

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



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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)

- ▶ 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



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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:
 - smart purchasing choices (i.e., buy products in less packaging)
 - recycling / reusing
 - 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
 - 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
 - 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
 - pass an ordinance
 - haulers need to offer recycling for no added fee
 - enforce the ordinance
 - usually involves registering haulers
 - some examples:
 - Boulder, Larimer & Pitkin counties in Colorado
 - 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 $\sim\frac{3}{4}$ 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 ↓ \sim 220 tons/yr. before to 99 tons in 2013
- ▶ Recycling ↑ \sim 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
 - all trash & recycling costs
 - most costs
 - just hauling & disposal
 - disposal only
 - 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)
 - evaluate feasibility & modify as necessary
 - 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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