

PROP **FACT** Sheet

Bulky Waste Collection

Unwanted furniture, appliances and tires can cause a headache both for a resident and for a municipality. Given the high cost and inconvenient nature associated with proper disposal, a large number of these items end up in illegal dumpsites in state forests and parks, along roadsides and near streams.

Stopping this illegal dumping requires strong ordinances and enforcement, as well as a bulky waste program to collect these items. A bulky waste program need not bankrupt a municipality - a modest fee structure can be incorporated to offset the larger cost of disposal.

Cleanup Days:

Holding an annual cleanup is an effective way of collecting hard-to-dispose-of items that might otherwise become part of an illegal dumpsite. Cleanup days allow residents the opportunity to bring these items to a centralized location for proper disposal and/or recycling.

Cleanup days can be very costly, depending on the amount of items collected. There are a variety of ways to lower disposal costs:

- Partner with local non-profit groups, such as second hand stores and thrift shops to collect usable items for resale.
- Invite local scrap metal dealers to collect metal items for reuse.
- Charge a modest fee to offset disposal costs.
- Require proof of residency to drop-off items. This will discourage abuse by residents from neighboring municipalities.



Permanent Drop-Off Centers:

Some municipalities choose to operate year-round bulky waste drop-off centers. These centers generally charge a small fee for each item brought to the location. It may also be beneficial to partner with a local non-profit organization that takes usable items for direct resale.

Other Options:

In addition to the options listed above, municipalities or counties can also promote the proper disposal of bulky items through the distribution of information on local resale shops, recycling centers and scrap metal dealers. Municipalities with a contract hauler may also include on-demand collection of bulky items in their waste contract. In a private subscription or licensed hauler system, municipalities can also require that periodic bulky pick up be included as part of a resident's trash bill.

This fact sheet was developed by the Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania, P.O. Box 25, Bellwood, PA, 16617. For more information, please visit our website, www.proprecycles.org, or contact us by email at prop@proprecycles.org. Funding for this fact sheet was provided through a grant from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Forest Lands Beautification Program. We do our part to close the recycling loop and print all our publications on recycled paper.

Updated July 2008