

Countywide Municipal Solid Waste Management Plan Updates

Background: In 2014 the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) approved a major revision of the York County Municipal Waste Management Plan (the “Plan”) required under Act 101 of 1988. Many tasks set forth in the Plan are in progress, some have been completed, and other items are assessed on an ongoing basis. The following describes updates issued to date on Plan implementation. The Authority will provide Plan updates to the public via our website as tasks are completed.

Plan Update-June 2017:

- The Authority’s hauler licensing program has been replaced with a hauler registration program. The registration program enables the Authority to collect information from those managing municipal waste and recyclable materials, in order to facilitate Plan implementation.
- The Authority, through the York County Disaster Debris Management Plan developed by the York County Department of Emergency Services (with input from the Authority and other key stakeholders), has provided for outlets for disaster debris either at the York County Resource Recovery Center or other appropriate contingency facilities.
- To assist municipalities in facilitating the practice of recycling at community events, the Authority distributed an event recycling survey to all 72 municipalities aimed at determining how and if, event recycling efforts are implemented across the county, as required by Act 101. The Authority will use this information to determine how recycling at community events can be improved.
- The Authority distributed a school recycling survey to all 16 York County School Districts to obtain information about school recycling programs and assess needs. The Authority will use this information to determine how recycling in schools can be improved.
- The Authority has completed an assessment of how white goods are managed throughout York County and will continue to track future trends going forward. It was determined that for the foreseeable future, the collection and management of white goods in York County is effective and will remain as is.
- The Authority assesses remaining waste capacity in York County on an ongoing basis. With respect to municipal solid waste, extended capacity (within at least a 10-year planning horizon), exists at the York County Resource Recovery Center. That said, the Authority is currently in the midst of a Site Improvement Construction Project that will enhance the infrastructure and increase customer service at the York County Resource Recovery Center (RRC) and associated facilities. The RRC site improvement project includes the following components:

Scalehouse Relocation

A new scalehouse will feature four scales instead of two to allow more automation for commercial haulers, more efficient communications with customers and quicker service. The new scalehouse will be located closer to the tipping hall thus alleviating traffic congestion at the site entrance.

Customer Convenience Area

A new customer convenience area of more than four acres has been constructed to the west of the tipping hall. This area includes a waste bunker to serve small haulers, boxes for the placement of certain special

wastes and recyclable materials and space to accept dedicated loads of yard waste. The electronics recycling collection program will also be conducted in this area and will expand to seven days a week during RRC business hours.

Tipping Hall and Pit Expansion

Expansion of the tipping hall and waste storage pit comprises a major portion of the RRC site improvement project. The tipping hall has been expanded to the north and west, and will allow transfer trailers to off-load without interfering with the operations of local haulers, thus enhancing facility safety. The waste storage pit is being expanded to the north to serve traffic on the expanded tipping floor, and to provide the Authority greater flexibility in managing fluctuations in waste generation among our customers. The crane system that delivers waste to the processing trains will be modified to accommodate the expanded tipping hall and pit.

Warehouse and Maintenance Shop; Mechanical Upgrades

Warehouse and maintenance facilities have been relocated to make room for the tipping hall and pit expansion. The RRC's boiler water treatment system will be replaced with newer technology and new air compressors will be installed and relocated to better serve the facility.

Education Center

Thousands of people tour the RRC every year to learn how municipal waste is managed in the county and how that system impacts our environment and quality of life. A new education center has been constructed to better serve the large number of school students, civic groups, and individuals who tour the RRC.

Environmental Improvements

Systems are being installed to capture a portion of site storm water runoff for reuse in the process. Properly managed and maintained, the RRC will serve York County's municipal waste processing needs for many decades. The site improvements now being planned will not only provide the current benefits described above, but also prepare the facility for future expansion and the eventual replacement of existing waste processing capacity. Investments made in the facility now will benefit York County for years to come.

In addition to the initiation of the Resource Recovery Center site improvement project, the Authority broke ground for an Ash Processing and Recycling Facility in August, 2016 and the facility is expected to be completed in 2018. The Authority will construct the facility while York Reduction Systems, LP will provide and operate the technology and processing equipment.

The ash facility will increase recovery of recyclable materials contained in the ash. The process will result in the harvesting of viable commodities (such as aggregate, metal and glass), out of the municipal waste combustion ash and will further reduce the overall remaining volume of ash that must be managed in a landfill.

Finally, the Authority, owner of the RRC, and Covanta York Renewable Energy Systems, LLC, operator of the RRC, have extended their long-term operation and maintenance contract through 2035 for the RRC. Ongoing investments in the facility will continue to ensure the facility maintains rigorous performance and safety standards and reliable operations for decades to come. The extension reflects the successful and mutually beneficial long-term collaboration between the Authority and Covanta, the largest Waste-to-Energy company in the country. The agreement became effective January 1, 2016 and ensures that Covanta will continue providing first-class maintenance and operation of the facility, ensuring continued stability and reduced business risk in the area of waste and materials management for York County, its residents and the Authority.

Plan Update-March 2019:

- The Authority, through the York County Disaster Debris Management Plan developed by the York County Department of Emergency Services (with input from the Authority and other key stakeholders), has provided for outlets for disaster debris either at the York County Resource Recovery Center or other appropriate contingency facilities. In 2019, the Authority's Permits and Safety Coordinator became an advisory member serving on the York County Emergency Management Program Advisory Committee. This committee recognizes that emergency preparedness efforts must be collaborative and must respond as a system to provide the greatest service to those in need in York County. This committee provides non-binding program oversight and makes recommendations for policy as it relates to the emergency management program. Participation on this committee further enables the Authority to integrate with other critical county agencies and enhance our ability to respond efficiently to the management of disaster debris.
- In June 2018, commercial recycling haulers eliminated certain recyclables from the recycling stream due to China's ban on contaminated recyclables. China's new rules severely restrict the levels of contamination allowed in the recyclable material they accept. These changes have challenged the recycling industry in the US and globally. For example, bales of mixed paper were allowed to have approximately 5% contamination in them, or 92 pounds of trash in a 1,850 pound bale of recycled paper. Beginning in 2018, China changed those restrictions to a 0.5% contamination rate, or 9 pounds of trash in a 1,850 pound bale of recycled paper. Consequently, recyclers are now having a difficult time meeting these requirements and a lack of US-based end users is complicating this problem. An increase in recycling residuals (material collected for recycling but not recycled) is being monitored by the Authority with respect to its potential impact on available capacity at the York County Resource Recovery Center. Overall, the Authority has observed a 33% increase in deliveries of processible York County waste since the Plan update was approved in 2014. This increase is due to a variety of factors including population growth, a healthy economy, wet weather in 2018, and expanding service to York County manufacturing and construction waste generators.
- To assist municipalities in facilitating the practice of recycling at community events, the Authority distributed an event recycling survey to all 72 municipalities aimed at determining the extent to which community event recycling efforts are implemented across the county. The Authority received responses from 28 of the 72 municipalities. Those responses included 11 townships, 16 boroughs and the City of York. Half of the respondents require community event recycling by way of an ordinance, 15 offer assistance to event organizers, 10 provide educational material to event organizers and 11 indicated they would be interested in exploring opportunities for community event recycling.
- The Authority distributed a school recycling survey to all 16 York County School Districts to obtain information about school recycling programs and assess needs. Ten school districts responded. All respondents indicated they implement a school recycling program throughout the district although in some cases, not all schools within the district participate. Eight school districts collect recyclables via single stream and two source-separate. Materials collected vary from school district to school district, but all include office paper, which is no longer accepted by commercial recycling haulers due to China's ban, so unless districts directly deliver office paper to outlets in York County that still accept it, it may not be getting recycled. All districts indicated they would be receptive to receiving educational materials to assist with in-school recycling efforts. The majority of the responding school districts cited the cost of in-school recycling as a challenge.
- The Authority assesses remaining waste capacity in York County on an ongoing basis and tracks waste generation rates closely. With respect to municipal solid waste, extended capacity exists at the York County Resource Recovery Center. In 2018 the Authority reached substantial completion of the Site Improvement Project at the York County Resource Recovery Center Complex (YCRRC). This project set the foundation for future expansion at the YCRRC when the need for additional capacity

is identified. In addition to the completion of the site improvement project, the new Ash Recycling and Processing Facility came online in mid-2018. The ash facility will recover recyclable materials contained in the ash, including construction aggregates and metals, further reducing the overall remaining volume of ash that must be managed in a landfill.

Plan Update-February 2021

- In 2021, a review of the Plan was conducted to assess the validity of assumptions and recommendations.
- The Disaster Debris Management Plan is reviewed annually to ensure it is accurate and adequate and correctly identifies appropriate disposal facilities and maintains by-pass agreements with facilities to accept excess volumes of disaster debris.
- Staff are in the process of assessing the weight of local municipal solid waste streams between 2014-2020 to determine changes in the potential for energy recovery from available materials.
- Staff are tracking biosolids, sludge and septage generation via transporter reports required by our hauler registration program. The goal is to project York County's future waste management requirements for capacity for these materials.
- Staff are monitoring and providing support for the municipal waste and recycling contract bidding process. Staff have analyzed data to identify which municipalities are paying less for these services and which have high recycling rates and follow best practices. Staff have identified those best practices and have generated a document and shared it with municipalities. On an ongoing basis, staff review municipal ordinances to ensure they align with waste and recycling collection contracts and review municipal meeting minutes to determine how many companies bid on these service contracts.