



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

To: The Honorable Andrew J. Ginther, President, City Council
The Honorable Michelle M. Mills, President Pro Tem, City Council
The Honorable Shannon G. Hardin, City Councilmember
The Honorable Zach M. Klein, City Councilmember
The Honorable Jaiza N. Page, 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
Priyam Chokshi, Legislative Aide
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Sherry Martin, Legislative Assistant
Nancy Sully, Legislative Aide
Nicole Harper, Legislative Aide
Dave Bush, Assistant Director, 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 18, 2015

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 2014. 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 with 187,926 single family households. Recycling and yard waste were collected on alternating weeks. In March 2014, the program was expanded to service low-density condos, townhouses and apartments and the schedule was altered to increase efficiencies for Rumpke as well as reduce confusion amongst our residents. Now, under the recycling program, recycling and yard waste are collected on the same day, every other week, for 201,326 households.

Recycling Participation Rate

Rumpke conducted four participation counts throughout the year. Drivers counted blue recycling carts as they serviced them and divided that number by the total amount of carts in the field. The average participation rate for 2014 was 71%.

Diversification Rates in Percentages and Tonnage

In 2014, the RecyColumbus program served 201,326 households, which diverted 33,983.15 tons of recyclable material from the landfill (averaging 338 pounds per house per year). Residents also utilized the SWACO drop boxes, which yielded 9,523.91 tons of material. In total, Columbus residents diverted 43,507.06 tons in 2014, which is equal to a 18.9% diversion rate for 2014, an increase from 18.1% in 2013.

The original 2014 minimum goal was 20.8% diversion based on the original count of 227,000 households at 52,000 tons (458 pounds per house per year); we are still 25,674 households under our original projection. The average pounds per house per year is 432 pounds, which is 2,617 tons under our original projections. By increasing the participation rate, educating residents about compaction of materials and the second cart option, we should see an increase in the tonnage for 2015.

	Calendar Year 2012	Calendar Year 2013	Calendar Year 2014	Totals
Households Serviced	149,469	187,926	201,326	
Tons of recyclable material diverted from the landfill	26,260.82	40,681.50	43,507.06	110,449.38
Tipping Fees Saved	\$1,456,425.08	\$2,253,078.83	\$2,402,459.85	\$6,111,963.76

Overall Program Expenditures for the RecyColumbus Program

Description	Calendar Year 2012	Calendar Year 2013	Calendar Year 2014
Personnel Cost	\$227,442.23	\$267,325.64	\$261,594.90
Materials & Supplies Cost	\$2,449.86	\$1,766.75	\$1,569.25
Services Cost (Rumpke, other)	\$1,805,202.30	\$2,869,204.16	\$2,832,885.12
Fleet Vehicle Costs	\$22,855.79	\$31,697.38	\$8,500.00
Total Operational Funds Expenditures	\$2,057,950.18	\$3,169,993.93	\$3,104,549.27
Purchase & Delivery of Containers	\$7,833,970.90	\$598,916.70	\$58,163.95
Consulting services for curbside recycling education	\$336,265.64	\$73,750.39	\$93,998.65
Total Capital Funds Expenditures	\$8,170,236.54	\$672,667.09	\$152,162.60
Total CY14 Operating & Capital Expenditure	\$10,228,186.72	\$3,842,661.02	\$3,256,711.87

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, we will continue to encourage residents to fit more material in the carts by compacting the recyclables. We will also continue efforts to encourage signing up for collection reminders and will target outreach to specific neighborhoods to increase participation.

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.

Public Education, Outreach and Engagement

In 2014, the City continued to win local and regional awards for RecyColumbus. As the program moved from launch to maintenance, and its first expansion, the RecyColumbus team used a multi-pronged outreach strategy and extensive neighborhood-level grassroots activities, combined with smart media outreach.

There were several messages used during the year, targeting different audiences:

- Educating residents about the expansion to eligible multi-family households,
- Informing the community about collection schedule changes,
- Encouraging sign ups for the free recycling reminder program (ReCollect) and
- Improving overall recycling participation rates.

Outreach efforts included:

- Retraining ambassadors and volunteers to educate local neighborhoods about the multi-family expansion and schedule changes, while continuing to recruit and train ambassadors and volunteers.
- Created and implemented a comprehensive communications campaign for the multi-family expansion and schedule change, including: updating outreach materials — cart letter, information card, presentation, pop-up banners, direct mail; calling residents to remind them about their first collection day; making presentations to home owner and condominium associations about the new service; and updating the website and social media channels.
- Attending community festivals and events, and conducting presentations at neighborhood organizations. Total for 2014: 155 festivals, events and presentations.

2014 (155 festivals, events and presentations):

64 Speaker Events (with 13 different speakers)

26 Volunteer Events (with 17 different volunteers)

10 events at which the Recycle Band performed

Six events at which a volunteer in the recycling cart Segway distributed recycling information

5 events at which RecyColumbus materials were distributed, teamed with CD 102.5 Green Team

45 events at which RecyColumbus materials, with PUP campaign materials, were distributed

2013 (93 festivals, events and presentations):

18 Speaker Events (with 9 different speakers)

30 Volunteer Events (with 16 different volunteers)

12 events at which the Recycle Band performed

10 events at which a volunteer in the recycling cart Segway distributed recycling information

23 events at which RecyColumbus materials were distributed

- Bringing eligible multi-family households into the recycling program in the spring.
- Recruiting, training and scheduling recycling messengers including the Recycle Band and Recycle Segway. Creating additional instruments for the Recycle Band to use at community events over the summer and beyond.
- Partnering with radio station CD 102's Green Team to have information and resources at 5 additional community events at no cost to the program.
- Partnering with Rumpke on a television buy on local network and cable channels to extend the reach of the expansion messaging to the community. The buy included 1,101 spots with a reach of 99% and an 11-time frequency, as well as 195 bonus spots and closed captioning billboards. The PSA also aired on the City's CTV-3 channel.
- Winning a prestigious local communications award from the Columbus chapter of Public Relations Society of America for the 2013 outreach program in the category: Marketing Communication, New Products or Services.
- Continuing a regular, monthly e-newsletter to reach our most avid participants and local leaders.
- Expanding the partnership with OSU to boost participation in off-campus housing participation through multiple outreach activities and active participation on its campus-wide Recycling Committee.
- Hosting a contest with donated prizes to increase awareness of and participation in the ReCollect recycling reminder service.
- Publicizing the multi-family expansion, schedule change and ReCollect sign ups in local media, including a media event to launch the multi-family expansion and a segment on Good Day Columbus to promote ReCollect and the recycling program overall.
- Planning and implementing a recognition presentation of two leading Recycling Ambassador volunteers as part of America Recycles Day at a Columbus City Council meeting with Council Member Michelle Mills.