. Pamphlets were available containing comprehensive information about the use of the carts and the sign up process. In addition, public service announcements were repeatedly placed in City Utility bills. Ads were placed in various local newspapers, magazines and other publications. Staff from Public Works conducted regular presentations to neighborhood associations and other community groups. Local media was very cooperative in spreading the news through articles, interviews and press conferences. These were disseminated through all forms of mass media.

Promotional efforts progressed with the development of a school wide assembly program designed to reach the elementary school aged children-over 20,000 strong. An innovative and dynamic program was developed to teach the children of our community about the new recycle carts. Music and humor were used to entertain and educate the children about recycling. The program was a huge success and since then an additional program has been created to continue the spread of recycling education.



In conclusion the City of Fort Wayne, Indiana in conjunction with Republic Services has planned, implemented and carried out an exemplary single stream recycling program and state of the art collection and processing operation. The combination of many factors has made our program an overwhelming success and viable model for municipalities across the United States. We are eager to share our experience and knowledge. The overall success of this program is the result of hard work by many dedicated professionals and most importantly the citizen of Fort Wayne. Recycling participation has jumped from 33% to 73% within one year. Based upon our current success we believe that 100% can be obtained in the near future. Finally, the program works because of the positive environmental implications, economic benefits and convenience for the citizens.

Postcard mailed to all participants

### Recycle Cart Do's and Don'ts

**Please rinse all containers.**  
Remove lids from containers and recycle them loosely in your cart. Labels do not need to be removed.

**GLASS BOTTLES & JARS**  
Recycle brown, green and clear glass.

**PLASTICS**  
Recycle plastics #1 thru #7 & styrofoam. Look on the bottom of containers for a number inside the recycling arrows.

**METAL CANS, ALUMINUM FOIL, ALUMINUM FOIL PANS**  
Recycle all food and beverage metal cans - steel, tin, bi-metal and aluminum.

**CARDBOARD, NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINES**  
You can also include newspaper inserts, catalogs, paperback books, phone books & brochures.

**PAPER FOOD CONTAINERS**  
Recycle food boxes including: juice boxes, egg, ice cream & milk cartons, and cereal & pasta boxes.

**PAPER**  
Recycle envelopes, office paper, junk mail, greeting cards & file folders. Shredded paper should be put in a paper bag.

**NO Plastic Bags**

**NO Plastic Food Wrappers**

**NO Plastics without Numbers**

**NO Greasy Food Containers**

**NO Food or Liquid Waste**

**NO Yard Waste**

**NO Construction Debris or Scrap Metal**

**NO Hazardous Waste**

**NO Electronics, Cables or Batteries**

**NO Diapers, Tissue or Biohazardous Waste**

**NO Light Bulbs**

**NO Ceramics, Dishes or Mirrors**

**No hoses, toys, clothes, shoes, tools, plastic straws & to-go lids, and holiday decorations**

For information on how to recycle items that cannot go in your cart visit [www.acwastewatcher.org](http://www.acwastewatcher.org) or call 449-7878.

**3-1-1** One Call to City Hall  
For more information: Call 311 or visit our website at [www.recyclefortwayne.org](http://www.recyclefortwayne.org)

Fliers distributed with recycle carts

### It's Easy... One Cart Recycling

Put ALL these items in your recycling cart.

Glass... clear, brown, green and blue

Plastics (#1 thru #7), tubs, jugs, bottles & #2 (refrigerator doors)

Metal cans... steel, tin, mineral and aluminum

Newspaper, inserts, phone books, calendars, magazines, catalogs, paperback books, and brochures

Paper food boxes, cartons & containers

White paper, junk mail, newspapers (including windows), No folders, greeting cards, and shredded paper

Aluminum foil and pans

The new recycle carts will replace yellow and brown recycle bins. Collection is every other week.

All in ONE cart... paper, cardboard, glass, cans and plastics. It's easier than ever, just mix them together!

Plastics #1 thru #7 now accepted! If your garbage is picked up in the alley... now your recycling will be picked up in the alley too!

See other side for more details.

Billboards displayed around town

DIAL  
311  
TO JOIN

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO PARTICIPATE  
ONE CART RECYCLING

### It's Easy... One Cart Recycling

#### Proper Cart Placement for Automated Pick-up

Using your new carts requires proper placement on the day of your scheduled collection. Please follow the guidelines below. Thank you for your assistance.

If your garbage is collected in the alley, your recycling will be collected in the alley with the new One Cart Recycling Program.

**Please Do This**

FACING THE STREET

AT LEAST 3 FEET

AT LEAST 18 FEET OVERHEAD CLEARANCE

AT LEAST 3 FEET

**Not This**

On the day of your scheduled collection, place carts with lid opening facing the street; and the handle away from street.

Set carts no more than 5 feet from the curb or alley, and 3 feet apart. Carts cannot be placed in the street for collection.

Have at least 3 feet between the carts, and from trees, posts, mailboxes and vehicles etc.

Do not place carts under trees. Automated cart pickup requires up to 15 ft. overhead clearance.

In tight parking situations, have at least 3 feet between the carts and the vehicles. Avoid parking cars in front of carts on collection day.

Residents should have their recycling & garbage out at the designated collection site (alley or curb) by 6 a.m. on the day of collection. For curbside collection, recycling & garbage carts can be set out no sooner than noon the day prior to collection, and carts must be removed no later than noon the day after collection.

Clean your cart out periodically with water. Afterwards, be sure to empty all water from the bottom of the cart and allow to dry.

For additional carts dial 311 and for more information visit [recyclefortwayne.org](http://recyclefortwayne.org)

# journalgazette.net

600 W. Main St. Fort Wayne, Ind. 46802

[Back to main site](#)[New Search](#)   [Return to results](#)   [Printer Friendly](#)**Journal Gazette, The (Fort Wayne, IN)**

## Throwing in the carts \ Single-stream recycling is bringing in the green

Stacey Stumpf

Published: July 31, 2011

"I wasn't recycling prior to the wheeled cart system. The bins held my Halloween items," wrote Tara Cuney in response to a request on The Journal Gazette's Facebook page asking to hear from readers who, for whatever reason, did not recycle before the city updated its recycling system. Cuney, 42, is a busy mother of two living in the Aboite Lakes Estates neighborhood. She would collect her family's pop cans and turn them in for cash, but didn't want to bother with the brown and yellow bins the city provided for recycling.

"For me, the bins filled up in one week. So I just stopped. The main reason, I didn't like carrying them to the curb. I guess it seemed like it wasn't worth it," she said. "And now it's so much easier!"

She said she easily cut the amount of **garbage** she throws away each week in half. Her only complaint about the city's six-month-old recycling program is that her recycling cart is always full. "I almost wish they would do it every week."

Cuney's renewed commitment to recycling and her rave reviews of the city's revamped recycling program are echoed by other residents. More importantly, the overwhelming success of the updated program is backed up by an impressive increase in recycling and savings for city customers.

The new recycling process allows people simply to throw all of their recycling in one cart rather than separating it into two bins. The wheeled carts make it much easier to get the goods to the curb for pick-up.

The city's seven-year contract with National Serv-All significantly expanded the types of plastic that could be recycled.

Fortunately, the city also negotiated a revenue-sharing agreement into its contract so that the more city residents recycle, the more the city benefits.

### Unqualified success

"I see more yellow-lidded bins out in the neighborhood than I ever did those tubs," said Carol Elrod, president of the Anthony Wayne Neighborhood Association.

She said the new program has caused a dramatic increase in recycling in her southeast-side neighborhood.

The new program allowed Elrod, who celebrated her 76th birthday on Monday, to recycle. "I didn't recycle at all before," she said. "I wasn't going to try and struggle to get those bins to the street. They were too awkward to carry."

She said her neighborhood is also neater because the lids prevent papers, cans and other items left for recycling from blowing all over the neighborhood as happened with the bins. "It's handy, less trouble and neater."

The increase in recycling is happening all over the city. Last year, 34 percent of city residents participated in the city's recycling program. When the new recycling program was launched, Mayor Tom Henry set a goal of

increasing participation to 65 percent. The city has surpassed that with 68 percent of residents dutifully wheeling their recycling to the curb every other week.

The amount recycled before was shamefully less than 10 percent of the total solid waste.

Residents recycled fewer than 800 tons per month before the carts. It has increased to more than 1,100 tons each month.

More people are participating, and they are recycling a larger portion of their refuse.

Residents sent 95,000 tons of trash to the landfill in 2010. This year, city officials expect to send fewer than 90,000 tons.

Henry announced on Wednesday that the revenue-sharing component of the city's recycling contract will allow the city to reduce residents' **garbage fees** for the second time in less than a year.

In January the city cut 24 cents off customers' bills. The Henry administration proposed cutting the \$11 monthly **garbage fee** by \$1.05 as of Sept. 1. The proposal will go to Fort Wayne City Council for approval on Aug. 9.

That **fee** reduction is thanks to an impressive increase in recycling participation, but every homeowner - even those who don't bother to recycle - will reap the benefits of a lower solid waste bill.

Debt reduction

"We're getting new cart requests every day," said Matt Gratz, city solid waste manager.

The city's 311 call center receives an average of 20 requests each day for recycling carts. Gratz said another frequent request is exchanging the smaller 48-gallon cart for the larger 96-gallon recycling carts. He has received about 560 requests for larger carts.

As of Wednesday, the city had delivered 53,614 recycling carts total.

To keep neighborhoods tidier and make trash collection more efficient, the city invested in a 10-year lease of **garbage** carts with lids in 2006. In 2011, the city invested an additional \$2.7 million for single-stream recycling carts.

"Not only did we reduce **fees** by \$1 million, but we are also going to reduce our debt by about \$1.6 million," said Frank Suarez, city spokesman. The recycling revenue and lower **garbage** costs will also allow the city to pay off the **garbage** carts lease early.

"By paying down that debt this year, it's going to decrease the city's solid waste budget by \$435,000 each year," said Bob Kennedy, director of public works.

Recycling payoff

Currently, National Serv-All processes the city's recycling at a leased facility on New Haven Avenue. But in October 2010, the company bought the facility at 2509 E. Pontiac St. that was owned by Summit Recycling Transfer LLC. National Serv-All is expanding the building to allow access for more trucks and installing new equipment specifically designed to handle single-stream recycling. It's scheduled to open in September.

The price of recycling commodities fluctuates daily. On Tuesday a "clean load" of cardboard was worth \$145 a ton. But the value of glass is down, and National Serv-All has to work to find a profitable market for it. Because glass is heavy and costly to transport, National Serv-All sometimes ends up paying to get rid of it.

"Our challenge under the new program is getting as much glass out as possible so it doesn't contaminate the paper," said Joe Suleyman, operations manager for National Serv-All.

The new equipment uses friction and density to remove and sort paper by its grade as well as removing glass and other contaminants to get the highest grade commodity - and more profit for the company and the city.

National Serv-All is also getting 30 new trucks this year to service the city's account. And it will be adding decals to the trucks so the public can differentiate between the recycling and trash trucks. "Right now, they look the same," Suleyman said.

The new recycling facility and trucks will ensure the city's contractor can efficiently handle increased recycling from the city.

"We are going to be above 12,000 tons this year," Kennedy said. The city recycled only 8,800 tons in 2010. He said the city estimated that the recycling revenue-sharing agreement would bring in \$250,000 in 2011, but it's brought in \$234,000 in just the first six months. It will bring in about \$500,000 this year.

The success of the recycling program has led to an unprecedented reduction in user fees and allowed the city to cut its debt. Increased recycling will increase the payoff. Finally, residents are experiencing the benefits of being green in the most persuasive manner possible - more money in their wallets.  
**YOU CAN'T RECYCLE THAT!**

The challenge with the city's new recycling program is no longer encouraging participation. It is educating people on what they can and can't throw into the recycling carts.

"It's interesting what some people think is recyclable," said Joe Suleyman, operations manager for National Serv-All, as he pointed out half-full bottles of soda, a box of slide projector film and a broken ceramic vase go past on the conveyor belt of equipment processing a truckload of recycling on Tuesday.

"It's a lot of yard waste and scrap wood - those are the two biggest ones," he said. "A lot of it is they have the right intention. They say, 'I got a coat hanger and that's metal' or 'I've got my kid's broken action figure and it's got plastic.'" But those items are not recyclable.

He said workers at the recycling facility see microwaves and plastic lawn chairs. They also find pet waste and diapers - which is disgusting. And they see improperly discarded hypodermic needles - which is dangerous.

Plastic bags remain the worst offenders, according to city officials. The thin plastic grocery bags clog up the recycling equipment and should be taken back to the stores for recycling, not tossed into the carts.

The city is addressing this problem by ramping up its educational outreach.

"When people have questions, they can always refer to the instructions on the lid of the cart or go to our website," said Bob Kennedy, director of public works. For more information on the one-cart recycling program, visit [www.cityoffortwayne.org](http://www.cityoffortwayne.org).

National Serv-All spokesman Bob Young said another problem is the placement of the **garbage** and recycling carts. The carts' lids have to open toward the street. And residents need to make sure there is about 3 feet of space between the carts. Otherwise, the driver has to get out of the truck and move the carts so the automatic equipment can pick up the carts.

"Every time a driver has to get out of the truck, it's an opportunity for injury," Young said. "People think it's laziness, but it's not. It's a safety issue."

- Stacey Stumpf  
Stacey Stumpf is an editorial writer for The Journal Gazette.

Caption: Photos by Samuel Hoffman - The Journal Gazette: Bales of shredded paper sit ready for resale at the National Serv-All recycling center.

Photo 2: Workers separate the incoming goods at the National Serv-All recycling center.

Photo 3: A front loader pushes around cardboard to be baled at the National Serv-All recycling center on New Haven Avenue.

Photo 4: Workers separate incoming items at the National Serv-All recycling center. Weight and density help them accomplish the separation.

Cathie Rowand - The Journal Gazette: Tara Cuney, with sons Drew, 10, and Nick, 11, recycles more than she pitches with the recycling program.

#### **Infobox**

See 'You can't recycle that!' sidebar at end of story.

Copyright (c) 2011 The Journal Gazette

# journalgazette.net

600 W. Main St. Fort Wayne, Ind. 46802

[Back to main site](#)[New Search](#)   [Return to results](#)   [Printer Friendly](#)**Journal Gazette, The (Fort Wayne, IN)**

## Mayor calls for garbage fee cut \ Recycling program revenue soars

Benjamin Lanka The Journal Gazette

Published: July 28, 2011

Mayor Tom Henry wants to lower residents' monthly **garbage fees** by about 10 percent this fall because of higher than anticipated participation in the city's new recycling program. Henry announced his plan Wednesday to reduce **garbage fee** revenues by \$1 million because of increased revenues from the sale of recycled materials and reduced costs because there is less **garbage** going to the landfill. The plan would cut residents' monthly \$11 **garbage fee** by a little more than \$1 on Sept. 1, the second rate cut since the start of the year.

"The new **garbage** and recycling program is costing less and producing more revenue than expected," Henry said.

Last fall, the city signed a seven-year contract with National Serv-All to provide **garbage** and recycling collection and disposal. For the first time in the city's history, it began earning revenue from the materials that residents recycle. The city gets half of the profits from the materials Serv-All collects from residents. At the signing of the contracts, the city announced lowering its monthly rates effective Jan. 1 by 24 cents per month.

The city originally expected to generate about \$250,000 in the first year from this program, but earned nearly that much in the first six months. Because more materials are being recycled, less is being pitched to the landfill, reducing the city's tipping **fees**. That plus other cost savings under the new contracts will result in about \$500,000 in savings. The recycling revenue and the savings provide the \$1 million in total **fee** cuts.

Bob Kennedy, the city's public works director, said about 34 percent of homes recycled last year. The city hoped to increase that to 65 percent by the end of 2011, but that number has already jumped to 68 percent.

While he knew the program would be a success, Kennedy said he was surprised by the speed it was adopted by residents.

Fort Wayne residents have been notoriously inconsistent recyclers, often recycling less than 10 percent of the total waste stream. City officials believed making the system easier to use would help overcome that apathy.

The new recycling program includes one large bin where people can place all their materials. Previously residents had to sort their paper products from glass, plastics and metals.

This has already made a noticeable difference in the amount of waste being discarded and recycled. Residents under the old system typically recycled fewer than 800 tons of materials per month. That number has grown to more than 1,100 tons monthly. Last year, residents sent 95,000 tons of waste to the landfill and are expected to add less than 90,000 tons this year.

To accommodate the additional recycling, Serv-All is modifying a recycling center at 2509 E. Pontiac St. it bought late last year.

Bob Young, company representative, said the new facility will be built specifically to sort single-stream recycling - when all materials are collected in one container. This will help the company sort the materials more efficiently and allow it to stop paying rent at a facility on New Haven Avenue.

Young said that renovations to the facility would be finished this fall.

Matt Gratz, Fort Wayne solid waste manager, said he expects the benefit of the new program to only increase. He said residents are still signing up for the large carts - about 20 a day. The more people who recycle, the more the city can save. The majority of the carts were delivered over the first three months of this year.

The city is expected to submit its formal proposal for a rate reduction to the City Council on Aug. 9.

blanka@jg.net  
To recycle

\*Fort Wayne residents who have not yet signed up for the one-bin recycling program can call 311 or go to [www.recyclefortwayne.org](http://www.recyclefortwayne.org). Residents ordering bins should expect them to arrive in three to five business days.

Caption:Cathie Rowand - The Journal Gazette: Emmanuel Chapman collects recyclables in the Pine Valley neighborhood. More residents than expected have been bitten by the recycling bug.

Copyright (c) 2011 The Journal Gazette

---

Archives Technical Questions: For technical assistance, please send an email to [newslibrary@newsbank.com](mailto:newslibrary@newsbank.com).

# journalgazette.net

600 W. Main St. Fort Wayne, Ind. 46802

[Back to main site](#)[New Search](#)   [Return to results](#)   [Printer Friendly](#)**Journal Gazette, The (Fort Wayne, IN)**

## City clears trash cart debt early \ Recycling helps net windfall

Benjamin Lanka The Journal Gazette

Published: August 5, 2011

The city's new **garbage** and recycling contracts have been so successful that Fort Wayne plans to not only reduce rates, but pay off some debt early as well. Mayor Tom Henry on Thursday announced he will use some of the city solid waste department's surplus cash to pay off the remaining debt for residents' **garbage** carts. The announcement comes about a week after Henry announced he wanted to lower monthly **garbage** rates by \$1.05 for single family homes.

"Our solid waste program continues to be an unqualified success," he said.

Thanks to cost savings and new revenue, the solid waste fund has grown to \$3.6 million. The city typically likes to keep about \$2 million in reserve for emergencies or other unforeseen circumstances. The city will use the \$1.6 million in extra cash to pay off the debt it incurred in 2005 to purchase the 48-gallon and 96-gallon trash carts for residents. The city spent \$3.7 million to buy 80,000 carts at that time.

Henry said paying the debt early - there is no prepayment penalty - will save the city about \$100,000 in interest costs. The city spends about \$435,000 per year on the debt, which was scheduled to be paid off in 2015. The prepayment does not require City Council approval, according to Henry's staff, and will likely be made today.

Republican mayoral candidate Paula Hughes has long criticized the city for having too much debt, but Henry said such political attacks did not influence his decision to pay this expense. He said the cash in the solid waste fund, which comes from residents' **fees**, can be used only on the department, so it made sense to use the funds to reduce long-term costs.

The move to pay off the debt does not affect the \$2.7 million bond the council approved in January to buy the new recycling carts. The city is expected to spend \$293,473 over seven years in interest for that purchase.

The surplus in the department was created in part because of cost efficiencies - it came in \$500,000 under budget last year.

In addition, new recycling and **garbage** contracts that began this year have further reduced costs and provided a new revenue stream. For the first time the city shares in the profits from items residents recycle.

Bob Kennedy, city public works director, said he is very conservative in setting rates for the department and he is not concerned that the rate reduction and debt payoff will cause a slow erosion of its cash balance.

Even with lower rates - which will eliminate about \$1 million in annual revenue - and potentially higher costs next year, Kennedy said the city believes the revenue will meet expenses and allow the balance to remain flat. He said he is confident the new rates will last through at least 2012.

The rate cut is scheduled to be introduced to the council next week and could be approved Aug. 23.

blanka@jg.net

# 2012 COLLECTION SYSTEMS EXCELLENCE AWARD CHECKLIST AND RELEASE

2012 Applications must be submitted to SWANA no later than Friday, April 13, 2012

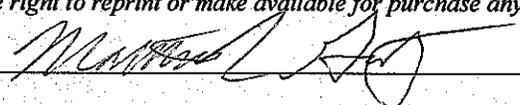
\*\*\* PLEASE NOTE THAT ENTRY REQUIREMENTS HAVE CHANGED \*\*\*

**Application Checklist** (Please make sure the following items are included in your submittal packet)

- Completed release statement (this page), to be scanned and included in digital submission
- Check (made payable to SWANA) or credit card payment for nomination fee (in U.S. dollars) via Excellence Award Nominations
- At least 2 pictures of your operation (may be included in nomination text)
- One copy of your award submittal uploaded using your purchased *2012 SWANA Excellence Awards Application Uploading Instructions*
- If you would like to mail your submission, please contact Jesse Maxwell, *Program Coordinator*, at [jmaxwell@swana.org](mailto:jmaxwell@swana.org) or (240) 494-2237.

**Release Statement:** *I certify that the information provided in this application is accurate and correct to the best of my knowledge. SWANA reserves the right to publish the enclosed information. Nominations become the property of SWANA. My signature gives SWANA the right to reprint or make available for purchase any portion of this submittal.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

4-13-12