Pay-As-You-Throw for Trash in the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Region

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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)

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

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

- Contacted over 15 small communities that have PAYT in some form or another - developed case studies
- Can help towns investigate & design their PAYT system

What is Pay-As-You-Throw?

- A system that saves $$$ in town budgets
  - reduces amount of trash managed
    - usually 40-50%
      - reduced hauling frequency & tipping costs = $$$
  - user fees cover some/all of costs
  - NOT an added cost - just changes the way waste management is paid for
Recent Examples

- Canaan, VT (pop. 972) - $1.70 / 30 gal. bag
  - total trash (household & business) cut in half
    - 535 → 258 tons/year
  - budget costs cut in half $114K → $57K*
    - PAYT fees cover 40% of that $57K

- Northfield, MA (pop. 3,032) - $1.50 / 33 gal. bag
  - Trash cut by 40%
    - 795 in 2004 → 460 tons in 2006
  - hauling/disposal costs cut by 40%
    - $30K → $18.5K (6 month period)
    - PAYT fees cover all hauling/disposal

Pay-As-You-Throw: How?

- Residents pay according to the amount of trash they generate for disposal
  - generate less = pay less
  - generate more = pay more

- Flexible - towns can design their system
  - residents pay per bag, container, or weight
  - fees set to cover some, most, or all costs
Why Pay-As-You-Throw?

▲ Removes costs from the town budget
  ▪ how much depends on the user rates the town decides on:
    ○ fees can be set to cover all or just a portion of the costs associated with trash & recycling

Addressing Issues

▲ It’s a New Tax
  ▪ educate on current cost of waste management in tax rate
  ▪ lower tax rate by amount that PAYT will remove from budget
  ▪ or clearly explain how “freed up” tax money will be spent
    □ could be eliminating/reducing the need to raise taxes to pay for something else
Why Pay-As-You-Throw?

► Fair for residents
  - each pays only for what they use
  - those producing less trash aren’t subsidizing those that produce more
  - everyone can choose to lower their costs by:
    o smart purchasing choices (i.e., buy products in less packaging)
    o recycling / reusing
    o composting - kitchen scraps & leaf/yard

Addressing Issues

► Unfair For Low-Income Residents
  - everyone has opportunities to reduce waste & their costs
  - senior citizens tend to generate small quantities
  - it IS a new cost for renters
  - consider a subsidy - but not unlimited
    o such as 1 free bag/sticker each week
Why Pay-As-You-Throw?

- More reasons:
  - Some towns turn to PAYT to stop influx of trash from non-residents
  - Reduces the amount of trash managed
    - Reduces hauling frequency/costs = $
    - Reduces disposal tipping fees paid = $
  - Increases recycling & composting
    - Does require “free” convenient recycling

Addressing Issues

- Illegal Dumping Will Be a Problem
  - None of the 15 towns reported increased problems
    - Problems existed before PAYT - mostly bulky
    - Lots of other studies
    - If problem - quick enforcement at program start
What is NOT Pay-As-You-Throw?

- Transfer station sticker on vehicle
- Punch-card that is canceled once per-trip
- Fixed monthly fee for curbside pickup

Bottom line: the amount paid needs to vary with the amount thrown away

PAYT @ Transfer Stations

- Usual options:
  - special bags
  - stickers - affix to bag provided by resident
  - punch-cards - one space per bag/container
- Requires convenient sale locations
- Small administrative costs for town:
  - purchase bags/stickers/punch-cards
  - sell - directly and/or to local merchants
  - keep track of inventory
  - manage $
PAYT @ Transfer Stations

- 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

- Typical charge that covers all costs: $3 per 32 gallons
  - many communities have 2 or 3 sizes (15, 32 & “contractor”) & fees
PAYT & Curbside Pickup

▲ Special bags (or stickers) - easiest option
  ▪ convenient sale locations & some administrative costs
  ▪ can put bags in containers if problems with animals

▲ Containers
  ▪ different fees for different sizes
    o 32 gallon base size (or smaller) - 2X base fee for larger size
  ▪ administrative costs to bill monthly/quarterly & collect
  ▪ requires trash collectors to keep track of extra trash so additional fee can be charged
  ▪ or require special bags/stickers for “extra” trash

PAYT & Curbside Pickup

▲ Can be applied to private subscription haulers
  ▪ requires commitment of town
    o pass an ordinance
      • haulers need to offer recycling for no added fee
    o enforce the ordinance
      • usually involves registering haulers
  ▪ some examples:
    o Boulder, Larimer & Pitkin counties in Colorado
    o entire state of Vermont by July 1, 2015
Curbside Pick-Up: Plainfield, NH
- Population: 2,241
- PAYT since 1991
- 50/50 Split: PAYT fees & Town budget
- $2 sticker per 30 pounds
- Stickers sold at several local stores

Curbside Pick-Up: Hinsdale, NH
- Population: 1,548
- PAYT since late 1990’s
- Fees paying off landfill closure costs
- Special bags
  - $1 / 15 gallon
  - $2 / 30 gallon
- Bags sold at Town offices & local stores
Transfer Station: Unity, NH

- Population: 1,530
- PAYT since landfill closed in 2008
- Fees cover ~\(\frac{3}{4}\) costs
- Require special bags
  - $2.00 / 33 gallon bag
  - sold at the transfer station

Transfer Station: Piermont

- Population: 709
- PAYT since 2001
- Fees 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
Vermont Transfer Stations:

- Concord, VT - Population 1,297
  - UBP since mid-1990’s
  - fees cover all costs
    - $1 / small “kitchen” white bags
    - $2.50 / “regular” black bags
    - $5 / “contractor” size
  - TS Operator collects fees (computerized cash register)

- Waterford, VT - Population 1,280
  - UBP since 1992
  - fees cover all costs (+ extra into equip. fund)
    - $3 / 30 gallon
  - TS Operator collects fees (discretion on charges)

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
  - sold in packs of 10 at town offices & local stores
- Costs: $114,000/yr. to $57,000/yr. (of which 40% covered by bag sales)
  - 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)

Next Steps for Communities

- Establish Solid Waste Committee
  - understand current costs: labor, hauling, disposal, recycling & capital expenses
  - initiate ongoing public education/input process
  - determine how much fees should cover
    o all trash & recycling costs
    o most costs
    o just hauling & disposal
    o disposal only
    o capital expenses
More Next Steps

► Determine type of system
  ▪ bags vs. containers
  ▪ 1 size vs. multiple sizes

► Determine fee structure
  ▪ estimate post-PAYT trash & recycling quantities & costs (include PAYT administration)
  ▪ determine PAYT rate(s)
    o evaluate feasibility & modify as necessary
    o best to set similar/higher than nearby towns

Final Steps

► Plan for logistics
  ▪ if bags/stickers/punch-cards, where will they be sold?
  ▪ if containers, will they be provided?
  ▪ how will fees be collected & managed?

► Educate & obtain plan approval

► Publicize new system to residents
  ▪ alert those with commercial dumpsters to restrict access
Questions?
Or
Request Assistance

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