

The Lafayette Experience – Single-Stream Recycling & PAYT Trash Rates

In 2007 Lafayette embarked on a journey to see if thru a solicitation of trash haulers bids, the City could develop a contracted curbside pickup of single stream recyclables and a Pay-As-You-Throw trash program. Lafayette had four goals in mind:

- 1) Eliminate up to six trash hauling companies that were serving single family neighborhoods. From a Public Works perspective, trash trucks create the heaviest cyclic loading on local streets.
- 2) Minimize the noise and air pollution of these multiple diesel trash trucks in local neighborhoods.
- 3) Increase the amount of recyclables that can be diverted from the landfill using the typical one or two small bins to a 96 gallon single-stream recycle cart to collect all material including cardboard.
- 4) Eliminate the price discrepancies in Lafayette where non-HOA residents were paying up to two to two & a half times the price for the same monthly service, sometime without recycling, as compared to HOA's which negotiate their trash and/or recycling rates.

This process started when members of the Lafayette Waste Reduction Advisory Committee began discussions about the lack of recycling and the HOA/Non-HOA price discrepancy in 2005. Council adopted this issue as a goal in early 2006 and instructed the Public Works Director to begin the process to write and solicit bids thru a Request for Proposal process and to come back to Council with the results.

In August of 2006, during a four hour public hearing, the information was presented to Council and citizens about the proposed program, the six bids received and the results of those bids. The City Council listened very attentively to the citizen's pros and cons concerning our proposed contracted pay-as-you-throw trash service and single stream recycling program. At the end of the public hearing, the City Council debated the pros and cons presented by the citizens, reviewed the six bids, weighed in on what was best for the community and made the decision that directed the Public Works Director to continue on this path to implement this program and to negotiate a contract with the lowest responsible bidder.

The Lafayette PAYT and single-stream recycling program was finally begun in October 1st, 2007 after contract negotiations with Western Disposal of Boulder, ordering the new Lafayette 96 gallon recycle carts and delays in installing single-stream recycling equipment at the Boulder County MRF. The results of the Lafayette PAYT and single-stream recycling are amazing:

- 1) Now only one trash company serves the local neighborhoods in Lafayette which extends the life of local roads.
- 2) That one trash company on local roads minimizes the diesel engine noise and pollution.
- 3) Lafayette's recycling rate went from an estimated 10% to 12% rate to documented 28% recycle diversion rate which represents approximately 140 tons per month of material that is recycled and not land filled. This also produced an annual revenue stream of approximately \$23K which funds other environmental programs in Lafayette.

- 4) The City contracted program resulted in a cost savings to most Lafayette citizens, better service, choice in the size of trash cart needed to meet the needs of the individual homeowner (Seniors love the small 32 gallon trash cart..!), other value added services that were not available before the City program and overall a highly beneficial program that has proven the worth of a PAYT system to incentivize recycling.

In summary, the Lafayette experience with contracted PAYT trash rates and curbside pick-up of single stream recyclables is a triumph for the citizens of Lafayette.

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