

Chapter 5

Future Strategies Sustaining the System

The collaborative efforts of many varied sources have contributed to Cumberland County's advancements made in solid waste management. A comprehensive infrastructure of transporters, processors and disposal facilities has grown in response to regulatory initiatives and the ever changing composition of the municipal waste stream. More than sufficient disposal capacity in waste to energy and/or state of the art landfills has been secured for the County's needs. Numerous successful programs have been implemented in an effort to meet the state's recycling goals. Unique services even address those select components of the waste stream that require special handling.

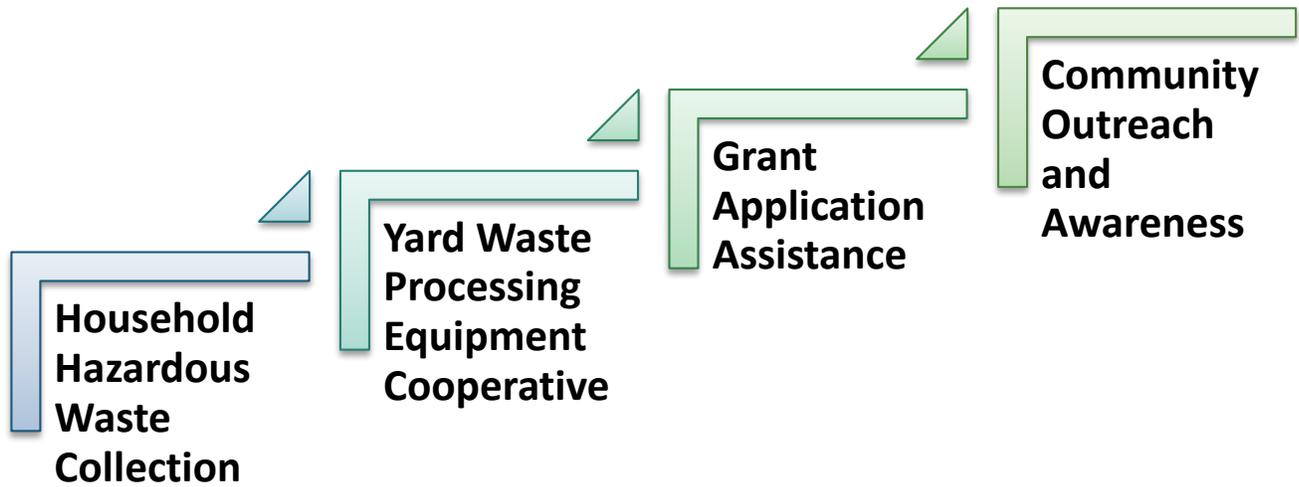
Details about these programs were provided in the description of the existing solid waste management and recycling system discussed in an historic context throughout the earlier chapters of the Plan. A benchmark year was used to analyze current programs and to provide a snapshot in time of local performance. This section is more forward thinking. Its purpose is to react to the findings of the program review and offer a response plan.

STAYING THE COURSE

Overall, little to no change is anticipated in Cumberland County's approach to waste management and recycling. The County will remain responsible for securing disposal capacity. During the planning process solicitations were made for proposals and subsequently agreements were executed with numerous facilities. The County will facilitate the growth of cost effective and comprehensive residential curbside collection programs. However, the responsibility for implementing those programs and procuring those services remains with the municipalities. Similarly, the County encourages the development of new business to business services, but ultimately commercial establishments make those choices and secure collection and processing contracts with the provider (s) of their choice.

The County will maintain support of its own existing programs, provided that local conditions at any given time are not cost prohibitive. Figure 5-1 lists those ongoing programs and services, previously described in detail, which will remain in service.

FIGURE 5-1 CONTINUATION OF COUNTY LEVEL PROGRAMS



FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS AND TIMELINE

Meetings were held with the Solid Waste Advisory Committee to gain insight on local perceptions regarding solid waste management practices and expectations for programs and services. Members of the Cumberland County Recycling & Waste Authority, who serve in an advisory capacity to the County, also participated. The discussions revealed a few issues that deserve future consideration. This section reviews those items and offers recommended courses of action for each.

DISCARDED ELECTRONIC DEVICES

With the implementation of the Covered Device Recycling Act 108 of 2010 an increase in the recovery of discarded electronic devices is expected. Specifically, desktop computers, monitors, laptops, computer peripherals and televisions have been banned from disposal. Manufacturers have a responsibility to recycle 100% of their equivalent market share of device sales in each year. This is to occur with no additional “end of life” disposal fee to the consumer. To acquire their quotas, manufacturers have entered into agreements with broker/processors to recover and document the amounts. These processors in turn have also entered into agreements with local governments to sponsor collection events. In many cases the events have become revenue generators. The Cumberland County Department of

Recycling & Waste Management will be commissioning a study in 2013 to determine best practices and roles for county agencies in facilitating compliance with the CDRA.

TIRES, WHITE GOODS AND BULKY ITEMS

According to Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, some of the most common items found in illegal dump sites are white goods (appliances), household furnishings, mattresses, and tires. Studies show that when outlets are readily available to accept these materials, the incidence of illegal dumping decreases. An illegal dump survey conducted in Cumberland County confirms those statistics.

Many municipalities include the collection of large items as part of their regular curbside collection programs. Although this is a convenience, it forces all residents to pay for the privilege of the service whether or not it is ever used. Others offer seasonal clean-ups where items are collected at the curb or at a central drop-off location. Residents in these communities must hold their items until the collection event is scheduled. If the service is not provided at curbside, only those with a mechanism to transport the items to the collection event benefit. Communities tend to pay for these events, which can be costly, from the general fund. Those with subscription collection service are dependent on the willingness of their service provider to accept these materials, often at a premium price. There are areas of the County, where the collection of white goods, tires and other bulky items is not readily available.

During the planning process, discussions focused on mechanisms to address the needs in the areas of the County where no service was available. A additional concern was the need to provide options for residents countywide whose circumstances dictate immediate removal of the materials. One solution is to enlist scrap dealers to provide discount pick-ups of materials if scheduled through the County Department or Authority. An alternative is for the Department or Authority to derive some revenue for coordinating the on-call pick-up service. Finally, the Authority could provide this service directly. During the planning period the Authority should conduct an investigation and analysis to determine the best fit for Cumberland County. This activity is anticipated to occur in planning year 2015.

MAINTENANCE AND REPLACEMENT OF YARD WASTE EQUIPMENT

Arguably the most valued service that the County provides to the municipalities is the yard waste processing equipment cooperative. This program has saved countless dollars of the Recycling Fund and local general funds from being spent on unnecessary duplicate equipment in Cumberland County. The County has traditionally borne the bulk of the maintenance costs through revenues realized via landfill administrative tipping fees. Equipment replacement was reliant on Act 101 Section 902 grant funding. With the discontinuation of the administrative fees and a diminishing reserve balance, the County can no longer assume the

full costs of the maintenance program. Fewer and more competitive grant rounds have decreased the opportunities to secure equipment replacements as needed.

To ensure that the program continues to offer safe and efficient equipment, the County needs to conduct current costs assessments of this operation. End of life projections should be made far in advance and a portion of the annual budget should consider these future needs. As the beneficiaries of this service, municipalities have realized lower market costs. To sustain the program moving forward, user fees need to more accurately represent the true full costs. A formula or some other mechanism based on use should be established for an annual stipend from the municipalities, which would be dedicated to this purpose. This action will begin in 2013 and continue each year of the planning period.

RESIDENTIAL CURBSIDE COLLECTION

Residential waste and recycling curbside collection services are beyond the normal jurisdiction of the County. However, that does not preclude the County from providing support to municipalities desiring to expand their services, switch to a Pay As You Throw (PAYT) rate structure, or issue its first request for competitive bids for collection service. The County should consider organized forums to foster peer to peer exchanges with municipal officials. These meetings could be used to expose municipal officials to new concepts, regulatory initiatives, and best practices. This action is anticipated to begin in 2014.

With the availability of single stream recycling, which dramatically increases the types and amounts of recyclable materials collected, Cumberland County communities have the ability to reverse the traditional sizes of the waste and recycling containers. 96-gallon recycling containers have become commonplace in curbside programs throughout Pennsylvania and the nation. Municipalities benefit when ownership of these carts is retained by the political jurisdiction. Ownership levels the competitive bidding for waste and recycling collection. It also prevents unneeded chaos during vendor transition. The County should assist municipalities in obtaining grant funding for at least a portion of the cart purchases. Such support is ongoing and thus will commence in 2013 and continue throughout the planning period.

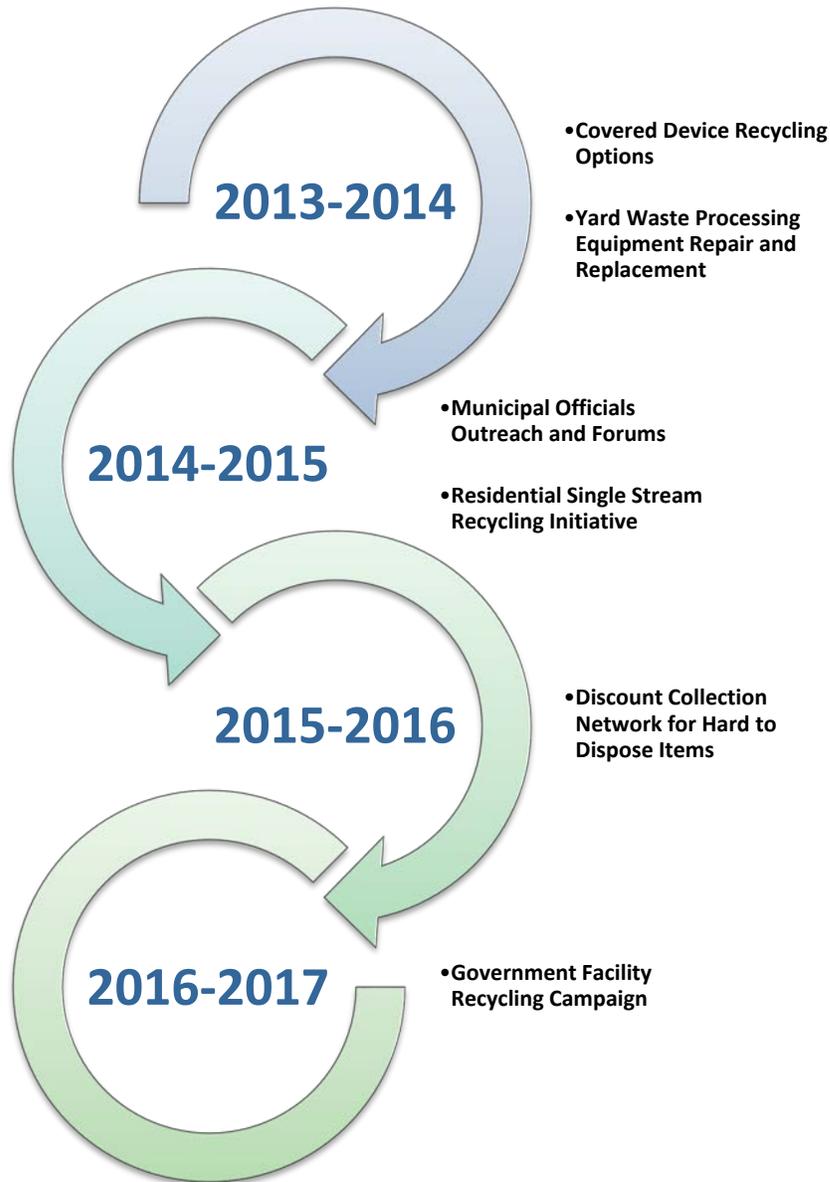
RECYCLING IN GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

Improving the participation rate of facilities at all levels of government to recycle was considered important in the advisory discussions. During the planning period, the County should establish an outreach campaign targeted at government facilities in non-mandated communities. Some of these efforts could also be used to expand school recycling in the same community. Joint marketing of recyclable materials might even be considered. This campaign is anticipated for launching in 2016-2017.

SUMMARY

Overall, Cumberland County has demonstrated success in the implementation of municipal waste and recycling programs. By making these minor adjustments, an even greater increase in the recovery of recyclable materials should occur.

FIGURE 5-2 PROJECTED LAUNCH OF FUTURE PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS





“Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.”

William James, 19th century American philosopher and psychologist