Pay-As-You-Throw: Experience in Rural Communities

Jennifer Griffith
Northeast Waste Management Officials’ Association (NEWMOA)
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What is NEWMOA?

- Non-profit, non-partisan interstate association
- Solid waste, hazardous waste, waste site cleanup, & pollution prevention programs
- CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, RI, & VT
- Formally recognized by EPA in 1986
- More information at: www.newmoa.org

NEWMOA is an equal opportunity provider & employer
Project Promoting Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT)

- Vermont:
  - Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District
  - Windham Solid Waste Management District
  - Department of Environmental Conservation

- New Hampshire:
  - Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission
  - Department of Environmental Services

- Case studies of 11 communities
- “Fair Pricing Strategies” brochures
  - 3 location-specific
  - 1 “generic” for use by everyone everywhere
- Regional meetings with government officials
  - 4 held & 3 more planned
- Developing template for a residential handout
- All materials posted: www.newmoa.org/solidwaste/projects/smart/index.cfm
Community Summary

- Contacted 14 small communities with PAYT
- Most have transfer stations:
  - 1990’s: Concord, Dover, Piermont & Wilmington ($2.50), Readsboro ($1), Waterford ($3)
  - 2000’s: Unity ($2), Orford ($3) & Northfield ($1.50)
  - Recent: Newark ($3) & Canaan ($1.70)
- Some have curbside:
  - 1990’s: Plainfield & Hinsdale ($2)
  - Recent: Vernon ($3)

Curbside: Vernon, VT

- Population: 2,206
- Adopted PAYT July 1, 2014
  - Added curbside recycling
- Fees cover all costs
- Require special bags
  - $2.00 / 15 gallon
  - $3.00 / 30 gallon
- Disposal ↓ ~195 tons 3rd Q 2013 to 86 tons 3rd Q 2014
- Recycling ↑ ~28 tons 3rd Q 2013 to 57 tons 3rd Q 2014
Transfer Station: Piermont, NH

- Population: 709
- PAYT since 2001
- Fees usually cover all costs
- Require special bags
  - $2.50 / 33 gallon
  - sold at Town offices & local general store
- Disposal ↓ ~220 tons/yr. before to 99 tons in 2013
- Recycling ↑ ~50 tons/yr. before to 98 tons in 2013

Transfer Station: Northfield, MA

- Population 3,032
- PAYT since 2005
- Fees cover hauling/disposal
- Require special bags
  - $1.50 / 33 gal. bag
  - $0.75 / 15 gal. bag
- Trash cut by 40%
  - 795 tons in 2004 » 460 tons in 2006
- Hauling/disposal costs cut by 40%
  - $30K » $18.5K (6 month period)
Transfer Station: Newark, VT

- Population: 581
- Removed all costs from Town budget
- Contractor operates - paid by fees only
  - $2 / 15 gallon
  - $3 / 30 gallon
  - $4 / “contractor”
- Disposal ↓ 33.39 tons to 14.4 tons
  (4th Q 2012 vs 4th Q 2013)
Transfer Station: Canaan, VT

- Population: 972
- 50/50 split: fees & Town budget
- Require special bags
  - $1.70 / 30 gallon
- Costs: $114,000/yr. to $57,000/yr. (of which 50% covered by bag sales & bulky waste drop-off fees)
  - Disposal ↓ 535 tons/yr. to 258 tons/yr. (households & businesses (H&B))
  - Hauling ↓ 9.5 tons/week (H&B) to 12.5 tons/month (H)

Findings: PAYT @ Transfer Stations

- Reduced amount of trash managed
  - usually 40-55%
  - reduced hauling frequency & tipping costs = $$$
- Fee that covers most/all costs: $3 per 32 gallons
- Can implement without bag/sticker/punch-card
  - residents use their own bag or container & operator collects $
    - computerized cash register with receipts - helps accounting
  - OR contract out operation: collected fees only payment
    - Orford, New Hampshire & Newark, Vermont
Concerns/Views Expressed...

- New cost for low-income residents that are renters
- Some communities with a lot of second homes like trash service in their tax base so it’s subsidized by “out-of-staters”
- Composting will attract bears and other animals
- Illegal dumping will be a problem
  - NONE of the 14 towns reported increased problems

So Where is the Trash Going?

- Smarter purchasing
- New/increased
  - organics composting
  - recycling
- Alternative disposal
  - commercial dumpsters
  - work, friends/relatives in other towns
- Other?
Vermont’s The Place to Watch

- Act 148 requires PAYT for all residential trash starting July 1, 2015
- Applies to municipal and private service
- Fee must cover at least hauling & disposal
- No separate fee for recycling
- Allows municipalities an “Hybrid” approach
  - base level of service paid by town
    - maximum one 32 gallon bag/container per week
- Enforcement challenges

Questions?

Jennifer Griffith, Project Manager
NEWMOA
129 Portland Street, 6th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 367-8558, ext. 303
jgriffith@newmoa.org