Pay-As-You-Throw/Save-Money-And-Reduce-Trash
PAYT/SMART Fast Facts

In a PAYT/SMART solid waste program, residents pay a per-unit fee for disposal of the solid waste that they generate. MassDEP has found that PAYT/SMART is the most effective mechanism for encouraging real waste reduction at the municipal level.

- There are now 145 municipalities out of 352 in Massachusetts that have adopted this approach, about 40%. Looking at this from a household viewpoint, PAYT/SMART covers 20% of the total households in the state. In each of these municipalities, solid waste tonnage was reduced by 25-50% through a combination of increased recycling, diversion to reuse, repair, donation, composting, and other methods of disposal.

- In CY2015 the average solid waste generated per household in PAYT/SMART municipalities was 1,092 lbs, only 64% of the 1,710 lbs per household average generated in municipalities without PAYT/SMART programs.

- According to the US Census there are 2,500,000 households in MA. If the remaining 80% of the households in the state had a PAYT/SMART as incentive to reduce their waste, reducing their trash generation to the average seen in existing SMART/PAYT municipalities, it would reduce the statewide trash by over 478,000 tons per year.

- The projected 618,000 tons per year of solid waste that could be avoided if the all MA municipalities implemented PAYT/SMART programs represents over $42 million in potential savings by municipalities, assuming an average disposal cost of $68 per ton.

Additional Information

Visit the MassDEP web site:


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1 PAYT/SMART households served number was extracted from MassDEP PAYT database. Where there was no data on the number of households served, the statewide average (70%) of total households in a PAYT/SMART municipality was used. U.S. Census figure of 2500000 was used for the total number of households in the Commonwealth.

2 The average pounds per year per household disposed of by PAYT/SMART municipalities is 1155 according to CY15 data submitted to MassDEP on the annual Waste and Recycling Survey required by the MassDEP grant program.

3 Calculation 618,000 = .80*2500000*(1710-1092)/2000

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Did you know?
Municipalities can receive technical assistance to evaluate and implement PAYT/SMART programs, and apply for grant funding for program start-up costs. Learn more at:
http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/recycle/grants/smrp-grants.html