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 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.

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.

SWS TOTAL COLLECTION: 320.93 TONS

ALASKA WASTE TOTAL COLLECTION: 55.77 TONS

AVERAGED 97.25 POUNDS PER HOUSEHOLD PER MONTH

641,740 POUNDS COMPOSTED
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.
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
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.
The program provides 96-gallon roll carts for glass that are serviced once a week with the option for twice weekly.

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.
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.
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.

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

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.

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

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

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

SWS has seen violators who have not broken down boxes and left cardboard material on the ground at the site.
RECYCLING TONNAGES (ANCHORAGE RECYCLING CENTER)

- Aluminum Cans: 83
- Cardboard: 4456
- Residential drop-off glass:
- Mixed paper:
- Newspaper: 88
- Plastic bottles #1: 18
- Plastic bottles #2: 11
- Steel/tin:
- Curbside Commingled: 2783
### Recycling Tonnages

**WestRock Central Recycling Services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Tonnage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aluminum Cans</td>
<td>8876</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cardboard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed Paper</td>
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<td>Newspaper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plastic #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plastic #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steel Cans</td>
<td>208</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curbside Commingled</td>
<td>92</td>
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