



# Case Study

## Town of Needham Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) Drop-off Program

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

<b>Community Population:</b>	28,911
<b>Households Served:</b>	8,500
<b>Services Provided:</b>	Drop-off trash and recycling

### Background:

The Town of Needham operates a large municipal transfer station. Known as the Recycling and Transfer Station (RTS), it is open 5 days a week (Tuesday – Saturday). Approximately 45% of Needham households use the RTS to dispose of solid waste and recyclables. Other residents use private haulers for subscription curbside trash and recycling. Private haulers must be permitted by the town, provide recycling to their customers and comply with the waste bans. Most of the private haulers operating in Needham tip solid waste and recyclables at the RTS. The waste bans are aggressively enforced through inspection of bags in commercial truckloads and inspections for loose cardboard and other banned items.

### Overview of PAYT Program

- Needham operates the largest drop-off PAYT program in the state
- Bags cost is \$0.85 for a 15 gallon bag and \$1.60 for a 30 gallon bag; sold in packages of 10 each.
- Residents must also purchase a \$90 annual sticker for access to the RTS.
- Charge for large bulky items drop-off is \$5 each; small bulky items that won't fit in a PAYT bag may be disposed of at no cost.
- Residents bringing in large quantities of bulky waste or doing clean-outs pay \$135/ton.
- Commercial haulers also pay the Town \$135/ton to tip solid waste. There is no charge to tip recyclables.
- Needham transports its solid waste to Wheelabrator Millbury for disposal.

### History:

- A 1995 consent order required the Town to close their landfill
- Residents were surveyed on whether to set up a transfer station or implement curbside collection. Residents supported the transfer station.
- In 1998, the Town Administrator proposed PAYT; after two meetings, the Selectmen voted it in.

### Trash and Recycling Tonnage Impacts

- In FY98, the transfer station received 13,448 tons of trash. In FY99, with PAYT, trash tonnage dropped to 6,770 tons – a 50% decrease.
- FY98 recycling tonnage was 3,845. With PAYT, in FY99 recycling tonnage increased to 4,286 or 11%.
- In the subsequent 5 years, trash tonnage gradually increased but stayed at 40% less than pre-PAYT levels.
- Recycling continued to rise, reaching a 30% increase over pre-PAYT levels.

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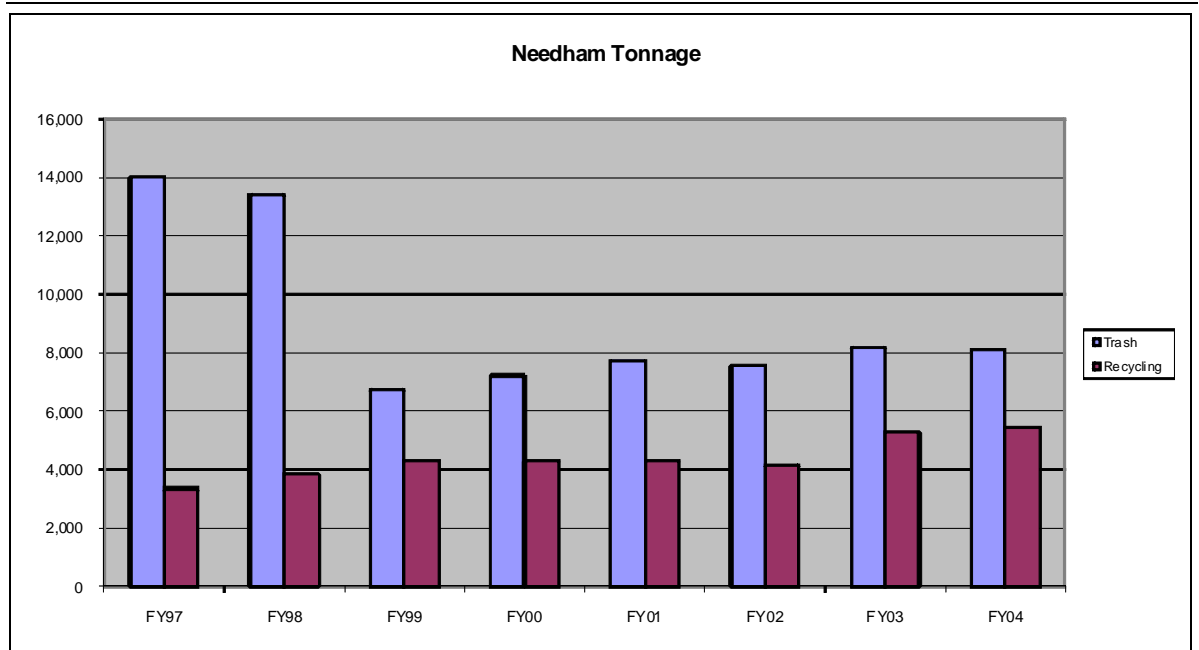
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**Administration and Finance:**

- Town purchases, inventories and distributes yellow bags to 7 Needham retailers. There is no mark-up for retailers.
- All bag revenue (and transfer station revenue) goes into the General Fund.

**Other Materials Accepted at Transfer Station:** The RTS accepts a wide range of separated materials for recycling, many at no additional cost to residents.

- Automotive wastes (used oil and antifreeze, oil filters, oily rags, lead acid batteries)
- Non-CRT electronic equipment (VCRs, computers, DVD players)
- Rechargeable batteries
- Leaves/yard waste
- Oil and latex paint, stains, varnishes, thinners
- Mercury bearing products
- Tires (\$3 to \$6)
- Propane tanks (\$3 each)
- CRT TVs and monitors (\$10/each)
- Refrigerators, air conditioners, dehumidifiers (\$15/each)
- The RTS has a successful swap shop called the Re-Use-It.
- Two sizes of backyard compost bins are available for purchase (\$15 and \$20)
- Recycling bins are available for purchase for \$5 each (for transporting recyclables to the RTS). Use is not required.

**For more information contact:**

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