ANNUAL REPORT
2018

RECYCLING AND MATERIALS MANAGEMENT OF TOMPKINS COUNTY
recycletompkins.org
(607) 273-6632
The Mission of Department of Recycling and Materials Management is to develop and implement a sustainable materials management strategy for Tompkins County consistent with the New York State solid waste management hierarchy that is environmentally sound, cost-effective, socially responsible and safe. This is accomplished through coordinated administrative, operational, and educational programs that maximize diversion with the 4R’s (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rebuy) as a focal point.
DIRECTOR’S REPORT

The continued decline in recycling revenues for paper and the changes in acceptable plastics posed a significant challenge for our Department in 2018. The primary reason for this situation is contamination from unacceptable materials winding up in residential and commercial containers. Recycling revenues declined internationally and domestically as the year progressed resulting in a loss of $319,876 in Tompkins County. Since the Department of Recycling and Materials Management is an enterprise fund this situation directly affected our budget. Fortunately the Department was able to cover necessary expenses with budget reductions, long-awaited State grant reimbursements, and use of the Solid Waste fund balance.

Despite this financial stress, the Department achieved numerous milestones in reducing the amount of waste for disposal. Tompkins County continues to be a leader in NYS with waste reduction, recycling, composting and reuse programs that have resulted in a waste diversion rate of nearly 60%.

Customer service continues to be a strong component of our work. The Department launched a new website and tools for getting text reminders about specific recycling collection days and finding out what can be done to reuse, recycle, and compost specific items. We participated in over 30 outreach events throughout the county. A recycling brochure available to all residents highlighted changes in what could be recycled through our “Recycle Right” campaign.

The Department played a key role in assisting the County Administrator and Legislature with policy recommendations to request expansion of the New York State bottle bill and the ban on food scraps from large-scale commercial generators from landfills.

Expansion of the food scraps recycling program was the most significant program achievement in 2018. Through a grant from Department of Environmental Conservation, a new transfer station was built at the Recycling and Solid Waste Center to accept large loads of source-separated food scraps from the commercial sector. This material is hauled to Cayuga Compost in Trumansburg. In addition to the transfer station, three additional residential food scrap drop off locations were established bringing the total number to 15 throughout the county.

In 2019, our staff will continue to educate the public on the recycling changes and strengthen our enforcement efforts to reduce contamination. Additionally, we will be working with staff from County Information Technology Services and our consultant, Paradigm Software, to replace the original weigh scale operations software with software that provides greater capabilities, efficiency and functions.

Barbara Eckstrom
Director
PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Department of Recycling and Materials Management’s budget is comprised of seven program areas: disposal, recycling, recycling collection, waste reduction, old landfills, administration, and household hazardous waste.

DISPOSAL

I. Program Description
In 2018 Tompkins County transported 20,844 tons of municipal solid waste from the Recycling & Solid Waste Center (RSWC) to nearby landfills through a contract with Ontario County, Seneca Meadows, Hyland Landfill (Angelica) and Chemung County. This program also includes enforcement of Chapter 140 of the County Code to prevent violations related to trash tag, hauler licensing, mandatory recycling and illegal dumping laws.

II. Program Goals
- To provide safe and environmentally sound disposal practices for Tompkins County waste generators.
- Minimize illegal disposal violations in the County.

III. Highlights
- 190 tons of MSW received at the RSWC in 2018 was diverted from the landfill through recycling.
- The County issued 22 hauler licenses and 4,689 vehicle permits in 2018.
- There were 105 County Code complaints investigated: 98 for illegal dumping, 6 for trash tag violations, and one uncovered load violation.

IV. Human Resources
Staff time allocated to this program is equivalent to 4.5 full time employees as follows:

- Weigh Scale Operator 1.0
- Senior Account Clerk Typist .5
- Fiscal Coordinator .5
- Solid Waste Enforcement Officer .5
- Senior Weigh Scale Operator 1.0
- Senior Account Clerk Typist .25
- TCRMM Director .25
- TCRMM Deputy Director .5

V. Annual Program Budget
Annual 2018 budget for this program is $1,890,101
Actual amount spent $1,927,896
Net Cost $37,795
The increased expense over the budgeted amount was due to the unexpected increase in tons of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) received at the Recycling & Solid Waste Center. Revenues from the increased tons covered the additional expense for hauling and disposal.
RECYCLING

I. Program Description
This program provides recycling opportunities for County residents, businesses and institutions. Through a contract with Casella Waste Systems Inc., the County received and processed 14,355 tons of recyclables at the Recycling and Solid Waste Center (RSWC). The facility includes a convenient public drop-off that accepts single stream recyclables, residential and commercial food scraps, and additional materials for recycling. Tompkins County also partners with Cayuga Compost to offer food scraps recycling programs. Other aspects of the recycling program include the ReBusiness Partners, Borrow-A-Bin, Public Space Recycling, and public outreach and education.

II. Program Goals
- Provide a local facility to process and market recyclable materials collected through the curbside and drop-off programs including educational information, direct assistance, and community support for recycling.
- Provide a program to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws.
- Support an overall goal of 85% waste diversion by 2030.
- Increase recycling tonnage for food scraps and other materials.
- Reduce contamination in recycling streams.

III. Highlights
- A new food scraps transfer station was built at the RSWC to accommodate large haulers of food scraps in an effort to reduce potential barriers to source-separated food scraps collection. The food scraps are delivered to Cayuga Compost in Trumansburg through a contract with Casella.
- Department staff worked with contractors to modify the materials accepted for recycling to accommodate changes in national recycling markets and more accurately reflect commodity streams.
- Launched a Food Scraps Recycling Drop Spot at Newfield Town Hall, and the East Hill Farmers Market. Satellite operations were maintained at the Brooktondale Community Center, Bostwick Road, Cayuga Compost, Cayuga Heights Village Hall, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Danby Town Hall, Dryden Town Highway Department, East Hill, Hancock St, Lansing Village Office, and Trumansburg Department of Public Works. The mobile drop spot was used at Brooktondale, and East Hill, East Hill Farmers Market, Hancock St, and Newfield Town Hall. The drop spot at Cass Park was discontinued at the end of November 2018 due to low participation.
• Options for recycling at the RSWC included acceptance of residential and commercial single stream recyclables, source-separated single stream recyclables, and source-separated food scraps from residents and commercial haulers.
• The County contracted with Buffalo Biodiesel to remove approximately 4.51 tons of Fats Oil and Grease (FOG) material.
• The County continued a partnership with Cornell’s Engineers for a Sustainable World (ESW) group, to modify the FOG station to stay open year round. The updated design prevented FOG material from solidifying in the drainage pipe during cold weather.
• Accepted 14,354.64 tons of recyclables at the RSWC.
• Cayuga Compost collected and processed 1,960.4 tons of food scraps, with approximately 340 tons collected from the drop spots.
• Continued a campaign to promote food scraps recycling and additional materials that can be brought to the Recycling and Solid Waste Center. The campaign included print and radio advertising, as well as coordination of a team of Outreach Assistants to provide information at 25 events throughout the County.
• Distributed 620 kitchen caddies and 607 transportation containers to participants in the food scraps drop-off program.
• Provided at least 48 educational presentations or tours to organizations throughout the County.
• Staff reached approximately 12,844 individuals through tours, events, tabling and presentations.
• Further developments of the recycletonpkins.org website included a site redesign and incorporation of the "What Do I Do With" and "Find My Recycling Day" tools.
• A short video titled "Recycle Right in Tompkins County" was developed and distributed, demonstrating information about properly recycling certain materials. Additionally, videos made prior to 2018 were updated to include current information.
• America Recycles Day activities included partnering with Challenge Workforce Solutions to offer a Free Confidential Document Shred Day to residents. The Borrow-A-Bin Program assisted 17 events by loaning recycling bins free of charge.
• Staff conducted 16 waste assessments for local businesses and organizations through the ReBusiness Partners Program.

The newly updated RecycleTompkins.org features an updated look and helpful tools.
IV. Human Resources
Staff time allocated to this program is equivalent to 4.75 full time employees as follows:

- Waste Reduction & Recycling Specialist .75
- Waste Reduction & Recycling Specialist .5
- Waste Reduction & Recycling Specialist .75
- TCRMM Assistant Director .5
- Communication & Administrative Coordinator .5
- Communications Specialist .75
- Senior Account Clerk Typist .25
- TCRMM Director .25
- Waste Reduction & Recycling Specialist .5

V. Annual Program Budget
Annual 2018 budget for this program $1,756,493
Actual amount spent $1,600,092
Net Savings $ 156,400

Department staff reduced costs for the year related to the food scraps recycling program, the single stream recycling program, and other recycling initiatives to achieve a net savings.

RECYCLING COLLECTION

I. Program Description
Through this program, the County provides bi-weekly countywide curbside collection of recyclable materials, which are transported to the County-owned RSWC. TCRMM contracts with Casella Waste Systems Inc. through a competitive bid process County staff monitors and tracks service requests from the public to ensure quality service from the contractor. Recycling bins are available for sale at the TCRMM offices, and R decals are provided free of charge to allow for flexibility in collection receptacles. Public education is an important component of this program.

Approximately 43,450 homes receive curbside recycling collection as well as an estimated 2,370 small businesses.

II. Program Goals:
- Provide convenient, cost-effective residential recycling opportunities through curbside collection under a five year contract with Casella and a public drop-off area at the RSWC.
- Monitor service calls and responses to maintain quality service for the curbside collection program, and minimize recycling collection complaints year over year.
- Enforce all applicable federal, state and local laws for mandatory recycling.
III. Highlights
- A 2018-2019 Curbside Recycling Guidelines brochure was made available to all residents in Tompkins County. There was no bulk mailing of the Guidelines, but staff increased the number of depository locations around the County.
- Throughout the course of 2018, TCRMM tracked 407 service calls regarding the curbside recycling collection service. This service-based contract was monitored closely throughout the year to maintain a high quality of service.
- To enhance communication and response systems regarding service requests, staff continued working with Casella using a GPS remote tracking system that provides time-stamped data about truck routes traveled.
- Three new public space recycling stations were placed in 2018 which included two at the Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC)-Ithaca, and one at the Wood St Park-Ithaca. Existing public space bins were monitored throughout the year at Montgomery Park-Dryden, Stewart Park-Ithaca, Tompkins County Courthouse-Ithaca, Tompkins County Human Services Building-Ithaca, Tompkins County Library-Ithaca, and on Main Street in Trumansburg. It is estimated 297 cubic tons of material were diverted through this program in 2018, an increase of 108 cubic yards over the previous year.

IV. Human Resources
Staff time allocated to this program is equivalent to 1 full time employee as follows:

- Waste Reduction & Recycling Specialist .5
- Waste Reduction & Recycling Specialist .25
- Waste Reduction & Recycling Specialist .25

V. Annual Program Budget
Annual 2017 budget for this program $ 1,575,887
Actual amount spent $ 1,602,060
Net Cost $ 26,179

An increase in the amount spent was due to the new curbside collection contract that went into effect in October 2018, after the development of the 2019 budget.
WASTE REDUCTION

I. Program Description:
Through this program, Tompkins County Recycling & Materials Management supports the community, local economy, and the environment by encouraging innovative waste reduction and reuse projects. Many of these initiatives are accomplished through partnerships with local organizations including Cornell Cooperative Extension’s (CCE) Compost Education Program, Finger Lakes ReUse, and Sciencenter. In addition, TCRMM collaborates with Green Teams in the Ithaca City School District, and offers education to share these projects and diversion potential with the public. In 2018, an emphasis was placed on food waste prevention and donation through a partnership with Friendship Donations Network. In 2019, TCRMM will apply for a grant from NYS DEC to further food waste reduction and donation efforts at up to four apartment complexes, increasing the reach of waste reduction programming, and potentially serving as a model for expansion throughout the county.

Approximately 306,000 individuals were reached through this program, including residents, students, businesses, and other community members.

II. Program Goals

- Reduce both the volume and toxicity of the waste stream by providing waste reduction, reuse and green purchasing programs and education to businesses, schools, municipalities and residents.
- Maintain an ongoing reuse program with Finger Lakes ReUse and a creative reuse program with the Sciencenter’s Reinvention Station.
- Support the statewide goal of achieving 2.1 lbs msw/person/day by 2030.
- Maintain support for home composting through a contract with Cornell Cooperative Extension.

III. Highlights

- Through home composting, it is estimated approximately 4,120 tons of food scraps and 6,340 tons of yard waste was diverted. A decrease from 2017 could be attributed to more residents utilizing the Drop Spots for their food scraps recycling needs (an increase of almost 4,000 drops from 2017 to 2018).
- Continuation of support for Finger Lakes ReUse, which coordinates a Fixers Collective, Deconstruction Program, retail space, and eCenter. Over the course of 2018, approximately 480 tons were diverted through this initiative, including materials like books, building materials, computers and electronics, furniture, house wares, and textiles.
- A food waste prevention campaign was continued through the following:
  - Offering a school lesson plan module, which included an “Eat First” box activity.
  - A social media campaign promoting tips and tools for food waste prevention.
  - A film screening of “Wasted,” a movie about food waste prevention, was held at Cinemapolis as part of the Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival (FLEFF), followed by a panel discussion.
  - The refrigerator game was integrated into outreach events, focusing on smart storage to prevent food waste.
  - A new brochure was designed for Friendship Donations Network.
IV. Human Resources
Staff time allocated to this program is equivalent to .75 full time employees as follows:

- Waste Reduction & Recycling Specialist .25
- Waste Reduction & Recycling Specialist .25
- Communications Specialist .25

V. Annual Program Budget
Annual 2017 budget for this program $237,568
Actual amount spent $217,038
Net Savings $ 20,529

This savings was a result of an increased focus on minimizing budget expenditures to align expenses with projected declines in revenue.

An outreach assistant plays the food waste prevention fridge game with residents.
OLD LANDFILLS

I. Program Description
This program includes monitoring, maintenance, reporting and leachate removal at two (2) closed landfills - Hillview Road Landfill in South Danby/North Spencer and Caswell Road Landfill in the Town of Dryden. This program is regulated by NYSDEC.

II. Program Goals
- Continually ensure the completion of routine, quarterly and annual reporting and inspections, regular maintenance and leachate removal required by NYSDEC closure permits.
- Routine inspections identify maintenance items that are then scheduled for repair or budgeted for in the following year depending on the magnitude of the problem.
- Weekly inspections are conducted to ensure contractual leachate hauling obligations are fulfilled.

III. Highlights
- The Hillview and Caswell landfill sites have a total of 64 monitoring points, including 13 residential locations. There are also 23 manholes and 18 cleanouts along the perimeter collection systems and 88 gas vents.
- Of the 64 monitoring points, 13 were archived in 2013 in an agreement between the Hillview Road Advisory Committee and Tompkins County, and approved by the NYS DEC. This means these points will no longer be monitored on an annual basis but are still maintained.
- Department staff started conducting residential well sampling in 2014 in place of the contracted engineering firm. Since then, County staff has conducted all environmental sampling at both landfills and residential locations.
- Both landfills have two underground leachate storage tanks each. Monitoring wells routinely require maintenance that includes sanding, repainting, flagging and concrete apron replacement as required by NYS DEC.
- Many of these locations are trimmed throughout the year because of the rapid growth of vegetation as well as for providing a setting for accurate sampling. Each landfill footprint consists of approximately 30 acres that requires mowing around the first week of July.
- The amount of leachate removed from Hillview in 2018 was 598,500 gallons. The amount of leachate removed from Caswell in 2018 was 1,537,372 gallons.

IV. Human Resources
Staff time allocated to this program is equivalent to .5 full time employees as follows:

- TCRMM Director .25
- Solid Waste Enforcement Officer .25
V. Annual Program Budget

Annual 2018 budget for this program $184,468
Actual amount spent $248,873
Net Loss $ 64,405

The primary reason for the increased spending was the wet weather through most of 2018. This caused a tremendous increase in the amount of leachate hauled and treated.
ADMINISTRATION

I. Program Description
Administrative staff assists customers as well as department staff. Over 19,000 customers were assisted in 2018 with information about recycling, composting, trash disposal, household hazardous waste and waste reduction programs.

II. Highlights
- The Administrative staff handled 10,659 customer inquiries over the phone and completed 8,515 transactions at the front desk (sales of permits, trash disposal coupons and punch cards, and recycling and compost bins) for a total of 19,174 customers served. The front desk also distributed 439 food scraps recycling toolkits at no charge to residents.
- The Department accepts the sale of permits, punch cards and coupons online through its website. There were 304 online transactions in 2018, totaling $9,375.
- The Communications and Administrative Coordinator is the primary liaison with other County departments, including Administration, Information Technology Services and Facilities, as well as with the County Legislature and the Facilities and Infrastructure Committee.
- The Communications Specialist reports to the CAAC and is responsible for maintaining the Department’s website and social media platforms. He also oversees the planning of community outreach events and assists with presentations to school groups and other civic organizations.
- The Administrative staff assisted customers with navigating a newly-designed website and taking advantage of its new features – “Find My Recycling Day” and the “What do I do with…?” materials database.

III. Human Resources
Staff time allocated to this program is equivalent to 2.75 full time employees as follows:

- Senior Account Clerk Typist  .5
- Communication/Administrative Coordinator  .5
- Administrative Assistant  .5
- Senior Account Clerk Typist  .5
- Fiscal Coordinator  .5
- TCRMM Director  .25

IV. Annual Program Budget
Annual 2018 budget for this program  $ 411,359
Actual amount spent  $ 397,499
Net Savings  $ 13,860

The savings realized in 2018 resulted from the half-time administrative assistant position being vacant for a portion of the year.
HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE (HHW)

I. Program Description
The HHW collection program directs the proper management of residential household hazardous
waste and hazardous waste from qualified non-residential generators (i.e. businesses, institutions,
community organizations).

II. Human Resources
Staff time allocated to this program is equivalent to .25 employees as follows:

-Solid Waste Enforcement Officer .25

III. Annual Program Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual 2018 budget for this program</td>
<td>$144,143</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actual amount spent</td>
<td>$108,624</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net Savings</td>
<td>$35,519</td>
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Expenses were lower in 2018 due to a 27 ton decrease in wastes received resulting in decreased contractor costs.

IV. Program Goals
- Diversion of hazardous wastes from the disposal waste stream and the effective management of that waste.
- Compliance with NYSDEC permit required inspections, maintenance, waste management and reporting.

V. Highlights
- There were a total of 1,177 residents at the six (6) Household Hazardous Waste drop off days conducted in 2018.
- There were 6 non-residential Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generators (CESQG’S) and an additional 18 bringing in universal wastes such as fluorescent tubes. Attendance numbers are not recorded for residential generators of universal wastes.
- There was a total of 21,905 pounds of solids, and 13,676 gallons of liquid hazardous universal wastes diverted from the waste stream in 2018.
- An on-line registration form was implemented in 2012 to allow for a more efficient registration process for drop off days. The on-line registration process was continued in 2018 and has proven a valuable tool in providing an abundance of information.
Tompkins County Recycling & Materials Management
Organizational Chart
2018

Director
Barb Eckstrom

Fiscal Coordinator
Jackie Maloney

Deputy Director
Leo Riley

Senior Account Clerk /Typist
Mike Armstrong Jr.

Communications and Administrative Coordinator
Geoff Dunn

Waste Reduction & Recycling Specialist
Nate Bates
Seth Dennis
Nancy Webster

Communications Specialist
Jeremy Betterley

Solid Waste Enforcement Officer
Paul Cowles

Senior Account Clerk/Typist
Nancy Clark

Senior Weigh Scale Operator
Heather Chappell

Administrative Assistant
Elizabeth Hujar

Weigh Scale Operators
Marcie Harding
Virginia Higgins

Recycling Assistant
Tim Shutts

Total staff: 15
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The goal of financing the Department of Recycling and Materials Management is to enable the development, maintenance, and sustainability of an integrated solid waste management system that facilitates recycling, composting, waste reduction and other diversion activities to the greatest extent possible. Where possible, the financing system is also designed to create incentives for diversion of materials from disposal. The Department is self-funded, and therefore no revenue is obtained from Tompkins County property taxes. The sources of revenue are:

- **Disposal Fees**: Waste is accepted at the Recycling and Solid Waste Center (RSWC) from Tompkins County residents, businesses, and licensed haulers. A disposal fee is charged to do so.

- **Solid Waste Annual Fee**: The annual fee helps to defray the costs of the Department’s programs and services, exclusive of waste disposal. The annual fee pays for the Recycling and Solid Waste Center, curbside recycling collection, waste reduction programs, Household Hazardous Waste, and maintaining closed landfills.

- **Recycling Revenue**: The Department receives revenue from the sale of recyclable materials.

- **Grants**: The Department actively seeks available grants to defray some of the cost of its programs.

- **Miscellaneous Revenue**: Other forms of revenue include the sale of recycling and compost bins, fines, permits and licensing fees.