



Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
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City of Portland 2016 Recycling Program Summary

Last Update: September 9, 2016

General

- Population: 632,000 (per 2015 Census)
- Square Miles: 145
- City Recycling Goal: 75% by 2015 (adopted in 2006)
- Overall Recycling Rate: 70%
 - Residential Recycling Rate: 63%
 - Commercial Recycling Rate: 71%

Collection and Processing

- All waste and recycling collection is conducted by 35 private haulers regulated by the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS). All customers pay their haulers directly for collection services.
- Portland significantly revamped its residential program in 2011 to include weekly collection of food scraps and switched garbage collection to an every-other-week basis.
- Haulers deliver garbage to local transfer stations and most of it is then sent to Columbia Ridge Landfill, located 150 miles away, operated by Waste Management through contracts with Metro, the regional government. The current tip fee at Portland transfer stations is \$96.25/ton, plus a \$10.00 transaction fee.
- Haulers deliver recyclables for processing at over 80 facilities; the top ten receive ~ 75% of the recyclables. Eight of the facilities are material recovery facilities (MRFs).
- Metro, the regional government, maintains a database of all drop-off locations for recycling and composting. Residents and businesses can access this info by calling 503-234-3000 Monday thru Saturday. Metro also posts a list of almost 7,000 sites on their website in a “Find a Recycler” searchable database.
- In Portland’s solid waste and recycling system, “residential” includes all single-family through four-unit dwellings. “Commercial” includes all multi-family dwellings (5 units or greater) and businesses.
- Residential customers are serviced by 14 franchised haulers. These haulers have exclusive service areas, and rates are set by the City. In contrast, commercial collection is provided in an open, competitive market (35 haulers, plus a number of independent recyclers, or companies that collect recycling, yard debris, and food scraps, but not garbage).
- 79% of garbage is generated by commercial, 21% by residential customers.



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Portland Recycles! Plan

In June 2006, Portland City Council directed BPS to develop a new waste prevention and recycling plan. The resulting plan, *Portland Recycles! A New Waste Prevention and Recycling Plan for Portland*, has four main goals: to increase the recovery rate to 75% by 2015, to reduce toxics and greenhouse gases, to have zero growth in the waste stream, and to make the system as a whole more sustainable. The plan included changes for both the residential and commercial systems. The plan can be accessed at <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/230043>.

City Council approved the residential, waste prevention and city operations portions of the plan in August 2007. The plan's proposed changes for the residential system occurred in two phases over the span of four years.

Phase One for the residential system (2008-2009) introduced a new recycling roll cart for commingled recyclables and a separate yard debris roll cart. A monthly rate increase of \$2.60+ offset the costs of the new carts.

Phase Two for the residential system (2011) consisted of significant changes to residential curbside collection, including the addition of food scraps to yard debris and a collection frequency switch between yard debris/food scraps and solid waste. Composting and recycling collection are weekly and solid waste collection is every other week or every four weeks.

City Council approved the commercial system changes in April 2008. Changes to the commercial system require businesses to recycle, focusing primarily on food scraps, paper, and construction materials. The Portland Recycles! Plan included new recycling requirements for businesses for these target materials while maintaining the competitive system for waste hauling services. Waste hauling companies are required to offer their business customers collection services to meet the requirement, including collection of the materials subject to mandatory recycling.

Recovery Rate Calculation

In addition to the many residential materials recycled curbside in Portland, there are other materials recycled by other means and counted in Portland's recovery rate (see Appendix for a complete list of eligible materials).

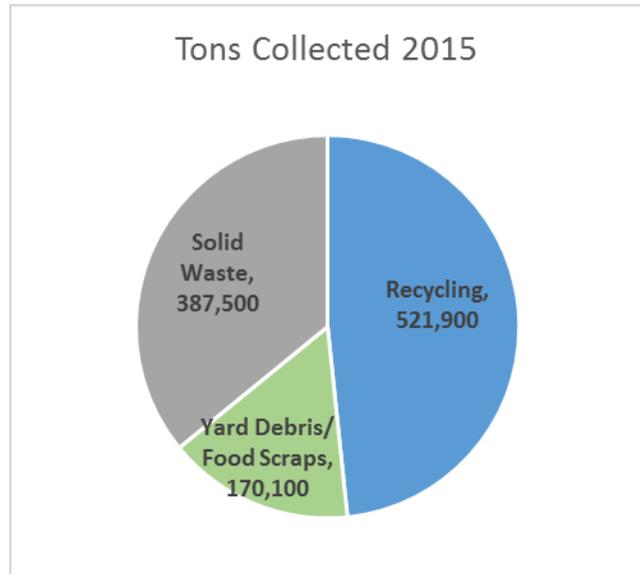
In calculating the City's recovery rate, City staff track quantities on the residential side including hauler-reported curbside recycling and composting and estimates of bottle bill recycling. Residential solid waste disposed includes amounts reported by franchisees as well as estimates for self-hauled garbage.

On the commercial side, recycling tonnages include materials collected by haulers and material sorted at recovery facilities, as well as a jobs-based estimate of material collected via independent recyclers that is reported to the State Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Commercial solid waste disposal tonnages are computed by adding tonnages of waste reported by haulers, residue at recovery facilities, and estimates of material that is self-hauled to transfer stations.



The residential and commercial tons are then combined to get an overall recycling rate. In order to align with Metro and the DEQ's calculation methodology, additional recovery credits, at 2% for each activity, are then added for home composting, waste prevention and reuse activities. For a watershed to achieve the maximum of 6% for a particular year, DEQ must approve each local watershed's documentation.

Total Recycling	521,900 tons
Total Yard Debris/Food Scraps	170,100 tons
Total Solid Waste	387,500 tons
Total Generation	1,079,500 tons
Recovery Rate	64%
With 6% credits	70%



For more info on recovery rate calculations, contact Bruce Walker at 503-823-7772, bruce.walker@portlandoregon.gov.

Regulatory Framework & Compliance

Oregon state law requires communities of more than 4,000 to have a curbside recycling program (1983 Opportunity to Recycle Act). In Portland's residential sector, there is no requirement that residents participate in the recycling program; however, it is estimated that more than 90% of residential customers recycle. Even before the City began to regulate residential rates in 1992, Portland has always had a "pay-as-you-throw" (PAYT) rate system which provides a direct financial incentive for reducing a household's garbage.

According to current Portland City Code, all commercial businesses are required to recycle. In addition, Oregon state law mandates that a hauler cannot charge more for recycling than would be charged for the same quantity of garbage pick-up. While the City does not currently receive reports of the number of businesses participating in the mandatory program, it is estimated that 85-90% of the commercial sector participates in recycling to some extent.

Though it is stipulated in Portland's Commercial Administrative Rules that failure to implement a recycling system is an Infraction, subject to a penalty of up to \$600 for non-compliance, the City focuses primarily on education and outreach efforts. City regulations do not provide for penalties unless a business has refused to comply by 30 days after being notified. Enforcement has historically been complaint-based and penalties have rarely been levied because businesses typically respond within the 30 days.

Residential Sector

- ✓ 158,600 households - single-family through fourplexes - are signed up for curbside garbage, recycling, and yard debris service
- ✓ Sign-up is voluntary, except for rental dwellings



- ✓ Yard debris/food scraps and recycling are collected weekly, both on the same day; garbage is collected every other week for most (every-fourth-week garbage collection is also an option).
- ✓ 90%+ participation in recycling
- ✓ Each household is given a blue 65 gallon roll cart for recycling and a green 65 gallon rollcart for composting.

Curbside Collection System

65-gallon Recycling Roll Cart

- Paper (Magazines, Newspapers, Cardboard, Scrap paper)
- Metal (Aluminum, Tin cans, Scrap metal)
- Plastics (Milk jugs, Bottles, Yogurt-type tubs, Potted plant containers and buckets)
- Roll cart supplied by hauler, costs included within basic rate

14-gallon Glass Bin

- Glass bottles and jars

On the side

- Motor oil in a see-through rigid container

65-gallon Composting Roll Cart

- Food scraps, food soiled paper towels and napkins, tea bags, coffee filters, pizza delivery boxes and kitchen pail liners including newspaper, paper bags and five approved brands of BPI-certified compostable bags
- Yard debris
- Roll cart supplied by hauler, costs included within basic rate

Rates currently paid by Residential Customers

- 14 franchised hauling companies operate within the City, each within an exclusive territory.
- Pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) volume-based rate schedule, reviewed and set annually by City Council (before City regulation, private haulers used PAYT system on their own)
- Close to three quarters of the City’s residential customers subscribe to 20-gallon can or cart, 32-gallon can, 35-gallon roll cart, recycling-only, composting and recycling, on-call, or every-four-week service level.
- The most common service level (43% of households) is a 35-gallon roll cart, collected every other week. It includes weekly recycling and weekly composting collection. It is priced at \$29.15/month (broken out below):

35 gallon rollcart collected every other week	Rate Components
SW Collection Charge	3.14
SW Disposal Charge	2.82
Recycling Collection Charge	5.25
Yard Debris Collection Charge	4.06
Yard Debris Tipping Charge	2.86
General and Administrative Charge	6.35
Rollcart Depreciation, Interest & Maintenance	0.34
Less: Sale of Recyclables	0.24
Operating Margin	2.63
Franchise Fee	1.46
Rate	29.15



Commercial Sector

- ✓ 25,000 businesses
- ✓ Approximately 4,000 multifamily complexes (five or more units), totaling more than 90,000 households.
- ✓ 35 private, commercial permitted haulers collect commercial waste and recycling in a competitive system
- ✓ A number of independent recyclers are also registered with the City to collect source-separated recycling from businesses; they collect without charge or they may pay customers for the material collected.
- ✓ In Portland, businesses and multifamily complexes may choose their garbage hauler and recycler and negotiate prices for these services.
- ✓ Since 1996, businesses and multifamily complexes are required by City Code to recycle 50% of their waste. The Portland Recycles! Plan established a goal of 75%.
- ✓ If requested by a business, haulers must offer recycling collection for:
 - Food scraps
 - Cardboard
 - Glass bottles & jars
 - Newspapers and magazines
 - Mixed paper (including office paper, junk mail, aseptic boxes and cartons)
 - Plastic bottles
 - Scrap metal
 - Tin and aluminum cans
 - Yard debris
- ✓ The Portland Composts! commercial food scrap collection program began in 2005, with about 1200 businesses participating as of end of 2015.
- ✓ All Portland multifamily complexes are required to have recycling for a full range of residentially-generated materials.
 - For buildings with 5 or more units, City rules require a two-sort recycling system of commingled recycling and glass containers. Recycling containers must be as conveniently-located as garbage containers with clear signage.
 - The landlord/manager must provide written recycling information to all residents at least once per year and to all new residents within 30 days of their move-in.

Commercial Customer Rates

Since the commercial sector is a competitive marketplace, the City has no information on the rates that haulers charge commercial customers.

Training & Outreach

Commercial organizations

Portland's Sustainability at Work program provides assistance, resources and recognition to businesses in the City. The program features sustainability advisors that can come on-site to complete a comprehensive sustainability assessment, highlighting opportunities for more efficient commuting and energy and water use as well as increased sustainable purchasing, waste prevention, recycling, and food scrap collection. In a typical year, the program serves 1,000 businesses.

Since 2005, businesses in the City of Portland have been able to contract with waste haulers to collect food scraps through the Portland Composts! program. Sustainability at Work provides technical



assistance, training for employees, and free resources like posters and stickers for labeling collection sites.

A multifamily program team provides outreach to multifamily complexes to assist them to transition to a well-functioning program. Many educational materials are available for property managers to order, including tenant door bags with refrigerator magnets and information, common area posters, and metal signs to hang above recycling containers. Examples can be found at <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/529954>.

Hotline

BPS staff answer calls received on the Portland Curbside Hotline (503-823-7202) from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. This phone service provides information on both the residential curbside and commercial collection programs. BPS Hotline staff also offer email responses via wasteinfo@portlandoregon.gov. Callers to the Hotline and email correspondents are typically seeking information about residential or commercial recycling or garbage collection, but Hotline staff also handle complaints. In most cases customers and haulers are able to address issues on their own, but unresolved problems are passed on to BPS enforcement staff for investigation. In a typical year, about 10,140 calls and 1,300 emails are received.

Residential

BPS produces and mails the *Curbsider* to all residential garbage customers twice a year, in June and December. This full-color newsletter publicizes program information or changes. Find samples at <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/66089>.

BPS also houses the regional Master Recycler Program. This is a community education project to raise awareness of waste-related issues and ways to reduce waste through prevention, reuse, recycling, and composting. The program consists of an eight-week training (one night per week plus a couple of Saturday field trips) for interested community members. Upon completion of the training, each graduate must volunteer at least 30 hours to raise awareness of waste prevention in the community through education and outreach at local events and through individual projects. Master Recyclers have volunteered at Fix-It Fairs, regional compost demonstrations and bin sales, hazardous household waste roundups, computer recycling events, farmers' markets, workplace fairs, and many other events. More info at <http://www.masterrecycler.org/>.

Events

BPS provides assistance for event recycling at all major events at Portland's downtown Waterfront Park and other community events as requested.

Office Organization & Funding

City Solid Waste and Recycling Staff

22 full-time positions

- ✓ Management 2
- ✓ Communications 1
- ✓ Customer and Regulatory Services 5
- ✓ Program Development and Planning 3
- ✓ Sustainability at Work (business) 7
- ✓ Public Education and Outreach 4
 - 2 Residential



- 1 Multifamily / Events
- 1 Master Recycler program

Budget & Fees

The City collects both permit and tonnage fees from all permitted haulers and a franchise fee from the franchised residential haulers. The annual revenue of approximately \$3.5 million is dedicated to a Solid Waste Management Fund, managed by BPS. This does not include any hauler operating costs.

The residential franchise fee is 5% of gross residential revenue received by the franchisees. The commercial permit fee is \$350/year, and the commercial tonnage fee (\$9.60/ton) is assessed on solid waste collected from commercial accounts within Portland. The Solid Waste Management Fund is dedicated solely to “implement and administer Solid Waste, recycling, composting and sustainable development policies approved by the Council,” and is not mixed with Portland’s General Fund monies.

Other

In 1971, Oregon adopted the nation’s first Bottle Bill and the current redemption rate is approximately 70% of affected beer, soft-drink containers, and water bottles.

In 1990, Portland City Council banned the use of polystyrene foam containers for takeout food and food served on restaurant or food vendor premises, including grocery stores.

In 2011, Portland City Council banned plastic bags as checkout bags. Since 2012, the ban has included all retailers and food providers.

In the Portland area, a regional government agency, Metro, plays an important role in waste management. In addition to other activities, Metro has authority over all waste upon collection, owns two major local transfer stations and operates a centralized recycling and waste prevention information service by phone and website/email (mentioned above under drop-off info).

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality is responsible for ensuring that all local governments implement programs that achieve the recycling goals set by the state legislature.

Appendix

Categories of materials counted toward recycling in Portland:

- Antifreeze
- Appliances
- Carpet and carpet padding
- Christmas trees
- Electronics
- Food scraps
- Glass - window/non-container glass
- Glass containers
- Gypsum wallboard (drywall)
- Milk cartons and aseptic containers
- Metal containers
- Motor oil
- Newsprint and magazines
- OCC & Kraft bags
- Office pack/hi grade paper
- Oil filters
- Phone directories
- Plastic bottles and tubs
- Plastic film
- Roofing/tarpaper
- Salvage & used building materials
- Scrap metal
- Scrap paper
- Tires
- Wood/lumber
- Yard debris

