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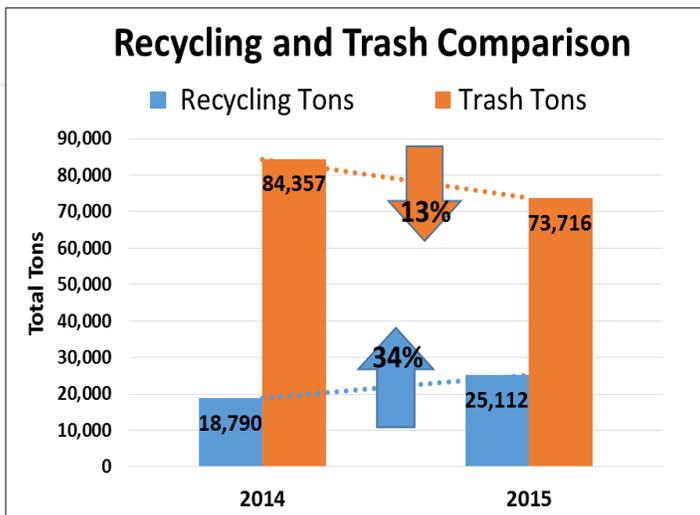


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# Municipal Recycling News

Waukesha County Recycles  
waukeshacounty.gov/recycling  
Summer 2016

## Single Sort Recycling Exceeds Program Goals



The 2015 conversion to single sort recycling increased recycling tonnage in the County program by an impressive 34% (6,322 tons) in the first year! This greatly exceeded the County's goal to increase recycling by 25% over three years.

Congratulations to the City of Pewaukee, Village of Elm Grove and Village of Nashotah which increased recycling tonnage more than 100% over the previous year along with the City of Brookfield, Delafield and Oconomowoc and the Village of Pewaukee increasing recycling tons over 50%.

An added benefit to the improved recycling rates and resulting revenue potential, is that communities have decreased trash tonnage by an average of 13%. With landfill disposal cost itemized in collection contracts, this saves communities another \$500,000 per year, while also conserving limited landfill space.

## Recycling Mobile App Saves Staff Time

In a continued effort to effectively and efficiently provide information to residents, the County recently launched a mobile application (app). This app provides detailed information on *what* and *how* to recycle or safely dispose of items, and *where* to take them. A mapping function even navigates to selected sites.

County and local staff answer hundreds of phone calls each month from residents with questions about recycling and disposal of hazardous waste, electronics, appliances, latex paint disposal and more. The recycling app can provide this same information instantly and conveniently while reducing staff time spent on calls.

Communities can help spread the word by including links to the app on community web pages and directing residents to the app when they call with questions. In the first month, over 1,000 residents downloaded and are now using the app, with the electronics and hazardous waste sections being viewed the most.

Download the NEW **Waukesha County Recycles** mobile application!

Search "Waukesha County Recycles"

GET IT ON Google Play

Download on the App Store

Or Scan the QR Code

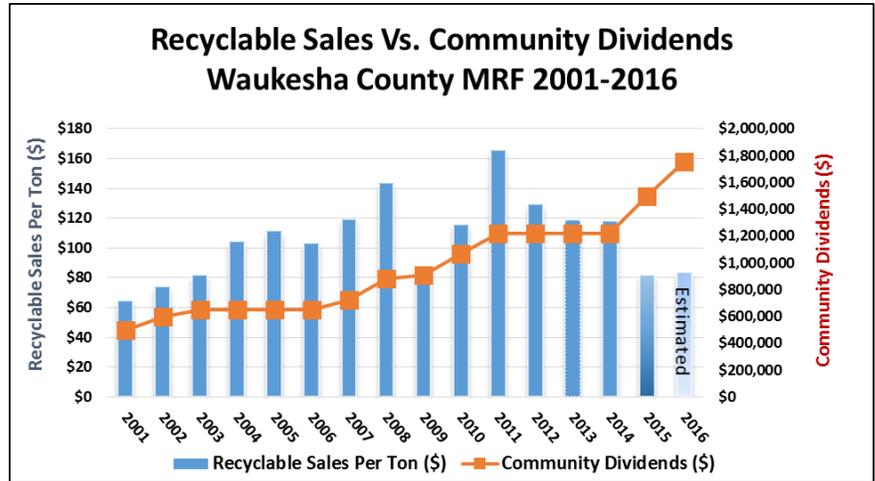
# Dividend Payments Increased 17%

This spring, Waukesha County distributed \$1.75 million in recycling dividend checks to the 27 municipal partners. With the addition of two new communities to the County program, the base and recycling incentive portions of the dividend payment were increased 17% (\$255,000) to account for the additional recycling tonnage.

The total dividend amount is budgeted each year based on an analysis described in the article below. Individual community payments are based on a formula that relies on tons recycled, recycling rates, and recycling collection/program costs, as well as recycling containers and hauling costs.

The 2016 dividend payments reflect the transition to single-sort recycling, resulting in a 34% tonnage increase countywide. The average recycling rate rose from 18.3% to 24.8%, a 6.5% increase. Some communities (as previously mentioned) increased recycling tonnage over 100% from the previous year, significantly impacting dividend distribution amounts.

Since 1991, \$15.4 million in dividend payments have been provided to partner communities. Together, we have recycled over 515,000 tons of material and avoided over \$25 million in landfill disposal costs. For details on 2016 dividend payments by community, go to: [www.waukeshacounty.gov/recyclingdividends](http://www.waukeshacounty.gov/recyclingdividends)



## Monitoring the Recycling Fund Balance

The Waukesha County recycling program is set up as a separate account (Recycling Fund) where no tax levy is used to fund the program. Revenue sources include the sale of recyclables and state recycling grants. Since operations of the County-owned Material Recovery Facility (MRF) began in 1991, no processing fees were charged to communities and any net revenues remained in the Recycling Fund. By 2001, enough of a fund balance had accumulated that the County Board authorized to budget annual dividend payments to the partner communities to help recover some of the local cost of recycling collection.

As the chart above shows, community dividends have steadily increased since 2001 and have helped buffer the financial impacts of highly fluctuating recycling markets. The 2015 dividend increase was a result of new 10-year intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) executed with the original 25 community partners to provide financial support for the transition to single sort recycling (new containers/direct haul). The 2016 dividend increase is due to the addition of two new community partners (City of Muskego/Town of Vernon).



Menomonee Valley Single Stream MRF

The Recycling Fund balance peaked at over \$13 million in 2013 while plans proceeded with the construction of a new \$15 million MRF in a partnership with the City of Milwaukee. With construction payments nearly complete, the Recycling Fund balance was at \$6.4 million at the beginning of 2016.

Each year, the County evaluates trends in recyclable markets, state grants and MRF operation costs to project Recycling Fund balances for the next three years. These projections help ensure an adequate fund balance can be sustained while supporting annual dividend payments to partner communities. If any reduction in the dividend budget is needed, community partners are given at least 1 year notice.

# 2016 Brings Two New Community Recycling Partners

Statewide data suggest that consolidation of recycling programs can help improve services, reduce costs and increase recycling rates. Prior to 2015, the County recycling program was dual sort while most neighboring Responsible Unit (RU) communities had already transitioned to single sort recycling.

With the recent County switch to single sort, and the investment in a new MRF, the opportunity for program cooperation and consolidation became a viable option for the 12 independent RUs in Waukesha County.

In 2015, the Town of Vernon and City of Muskego requested the County provide a fiscal analysis and recycling program options. Through this process, both communities

chose to join the County program starting in January 2016 by executing 10-year intergovernmental agreements with the County.

This move is reflective of the loss of program grant funding from the State (40% since 2010) and the potential to recover more program costs through community dividend payments under the County program.

The County Recycling program continues to be an excellent model of intergovernmental cooperation. The County looks forward to working with our two new community partners and is willing to provide a similar fiscal analysis to any community that requests it.

## WELCOME *City of Muskego & Town of Vernon* to the Waukesha County Recycling Program!

## Collaboration Improves Electronics / Appliance Recycling

The County and eight partner communities completed a coordinated Request for Proposals (RFP) process for residential electronics and appliance recycling in 2015. This process resulted in non-binding award recommendations for collection events, as opposed to permanent collection sites, primarily due to high operation and transportation costs of permanent sites.

At the request of partner communities, the County executed service contracts with Legacy Recycling for electronics and Refrigerant Depot for appliances. One collection event is scheduled for each month in 2016, rotating locations around the county (see chart below). Intergovernmental agreements were also executed with each hosting community.

This collaborative approach has resulted in a very successful program. During the first four months, over 166,000 pounds of electronics and appliances have been collected.

### Electronics and Appliance Recycling Events 2016 Results Summary

Host Community	Total Items	Total Pounds	Total Cars
City of Brookfield	182	28,154	465
City of Oconomowoc	115	29,247	198
City of New Berlin	135	45,021	403
Village of Hartland	701	64,110	662
City of Muskego	355	40,493	368
Grand Total	1133	166,532	1728

### 2016 Electronics and Appliance Recycling Collection Event Schedule

Month	Date	Time	Location	Location Address
June	11	9am-12pm	City of Pewaukee	800 Main St. (WCTC)
July	9	9am-12pm	City of Brookfield	19700 Riverview Drive
August	13	9am-12pm	Town of Merton	N78 W32101 Peterson Road.
September	10	9am-12pm	City of Muskego	W182 S8200 Racine Ave
October	8	9am-12pm	Village of Hartland	701 Progress Drive
November	12	9am-12pm	City of Pewaukee	800 Main St. (WCTC)
December	10	9am-12pm	City of Oconomowoc	630 South Worthington Street

# County Recycling Program Receives Two State Awards

In fall of 2015, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources recognized Waukesha County's recycling program with two "Recycling Excellence" awards. One was issued jointly to the City of Milwaukee and Waukesha County for the new partnership to build a joint City/County material recovery facility in the Menomonee Valley ("Valley MRF").

This award recognized the innovation and intergovernmental cooperation involved in planning and implementing the Valley MRF. The old County-owned MRF building in Waukesha was sold, and the old City of Milwaukee MRF building was upgraded to house a new state-of-the-art City/County single stream MRF. The Valley MRF has been successfully operating since March 2015.



The second award was to recognize the County for the coordinated collection contract RFP conducted on behalf of 20 municipalities during 2014. This RFP process helped our partner communities make the switch to a single sort recycling collection system, with several automating collection and reducing costs in the process. Collectively, this RFP process saved local municipalities over \$4 million per year in recycling and trash collection services. By separating the landfill disposal costs in the contracts, communities were also able to take advantage of the 13% less trash going to the landfill, saving an additional \$500,000 per year in landfill disposal costs.

# Industry Challenges & Opportunities

The first year of single sort processing at the Menomonee Valley Materials Recovery Facility ("Valley MRF") exceeded expectations, with a 34% increase in recycling tonnage. However, there are also several challenges facing the industry, locally and nationally, including:

- 2015 saw some of the poorest recyclable commodity markets in 15 years.
- China continues to enforce their "Green Fence" purity standards for imported recyclables. Along with a strong US dollar, this makes Chinese recyclable commodities lower cost and lowers demand for US materials.
- China is also facing slow economic growth, resulting in lower import demands and improved domestic markets.
- Lower global oil prices make virgin materials cheaper than recycled plastics.
- Recycling programs and end markets continue to experience a decline in paper tons and quality.
- Materials contamination results in lower value products and increased operational costs for disposal of non-recyclable materials. *For example, propane tanks have been a significant safety and contamination challenge.*
- Glass quantities continue to rise but has very little or no value, impacting MRF operating costs.
- State grants for recycling programs (funded by landfill disposal fees) have been reduced 40% (over \$10 million/year) since 2010.



Taken together, these factors can seriously impact local recycling programs. However, while there are many challenges to overcome, there are also opportunities. Education is key to tackling the issues with contamination. Working together, we can educate residents on how to improve recycling and reduce contamination in home collections. Currently, a capital project to remodel Retzer Nature Center has begun, which will incorporate a recycling exhibit hall and education room. This new space provides improved access for integrated environmental and recycling education for our county schools and residents.

Also, the Valley MRF is operating at design capacity and ready for additional tonnage, which helps minimize operating costs and improve revenues. The private operator, ReCommunity Recycling, is working with local haulers communities and businesses for additional tonnage.

Waukesha County Department of Parks & Land Use at 896-8300 or online at [waukeshacounty.gov/recycling](http://waukeshacounty.gov/recycling)