



Massachusetts  
Department  
of  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION

## case study

# Town of Ashland Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) Program

*In a Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) solid waste program, residents purchase preprinted stickers or bags for disposal of trash, thereby paying directly for the amount of solid waste that they generate. There is no direct fee for recycling.*

<b>Community Population:</b>	14,645
<b>Households Served:</b>	5,500 (FY07)
<b>Services Provided:</b>	Weekly curbside trash and recycling collection

### Program Overview

- Annual curbside trash and recycling collection fee for residents is \$138. Seniors who qualify for abatement pay a \$48 fee.
- Annual fee provides collection of trash, unlimited weekly recycling, curbside collection of bulky waste and white goods, seasonal yard waste pick-up, and various drop-off options (see below).
- Residents pay \$1.30 per 33-gallon bag, \$0.75 per 14-gallon bag to cover the cost of Ashland's trash disposal.
- Orange PAYT bags with town seals are sold in packages of five.
- Program serves all residential dwellings up to four units and designated condominiums.

### History

- In the past, Ashland funded solid waste management through its tax base.
- In FY06 (before PAYT), the town initiated an annual fee of \$215 for weekly trash and biweekly recycling collection services.
- The town's solid waste and recycling contract expired at the end of FY06. A Request For Proposals (RFP) was developed, including an option to switch to PAYT, along with an option to collect single-stream recyclables on a weekly basis. Of the items quoted in the RFPs, PAYT and single-stream recycling collection proved to be the most cost-effective options for households served by the program. With PAYT, the new annual fee was \$138.
- Ashland initiated a weekly collection of single-stream recycling (all paper and co-mingled recyclable allowed in a single container) with the new PAYT program in July FY07. Residents may use recycling bins or containers 30 gallons or smaller if clearly marked for recycling.
- PAYT was considered as a way to control costs, make trash and recycling collection program more equitable, and reduce waste.

### Implementation

- The PAYT bag vendor manufactures bags, warehouses inventory, and delivers bags to stores. PAYT bags are distributed through eleven local retailers.
- The town pays the PAYT bag vendor the following rates to manufacture the PAYT bags (FY07 costs): \$0.21 per large 33 gallon bag, \$0.14 per small 14 gallon bag, sold in quantities of 200 bags per case.
- The PAYT bag vendor collects \$1.30 per large 33-gallon bag and \$0.75 per small 14-gallon bag for all bags sold to stores, and they keep revenues in lock box.
- The PAYT bag manufacturing costs covered by the town are recouped through the bag fees charged to residents.
- Bag revenues are sent to the town on a monthly basis.
- One "co-collection" truck picks up trash and recycling at the same time, and deposits these into two separate on-board compartments.

### **Administration & Enforcement**

- Revenue from bag sales and the annual fee go into a Solid Waste Enterprise Account. These revenue streams cover the cost of the entire residential trash and recycling collection program, including staff oversight.
- There has been no increase in illegal dumping in Ashland since the implementation of PAYT.

### **Additional Waste Services**

- White goods and bulky waste: One per month collected curbside by appointment (no fee).
- Waste oil, mercury-containing products, paint and batteries: Drop-off at DPW first Saturday of each month at no charge.
- Yard waste: Curbside collection offered six times in the spring and six times in the fall. Christmas trees are collected curbside over a two-week period in January.
- Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event: Held yearly in May.
- Electronics and cathode ray tubes (CRTs): Special drop-off collections held four times per year, first Saturday in April, June, August, and October at DPW (fee).

#### **Waste Reduction Results in First Year (FY'07)**

- Trash decreased 1,986 tons (38 percent).
- Recycling increased 957 tons (98 percent).
- Ashland's recycling rate (=Recycling/(Solid Waste+Recycling)) went from 13 percent to 39 percent after PAYT was implemented.
- In the first year, 294,250 large bags and 171,000 small bags were shipped to local retailers.

#### **Financial Results**

- Ashland saved over \$139,000 in disposal costs in their first year of PAYT.

### **For More Information**

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