

Yard Waste Collection from the Curb

Separate vs. Comingle

Winter 2015-16

City Meetings

Background

- 2003: The initial legislation for comingled yard waste was proposed and passed, but vetoed by Gov. Vilsack.
 - Fugitive emissions were a major concern.
- 2008: Landfill management shifted from material diversion to environmental protection: recycling, hazardous waste, water quality, **greenhouse gas reduction, yard waste management** and environmental education.
- 2014: Added second landfill gas to energy plant, creating additional electricity.

Background

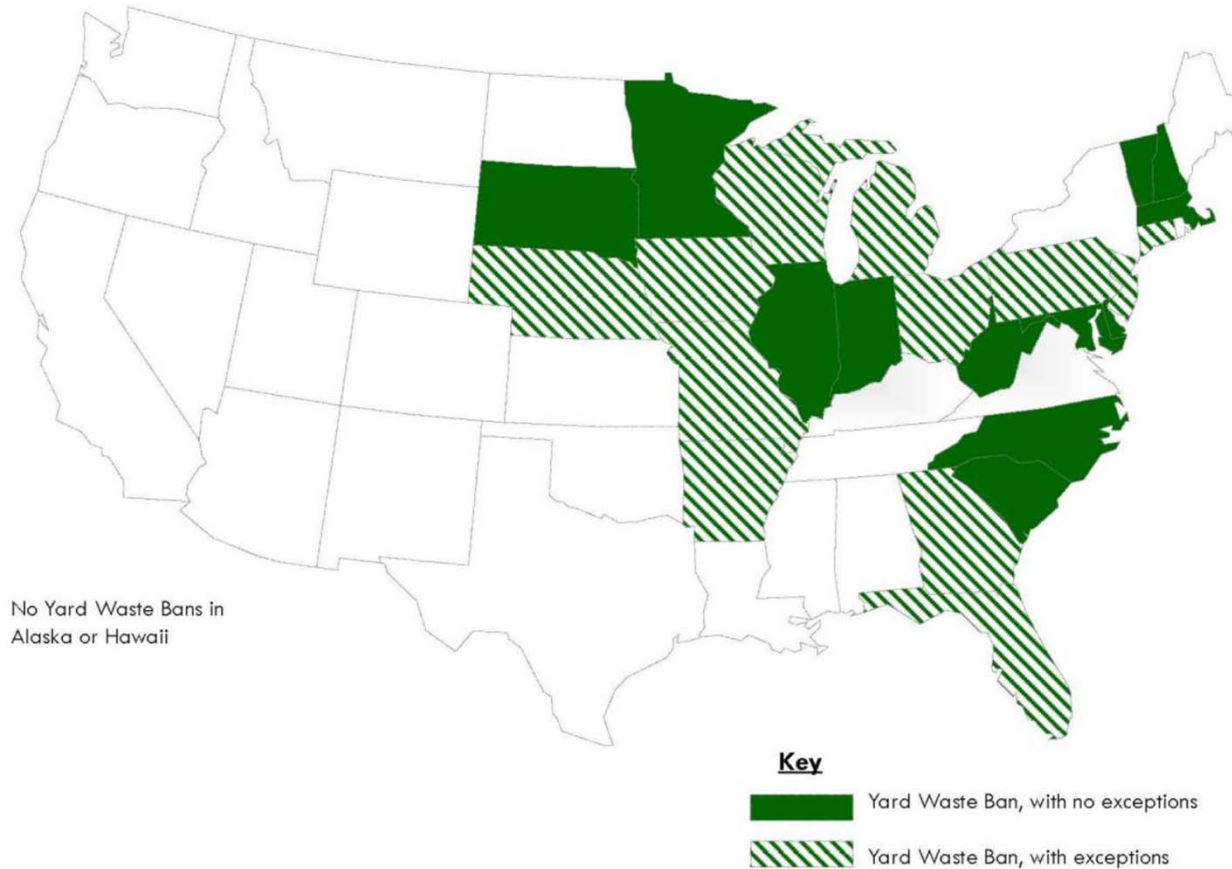
- 2015: Changed landfill compaction method to extend life of the landfill by 13 years.
- 2015: Legislation passed allowing landfills with gas collection systems generating renewable energy to accept yard waste.
- Metro Park East, our local landfill, is one of five in the state that's eligible.
- We ask again: *What is the best way to manage yard waste?*
Separate OR comingled collection?

Information Learned

- Gathered information from: environmental studies, public opinion research and cost analysis. We continue to learn more.
- Haulers are willing to amend their solid waste contracts to provide comingled collection.
- Board set policy: no change in collection in 2016.
- If a transition occurs, all communities making it together will ensure the greatest success.

Yard Waste Management in Other States

Only 22 states have full or partial landfill bans



In process of contacting states where transitions occurred.

Environmental Impact Comparison

Two studies conclude there is an environmental benefit to comingling yard waste at the curb:

- City of Des Moines contracted Sebesta Blomberg & Associates, Inc – 2008
- Metro Waste Authority contracted SCS Engineers – 2015

Separate Collection	Comingled Collection
Creates a natural soil amendment	Creates electricity
Requires a third, separate fleet of collection trucks	Reduction in fossil fuel + *carbon sequestration = 11% less greenhouse gas emissions annually
Doesn't consume additional landfill space	Anticipated decrease life of landfill by 15 months (2066 vs. 2067)

*carbon sequestration = trapping of carbon in the landfill. Carbon occurs naturally when yard waste breaks down. Carbon released into the environment is said to contribute to global warming.

Environmental Impact

Regardless of how yard waste is collected from the curb, MWA will:

- Continue to compost green waste at Metro Park East Landfill
 - Green waste comes from businesses, landscapers, and residents who self-haul.
 - Compost is used for cover and landscaping at the landfill.
 - Compost will remain for sale in bulk quantities.

- Continue promotion of backyard composting and mulching grass clippings.
 - Composting without transportation is the most environmentally beneficial method to manage green waste.

Are residents landfilling yard waste today? Yes

- 19,800 tons of yard waste per year

(2011 Iowa Statewide Waste Characterization Study)

How Would Comingle Collection Work?

- Solid waste collection is already set up to include yard waste – and to do it year round.
- Treat yard waste the same as garbage. Follow these steps:

STEP 1:

First, fill your garbage cart with garbage and yard waste.



STEP 2:

Garbage cart full? Have extra garbage or yard waste? Bag it, box it or bind it and attach a **\$1 Extra Trash Pick Up sticker**.



OPTIONAL:

Garbage cart routinely full? Consider a second garbage cart.



Public Opinion

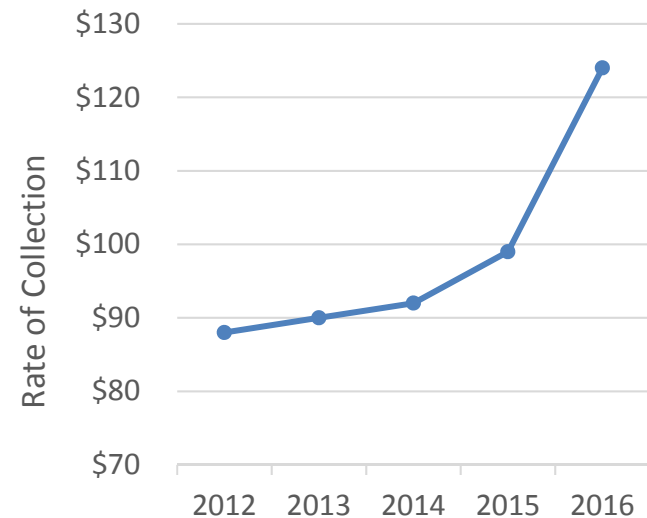
Two studies conclude a majority of residents are in favor of comingling yard waste with garbage at the curb:

- Metro Waste Authority contracted Flynn Wright – 2015
 - 84% of survey responders prefer the comingled collection option.
 - 44% of survey responders put yard waste in the garbage or burn it currently.
- City of Des Moines conducted a survey – 2015
 - 72% of survey responders prefer the comingled collection option.
 - 35% of survey responders do not use the Compost It! program.

Separate Collection	Comingled Collection
Preference for composting	Convenient
Perception its better for environment	Year-round collection
	Input for renewable energy
	Perception its better for environment

Financial Comparison

- Compost It! program costs are rising.
- Revenue is not covering the cost of collection and processing of yard costs as intended.
- If separate collection continues, MWA may need to address revenue loss. This could occur through
 - Increase in garbage rates – impacts everyone.
 - Increase in cost of yard waste bags, stickers, cart service – which could lead more residents to sneak yard waste into the garbage.



	Separate Collection	Comingled collection
	“Pay as you throw” system Pay for what is collected outside cart.	Partial “Pay as you throw” Flat fee + what is outside cart (like garbage).
Polk City Rates		
Yard Waste Bags	Avg. resident uses 10 bags/yr - \$12.50	\$6.00-9.36/yr + extra trash
Yard Waste Cart	\$105/yr	TBD by hauler

Next Steps

- Collect feedback from City Councils
- Board will determine path forward

