

Municipal Solid Waste Unit-based Pricing (UBP)¹

Case Study

Waterford, Vermont²
Population: 1,280

Prepared by: The Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association (NEWMOA)³

The Town of Waterford is a rural community located in northeastern Vermont on the border with New Hampshire just south of Saint Johnsbury and is a member of the Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District (NEKWMD).⁴ Waterford instituted a Per-Bag system in 1992 largely to combat problems associated with non-residents taking advantage of their property tax-based method of paying for disposal.

Most residents bring their trash and sorted recyclables to the transfer station where recycling is free and the fee for trash is \$3 for a 30 gallon size bag or container. The program is known throughout town as “\$3-Per-Bag.” Waterford does not require the use of special bags. The transfer station attendant collects fees and has discretion to charge less for small amounts and more for larger-sized containers and/or particularly heavy loads. The transfer station is open Saturday mornings.

The transfer station handled 168 tons of MSW and 76 tons of recyclables in 2013. The fees collected cover the cost of disposal and operation of the transfer station, including labor. Each year there is a small excess that is put into an account that will fund the purchase of a new compactor when the current one wears out. Town leaders are happy with the \$3-per-bag system and report that illegal dumping is not a problem. Because the per-bag fee covers all of the costs, the transfer station now accepts trash and recycling from non-residents.

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¹ Also known as: Save Money and Reduce Trash (SMART), variable rate pricing, and pay-as-you-throw (PAYT).

² The information in the case study is based on correspondence with Joanne Junentkuff, Waterford Town Clerk and information provided by NEKWMD.

³ NEWMOA is a non-profit, non-partisan interstate association whose membership is composed of the state environmental agency directors of the hazardous waste, solid waste, waste site cleanup, and pollution prevention programs in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Visit www.newmoa.org.

⁴NEKWMD provides recycling, composting, household hazardous waste management, and other solid waste services to its members.