

2020 SWS PROGRAMS

An overview of waste diversion and sustainability programs conducted by the Municipality of Anchorage Solid Waste Services



Programs included are curbside organics, community compost, ASD recycling, commercial glass, communications, and grant funding for a compost feasibility study.



CURBSIDE ORGANICS

THIRD
YEAR OF
PROGRAM

Curbside Organics registration opened in the spring for SWS customers. Participants were able to dispose of fruits and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, eggshells, as well as garden scraps and yard debris into pink bins for curbside pick-up.

Participants in the program were first serviced May 7 and 8. Organics collections were taken to the Anchorage Regional Landfill where a 40-foot roll off container was staged to accept materials. The container was hauled twice a week to Moffitt Farms in Palmer.

The last collection for 2020 was serviced Oct. 29 and 30.

321 NEW
PARTICIPANTS
IN 2020

1,100 TOTAL
PARTICIPANTS
IN 2020



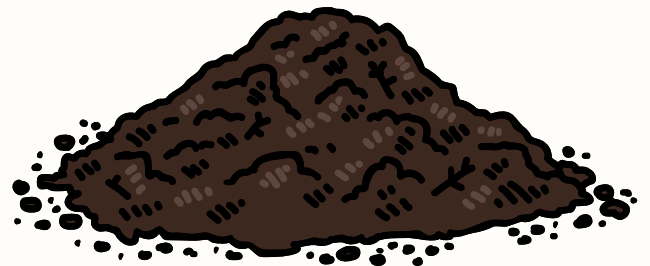
CURBSIDE ORGANICS

A participant survey conducted at the end of the program had 418 responses. Many customers enjoyed the program and would like to see it expanded.

**SWS TOTAL
COLLECTION:
320.93 TONS**

**ALASKA WASTE
TOTAL
COLLECTION:
55.77 TONS**

“
I don't know how you could improve the service. I am quite satisfied and love the program. I love my pink cart. I also have one at a rental property and allow a neighbor to also use it. I can vouch for her that she appreciates the service.
”



**641,740 POUNDS
COMPOSTED**

**AVERAGED
97.25 POUNDS
PER
HOUSEHOLD
PER MONTH**

COMMUNITY COMPOST

**FIFTH YEAR
OF
PROGRAM**

- The program was offered during the same season as curbside organics from May-October. Community compost sites opened at both the Anchorage Regional Landfill and the Central Transfer Station.
- Anchorage residents were able to visit these sites to drop-off their food scraps including fruits and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, and eggshells.
- Both sites had finished compost available to participants for free pick-up at the beginning of the season, but the compost supply ran out in late July.



COMMUNITY COMPOST

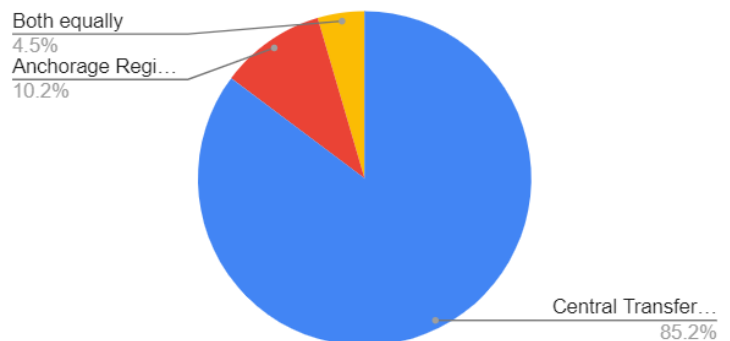
A participant survey conducted at the end of the program had 88 responses. It was clear that some participants were frustrated with not being able to get finished compost. SWS is considering a different approach to making finished compost available so that it does not run out before the season is over.

Total hauls: 11 hauls (2 from ARL/ 9 CTS)

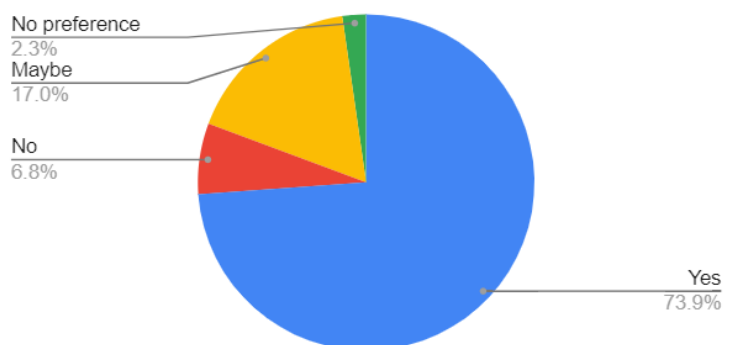
Average tonnage per haul: 2.75 tons

2020 Tonnage: 20.31

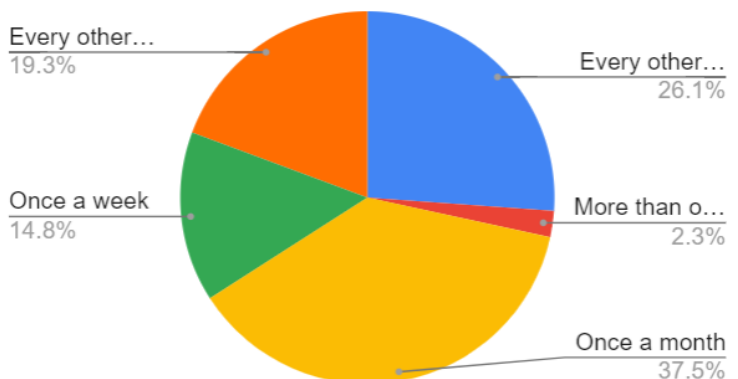
Count of Which drop-off site do you visit more frequently?



Would you still participate in Community Compost if finished compost was not offered?

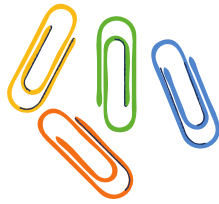


How often do you visit?



ASD RECYCLING

In 2020 SWS worked with Alaska Waste and the Anchorage School District to support an ASD Recycling Coordinator position.



The Recycling Coordinator puts out a monthly newsletter for staff and students that includes recycling educational tools.



- In September, ASD added a drop-off site at East High School that has shown high participation since being opened. This site allows drop-off of mixed paper, cardboard, aluminum cans, plastic bottles and jugs, and glass.
- Work is being done to set up another recycling drop-off site at a high school in South Anchorage.



**Glass island containers
at East High School**

COMMERCIAL GLASS RECYCLING

57,000 POUNDS OF
RECYCLABLE MATERIAL
COLLECTED FROM
COMMERCIAL BUSINESSES
IN 2020

The program provides 96-
gallon roll carts for glass
that are serviced once a
week with the option for
twice weekly.

**ARE YOU UP TO THE TASK?
RECYCLE YOUR GLASS!**



The service allows businesses to
benefit by saving money through
reducing dumpster size and/or
collection frequency.

Glass is recycled locally by Central
Recycling Services. Recycled glass
aggregate is used in local construction
projects and one of the few materials
that stays in Southcentral Alaska.



USDA GRANT

Solid Waste Services was awarded \$90,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for a compost feasibility study and organics collection expansion project.



- Over 500 applications were received and SWS was one of 23 projects funded by this first-ever grant.
- The SWS project includes a feasibility study and implementation plan for a municipal-scale composting operation at the Anchorage Regional Landfill, including an education campaign in partnership with the Alaska Food Policy Council, Alaska Waste, and Central Recycling Services.



An additional 500 roll carts will be purchased for Curbside Organics with funding from the grant.





Digital animation characters Moose and Squirrel will be featured in 6 videos used by SWS.

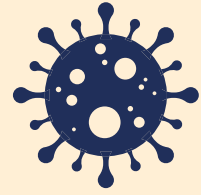
The media campaign will launch in spring of 2021 and will include local commercials, radio spots, and social media post content to inform residents about sustainability and recycling initiatives in Anchorage.

COMMUNICATIONS

- In 2020 SWS secured funding to begin work on a media campaign with communication agency Northwest Strategies.
- SWS also maintains communications messaging on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Since January of 2020, SWS has gained about 600 followers on Facebook.

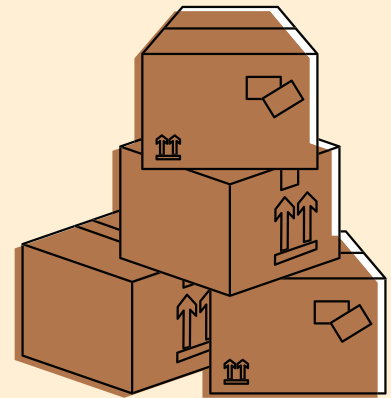
CHALLENGES

In March of 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic became a major disruption to some of the work and projects SWS was able to accomplish.



One of the challenges related to the pandemic was communication. Lacking the ability to hold in-person events communication had to be limited to virtual communication and social media.

There has been a noted uptick in recycling drop-off site use and also a rise in recycling drop-off violations.



The Anchorage Municipality dispatched three members of the sustainability team to assist the Emergency Operations Center in dealing with public health policy and coordination

CARDBOARD

In 2020 Anchorage residents could recycle there used cardboard pizza boxes for the first time.

Recycle your
empty pizza boxes



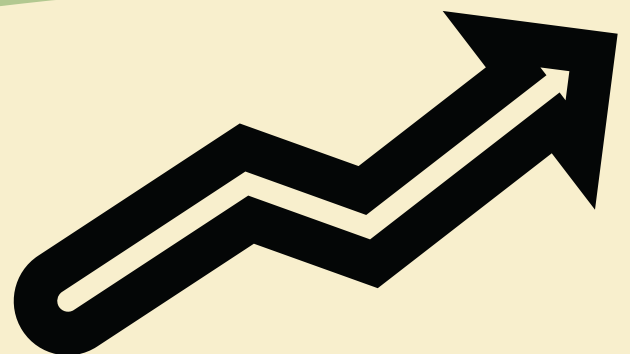
AN EMERGING ISSUE



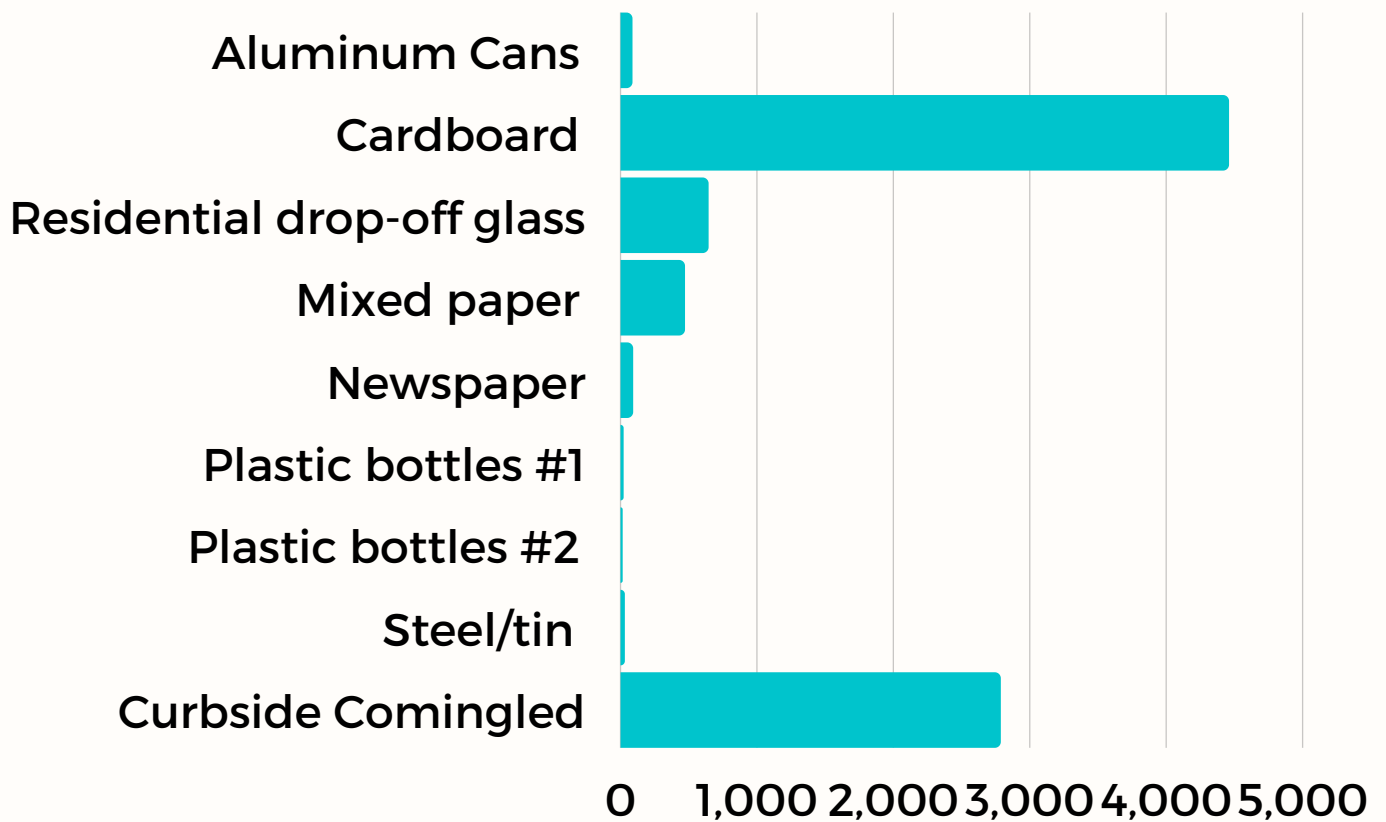
SWS has seen violators who have not broken down boxes and left cardboard material on the ground at the site.

Since the pandemic began, E-Commerce has been on the rise and percentage of online retail sales in the U.S. jumped 5.5% in 2020.

This so called "box boom" means more residents have cardboard piling up.

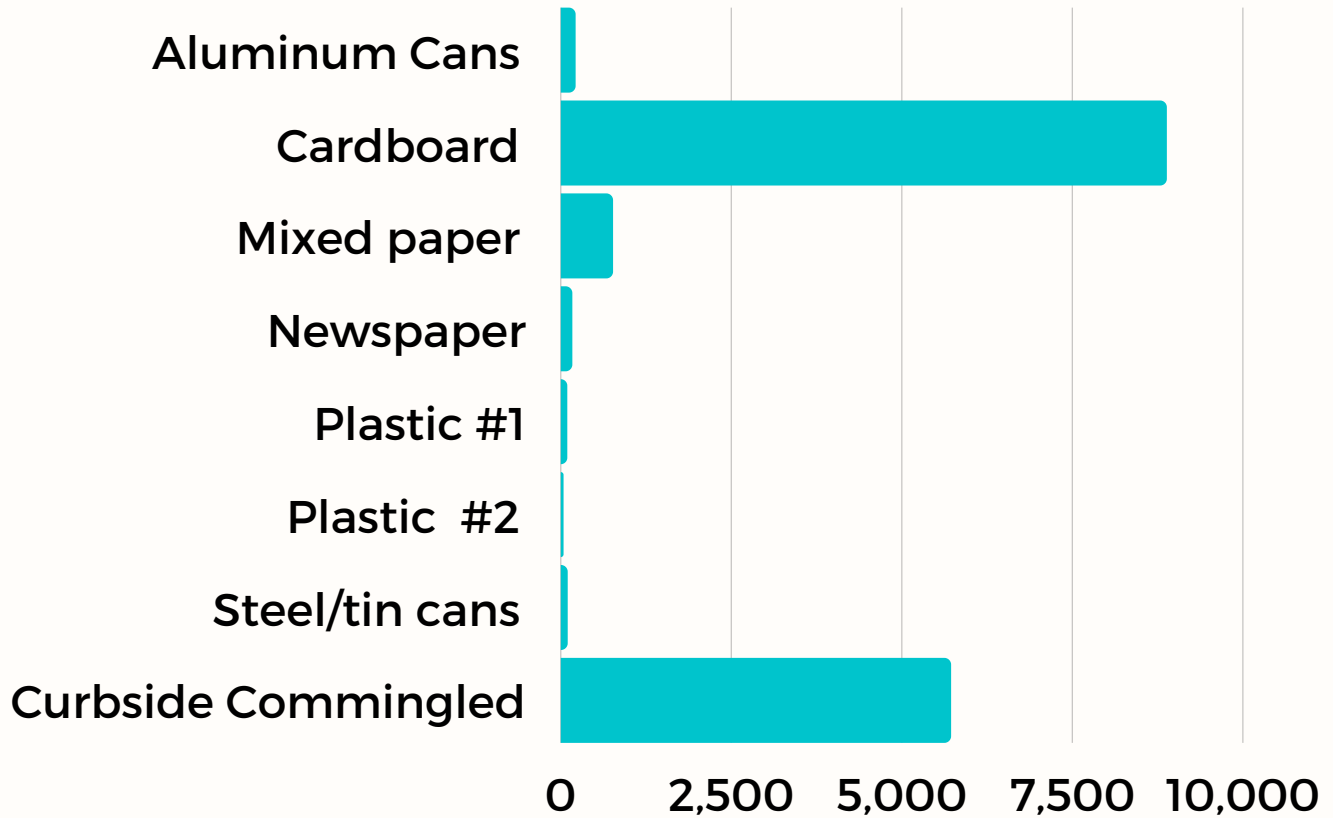


RECYCLING TONNAGES (ANCHORAGE RECYCLING CENTER)



Aluminum Cans	83
Cardboard	4456
Mixed Paper	468
Newspaper	88
Plastic #1	18
Plastic #2	11
Steel Cans	27
Curbside Commingled	2783

RECYCLING TONNAGES (WESTROCK CENTRAL RECYCLING SERVICES)



Aluminum Cans	8876
Cardboard	757
Mixed Paper	160
Newspaper	5713
Plastic #1	86
Plastic #2	31
Steel Cans	208
Curbside Commingled	92



www.muni.org/sws
(907) 343-6250

recycle@muni.org