United States Environmental Protection Agency
Solid Waste and Emergency Response (5306W)
EPA-530-F-99-017f
October 1999
www.epa.gov/osw

Crockett, Texas

52% Residential Waste Reduction

Overview

Prior to 1992, Crockett contracted with a private company for waste collection and disposal, and no materials were recovered for recycling or composting. The city ended its contract with the private company in 1992 with the belief that city staff could provide trash, recycling, and composting services at a lower cost. City staff now provide all city residents with twice weekly trash collection and once weekly recycling and yard debris collection. City ordinance requires residents of the city to source-separate designated materials for recycling and composting. The ordinance also requires residents to use clear bags for trash, recycling, and yard debris; which allows collectors to easily identify improperly prepared materials. The city processes all recyclables and yard debris in its own facility, markets recyclables directly to end users and retains all revenue from material sales. In 1996, Crockett recycled 20% and composted 32% of its residential waste stream. The city achieved this high diversion rate at a cost similar to what it formerly paid its contractor. The net cost of solid waste services has slightly decreased from $72 per household in 1991 to $69 in 1996.

DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION: 8300 (1996)

HOUSEHOLDS: 3,292 (1996); 2,834 in single-family dwellings and duplexes, 459 in multi-family dwellings

Keys to High Waste Reduction

Crockett's mandatory, weekly curbside recycling and composting programs; the use of clear bags for trash, composting, and recycling; and continuous resident education have contributed to the city's high diversion level. Crockett's local recycling ordinance designates 20 categories of materials that residents must recycle and requires residents to separate yard debris for recovery. The clear bags allow collection staff to see contamination in bags of recyclables and yard debris and to see if designated materials are mixed in trash set out for collection. Crews refuse collection of improperly set out materials and tag them to

RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM SUMMARY

	1991	1996
Tons Per Year	3,450	2,711
Percent Diverted	0%	52%
Recycled	0%	20%
Composted	0%	32%
Average lbs./HH/day	6.10	4.51
Net Program Costs/HH	$71.94	$68.71
Disposal Services	$71.94	$24.64
Diversion Services	$0	$44.07

Notes: 3,100 households served in 1991; 3,293 in 1996. 1991 dollars adjusted to 1996 dollars using the GDP deflator. Numbers may not add to total due to rounding.

Source: Institute for Local Self-Reliance, 1999.

explain to residents why they were not collected. These tags provide city crews opportunities to provide residents education and feedback when it is most needed. The city also publicizes waste reduction and public participation strategies using radio, newspaper, and other written materials.

Cost-Effectiveness

In 1991, the cost (in 1996 dollars) to the city to have a private company collect and dispose its trash was $223,000 or $72 per household. In 1996, total solid waste costs were $250,254 but were offset by $24,000 in revenues so that net solid waste management costs were $69 per household. In 1996, trash collection and disposal costs were $62 per ton, net recycling costs were $144 per ton, and composting costs were $78 per ton. Crockett's program cost-effectiveness is enhanced by high diversion levels, the dual-collection of recyclables and yard debris, and the city processing and marketing its own recyclables. High diversion reduces the need for hauling trash to the landfill 55 miles away, especially yard debris diversion as the material is composted and used locally. City crews collect recyclables and yard debris on the same truck, eliminating the need for separate truck fleets and collection crews. By processing and marketing its own materials, the city retains all revenue from the sale of recyclables.

Source: Institute for Local Self-Reliance, 1999.

MATERIALS RECOVERED

CURBSIDE:

newspapers, magazines, corrugated cardboard
mixed paper (phone books, paperboard, office paper, envelopes, mail)
glass containers
scrap metal
aluminum foil and plates
cans including empty aerosol cans
all plastics
white goods not containing freon
used motor oil
leaves, brush, grass clippings, and other yard debris

DROP-OFF:

all materials accepted in curbside program plus oil filters

Yard trimmings composting in piles at the Crockett Recycling Center

Tips for Replication

Secure the best possible markets for recyclables.

Use clear bags to make contamination evident.

Be creative.

Allow commingling.

Build positive relationships with the public.

Contact

Buddy Robinson
Solid Waste Director
City of Crockett
200 North Fifth
Crockett, TX 75835
PHONE: 409-544-5156 (office), 409-544-4025 (center)
FAX: 409-544-4976