

County Funding Challenges

A Summary of a Survey of
County Recycling Programs



Survey Background

- On-line survey
- Solicited all county recycling coordinators
- Received 38 responses
 - Fairly representative of counties size-wise
 - 27 collected fees & 11 had no fees
 - 60% were departments & 40% authorities
- Non-respondents
 - Approximately 10 with fees did not reply

Fee Payments to Counties

- Receiving All Payments 16%
- Receiving Some Payments 34%
- Receiving No Payments 32%

Interesting Background

(Some of which may now not mean much!)

- 93% had contractual agreements for fees
- Contracts are guaranteed by performance bonds in at least a third of the counties
- 77% placed fees in a dedicated account
- 75% of those that placed fees in the General Fund got more than 90% of the money returned to their programs

Understanding Funding Streams

- 64% of counties now get 10% or less of their support from the County General Fund.
- Since Performance grants are most frequently municipal awards, this provides less than 10% of funds for most counties.
- Admin fees account for a very large portion of the budget income in counties with fees.*

* More than half the budget income comes from admin fees in 56% of counties with fees.

County Size

- Smaller counties with smaller staffs will be impacted disproportionately.
- Smaller counties will be forced to cut programs more drastically than larger counties.

Service Elimination & Reductions

Small and Average Size Counties

	Eliminate	Reduce
• Drop-off Recycling	17%	26%
• MRF Operations	29%	0%
• Education	20%	20%
• Enforcement	30%	18%
• HHW Collection	60%	0%
• Electronics Collections	44%	12%
• Waste Planning	16%	16%
• Municipal Assistance	14%	13%
• Bulky Waste Programs	17%	11%

Service Reductions

Larger Counties

- Though the cutbacks will not be as severe, large counties will still see notable service reductions.
- Though small by percentage, the absolute number of materials not collected will be significant.
- Most notably, HHW and electronics programs will be significantly reduced in a third of the larger counties.

Service Reductions

Larger Counties

	Service Reductions*
• Drop-off Recycling	17%
• MRF Operations	-
• Education	11%
• Enforcement	-
• HHW Collection	33%
• Electronics Collections	30%
• Waste Planning	20%
• Municipal Assistance	11%
• Bulky Waste Programs	50%

* The % of existing programs likely to be reduced by 50% or more.

Other Implications & Possibilities

	Likely	Possible
• Cease operations of facilities but continue administrative work	30%	50%
• Close county office completely	17%	54%
• Higher user fees	21%	21%
• Affordable partnerships with private sector	12%	29%
• Significant County General Fund Contribution	8%	31%

Where Do Programs Turn?

- County officials disproportionately felt that the private sector would be unable or unwilling to fill the void left by cutbacks of their programs.

Where Do Programs Turn?

What voids cannot be filled by the Private Sector?

	Counties Overall*	Smaller Counties*
• Drop-off Roll-off/Depot Systems	79%	87%
• MRF Operation	55%	83%
• Recycling Education	100%	100%
• Recycling/Dumping Enforcement	94%	88%
• HHW Program	85%	89%
• Electronics Collection	64%	75%
• Assistance to Municipalities	83%	73%
• Bulky Waste Collection	36%	50%

* % of counties that believe the private sector is unlikely to provide these recycling services.

More Information

- For additional survey details
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- For questions or comments on legislative issues
 - E-mail jfrederick@proprecycles.org
- For background on Admin Fee decisions
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