

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



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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



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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



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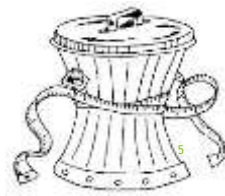
Project Promoting Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT)

- ▶ 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)



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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



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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)



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Transfer Station: Newark, VT

- ▶ Population: 581
- ▶ PAYT since 2013
- ▶ 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)



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Transfer Station: Canaan, VT

- ▶ Population: 972
- ▶ PAYT since 2008
- ▶ 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 = \$\$\$
- ▶ 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



PAYT Implementation Findings

- ▶ Towns vary on extent fees cover all costs to operate transfer station (e.g. staff & recycling)
 - Fee that covers most/all costs: \$3 per 32 gallons
 - If want to cover all costs - set fees to save for future capital expenses
- ▶ Try to avoid collection of cash by transfer station attendant
- ▶ Set fees similar/higher than surrounding towns
- ▶ PAYT transfer stations charge fees for bulky items



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?

- ▶ Out-of-town trash no longer smuggled in
- ▶ Smarter purchasing
- ▶ New/increased
 - organics composting
 - recycling
 - donation for reuse
- ▶ Alternative disposal
 - commercial dumpsters
 - work, friends/relatives in other towns
- ▶ Other?



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Next Steps for Communities

- ▶ Establish Solid Waste Committee
 - understand current costs: labor, hauling, disposal, recycling & capital expenses
 - separate out costs in tax bills & town budget
 - 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?
 - determine type of system (bags vs containers, 1 size or multiple sizes)



More Steps

- ▶ Determine fee structure
 - estimate post-PAYT trash & recycling quantities & costs (include PAYT administration)
 - determine PAYT rate(s) and modify if necessary
- ▶ Plan for logistics
 - where will bags/stickers be sold?
 - how will fees be collected & managed?
- ▶ Educate, educate, educate
- ▶ Obtain plan approval
- ▶ Publicize new system to residents



Vermont's The Place to Watch

- ▶ Act 148 requires PAYT for all residential trash starting July 1, 2015
- ▶ Applies to municipal and private service
- ▶ Must provide recycling with no visible fee
- ▶ Trash fees must cover at least hauling & disposal
 - Except allows municipalities an “hybrid” approach
 - base level of service paid by town
 - maximum one 32 gallon bag/container per week
- ▶ Enforcement challenges



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Questions?

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