



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

To: The Honorable Andrew J. Ginther, President, City Council
The Honorable A. Troy Miller, President Pro Tem, City Council
The Honorable Hearcel F. Craig, City Councilmember
The Honorable Zach M. Klein, City Councilmember
The Honorable Michelle M. Mills, City Councilmember
The Honorable Eileen Y. Paley, City Councilmember
The Honorable Priscilla R. Tyson, City Councilmember

cc: The Honorable Hugh J. Dorrian, City Auditor
Michael D. Reese, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Kenneth Paul, Chief of Staff, City Council
Paul Rakosky, Director, Department of Finance and Management
Jeanette Hawkins, Legislative Aide
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Dave Bush, Assistant Director, Department of Finance and Management
Steve Campbell, Director of Regional Growth Initiatives, Department of Finance and Management

From: Tracie Davies, Director, Department of Public Service
Erin Miller, Environmental Steward, Mayor's Office

Subject: Annual Progress Report for RecyColumbus,
Columbus' Comprehensive Residential Recycling Program.

Date: February 20, 2014

Overview

This serves as an annual report to Columbus City Council regarding the status and progress of RecyColumbus, the City's residential recycling program for calendar year 2013. This annual report was promised to City Council during the planning phase of the recycling program in November 2011.

With the support of City Council, the program entered the first of its five implementation phases in April 2012 and concluded in February 2013. There are 187,926 blue 64-gallon recycling carts being serviced every other week. Under the recycling program, recycling is collected bi-weekly with yard waste collected on the alternate weeks. Starting in March, recycling and yard waste will be collected during the same week. Also in March, the program will expand to eligible condos, townhouses and apartments, expanding the program to serve approximately 204,000 households.

Recycling Cart Adoption Rate

- The cart adoption rate of the program was more than 98 percent.

Diversification Rates In Percentages And Tonnage

In 2013, the RecyColumbus program served 187,926 households, which diverted 31,887.47 tons of recyclable material from the landfill. As the residential recycling program was phased in during 2013, we have included other previously existing recycling programs in the total residential recycling tonnage:

- The subscription-based program that is being transitioned out as the new residential recycling program is being phased in. The subscription program generated 35.63 tons (a 99% decrease from 2012), and
- The SWACO Drop Box program generated 8,794.03 tons (a 34% decrease from 2012)

The decrease from these two programs is due to the introduction of the convenient household RecyColumbus program. The total tonnage of recyclables diverted from the landfill was 40,681.50 tons. The diversion rate for 2013, was 18%, up from 11% diversion rate in 2012. The 2013 minimum goal was 20% based on the original count of 227,000 households, which is approximately 40,000 households more than the RecyColumbus program is currently serving.

Savings In Tipping Fees As A Result Of The Program

In 2013, residential recycling saved \$2,253,078.83 million in tipping fees.

Overall Program Expenditures For The RecyColumbus Program

Description	Calendar Year 2013	Notes
Personnel Cost	\$267,325.64	
Materials & Supplies Cost	\$1,766.75	
Services Cost (Rumpke, other)	\$2,869,204.16	Rumpke service cost
Fleet Vehicle Costs	\$31,697.38	
Total Operational Funds Expenditures	\$3,169,993.93	
Purchase & Delivery of Containers	\$598,916.70	Toter 64 gallon containers.
Consulting services for curbside recycling	\$73,750.39	Murphy Epson contract
Total Capital Funds Expenditures	\$672,667.09	
Total CY13 Operating & Capital Expenditure	\$3,842,661.02	

New Technologies That May Improve Diversion Rates And/Or Significantly Reduce Program Costs

City staff has regular conversations with Rumpke to find ways to increase the types of materials that are recyclable in the residential program.

In addition, SWACO and Team Gemini, LLC continue to explore a landfill material recovery facility to remove organic waste from the waste stream in order to generate natural gas and electricity. While curbside recycling programs are taking the best of the material for reuse by local manufacturers, SWACO plans to take the rest for generation of energy. The facility, once financing is secure, is scheduled to be operational in three years, and is expected to increase diversion of materials away from the landfill by 25 percent.

Public Education, Outreach and Engagement

In 2013, the City won local, regional and national awards for its work. Using a multi-pronged outreach strategy, RecyColumbus combined intensive neighborhood-level grassroots activities with smart media outreach to improve recycling rates. Outreach efforts included:

- Recruiting and training ambassadors and volunteers to educate local neighborhoods about how and why to recycle
- Conducting 207 presentations at community festivals and at neighborhood organizations
- Recruiting, training and scheduling recycling messengers including the Recycle Band, Recycle Segway and Recycling Sign Spinners
- Bringing the northeast neighborhoods into the recycling program in February 2013
- Partnering with the Carton Council to bring \$100,000 worth of paid TV, billboard, phone messages and direct mail advertising
- Winning a prestigious national award – Green City of the Year 2013 by Waste & Recycling News and a local and regional communications awards (Public Relations Society of America)
- Conducting a targeted outreach campaign in seven neighborhoods where potential was greatest for more participation
- Developing a regular, monthly e-newsletter to reach our most avid participants and local leaders
- Conducting a survey to determine why people recycle and how to motivate others
- Partnering with OSU to boost participation in off-campus housing
- Publicizing the program in local media
- Planning for multi-family expansion and new collection schedules

Regional approach to recycling

Discussions continue to promote regional collaboration and shared services for recycling and yard waste collection. For example:

- The City of Hilliard is reviewing the cooperative purchasing contract to move to carts.
- SWACO is piloting a program to provide easier access for higher density apartment dwellers to recycle. They are locating the recycling drop boxes within apartment complexes on the northwest and west sides of Columbus.