



Solid Waste & Recycling Collection

2010 Solid Waste Management Update

Waste Collection

Local governments have an array of options to choose from when providing for waste collection services. A significant minority of local governments continue to provide the service themselves, and many partner with the private sector to manage the waste generated within their communities by using permits, ordinances, franchise agreements, and/or

contracts. Permits and ordinances governing the collection of solid waste are typically the least restrictive tools local governments use to manage solid waste collection in their community. Collection ordinances typically establish general standards by which a private sector service provider must operate. Franchise agreements, either exclusive or open, generally establish a minimum level of services that must be provided by all service providers and usually stipulate the specific operating standards. A contract between a local government and private waste service provider provides the greatest degree of management control over the waste stream, with the local government setting forth specific performance measures and standards to be met by both parties.

The types of residential solid waste collection services range from “green box” or Dumpster drop-off service to curbside or backdoor pick-up. One trend DCA has been tracking for several years is the use of unstaffed Dumpsters. They are often placed in unsupervised areas, usually in rural communities, for trash collection and frequently become dumping grounds for everything from household trash to disabled vehicles, tires, and animal carcasses. They can become an eyesore in a community and attract waste from neighboring jurisdictions. In 1994, 74 cities and 99 counties reported using them for residential waste collection. In FY 2010, just 16 cities and 22 counties reported using green boxes. This steady decline is direct evidence of improving waste management in the state.

Private/Public Partnerships for Residential Waste Collection FY 2008 - 2010						
	2008		2009		2010	
	City	County	City	County	City	County
Private collection does not exist	199	58	181	60	174	59
Issue permit or license	69	41	68	37	65	30
Local ordinance	279	95	272	90	267	89
Franchise agreement	150	42	141	40	134	41
Governments contract	275	64	263	64	259	61
Open competition – no local government oversight	151	74	153	72	136	79

Residential Collection Methods FY 2008 - 2010			
	2008	2009	2010
No. of local governments responding to Solid Waste Management Survey	671	653	615
Solid Waste Service Providers			
Local governments providing/arranging for residential waste collection	513	489	468
Provided by public sector	435	427	411
Provided by private sector	217	208	194
Types of Residential Programs			
Curbside/Backdoor			
- City	373	355	337
- County	45	37	40
Staffed Drop-off			
City	43	41	39
County	78	87	81
Unstaffed Drop-off			
- City	23	16	19
- County	14	14	13
Dumpsters			
- City	23	21	16
- County	28	22	22
Recycling Service Providers			
Local governments making residential recycling services available	405	385	395
Provided by public sector	318	317	297
Provided by private sector	104	117	117
Provided by non-profit organization	109	92	110



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Recyclables Collection

During FY 2010, 406 local governments reported they provided or arranged for residential recycling services in their communities. As can be seen in the *Residential Recycling Services Providers* table, the strong tradition of public, private, and non-profit partnerships used to provide recycling services throughout Georgia continues, however it appears that the public sector maybe taking a stronger role in providing collection services.

The number of local governments whose residents have access to recycling services dropped off after making steady gains through the 2000s. The recycling industry is not immune from the economic recession, and commodity prices dropped in the fall of 2008 as global demand slumped. Some local governments, having grown accustomed to the revenue their recycling programs brought, cut collections. Since the public sector recovery will likely lag behind the private sector, Georgia will once again see our strong end-use markets clamoring for more material from a supply chain disrupted at the local level. Already in FY 2010 some of those programs have been restored, as evidenced by the *Number of Jurisdictions Collecting Residential Materials for Recycling* graph.

Nationally and regionally, market prices for recycled materials have risen steadily. Over the past year we have seen a stabilization of the price for recycled materials. This price stabilization along with local residents demand has prompted local governments to add recycling services and to increase the number of materials they accept in their program.

This report does not address the scale of the individual local recycling operations, which would be difficult to quantify. Rather, it focuses upon the level of recycling services being offered throughout the state. Since 1992, newspaper has been reported as the residential recyclable material most widely collected in Georgia, followed by aluminum cans. During FY 2010, the most popular commodities recycled from residences were newspaper (305 jurisdictions reporting collection); aluminum (314); and PET (# 1 plastic, 249.) It should be noted that there was a decrease in the number of jurisdictions collecting these materials. We will continue to monitor this decrease.

The tables on page C-4 tally the number of local governments collecting commercial and residential materials for recycling.

Recyclables Processing

In FY 2010 137 local governments reported processing residential recyclables as source separated materials, or reported that they collect source-separated materials from their customers. Source-separated means the materials are separated before being collected,

typically by the consumer. For example, a homeowner may have to place glass, plastic and metal in separate containers before collection. Commingled collection means the consumer places all the material in one container and the material is sorted after collection, often by paid staff, inmates or probationers. The chart above labeled 'Processing of Residential Recyclables' reflects Georgia's shift toward single-stream processing. While source-separated processing fell from 169 local governments in 2007 to 137 in 2010, single-stream processing rose from 44 to 141 local governments.

Georgia continues to have adequate collection and processing capacity for recyclable material; the demand for more material remains constant.

Processing of Residential Recyclables FY 2008 - 2010						
	2008		2009		2010	
	City	County	City	County	City	County
Source-separated	74	71	74	71	65	52
Commingled	78	21	78	21	96	35
Both	23	20	23	20	26	18



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Transfer Stations

With fewer, more regional-sized landfills in the state and a wide array of solid waste collection programs, solid waste transfer stations continue to be a popular method of streamlining solid waste collection services. Transfer stations are especially effective when collection routes are farther than 50 miles from a landfill. Combining several conventional rear-loader garbage truck loads into a single tractor-trailer for the trip to the landfill saves fuel costs, vehicle wear and tear, and means fewer trucks can service more customers. Only 70 counties reported that they or their contractors used transfer stations for the collection or disposal of residential waste in FY 2005. By FY 2010, 84 counties and 105 cities or their contractors were using transfer stations to manage residential waste.

	City	County
2007	157	77
2008	106	82
2009	108	84
2010	105	84

Yard Trimmings

Georgia banned yard trimmings from lined Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) landfills in 1996, as part of an effort to extend landfill disposal capacity. Effective September 1st 1996, each city, county and solid waste management authority was required to impose restrictions on yard trimmings generated in or disposed within their jurisdiction. The restrictions required that yard trimmings:

- Not be placed in or mixed with municipal solid waste;
- Be sorted and stored for collection to facilitate composting or other handling;
- To the maximum extent feasible be sorted, stockpiled or chipped for composting or used as a mulch or for other beneficial purposes; and
- Be banned from disposal at MSW disposal

	2008		2009		2010	
	City	County	City	County	City	County
Promote Home Composting and Beneficial Reuse	28	21	28	21	24	22
Provide for collection and disposal	304	45	304	45	298	45
Collection						
Not available	203	98	193	100	184	83
Your government	254	36	252	30	251	35
Another government	4	0	6	0	4	0
Solid Waste Authority	1	1	0	2	3	2
Private vendor via individual subscription	8	0	8	0	6	0
Private vendor via government contract	35	5	35	6	30	7
Collection Options						
Staffed drop-off facilities	12	31	14	27	13	31
Unstaffed drop-off facilities	10	3	6	2	1	2
Curbside collection	295	17	297	12	291	16
Accepted at landfill/transfer station	15	24	11	12	9	20
Processing Methods						
Composting	9	1	10	1	6	0
Solid waste landfill	40	1	35	2	29	1
Inert landfill	63	16	64	11	62	13
Grind/chip into mulch	99	12	91	14	98	14
Burning	21	0	25	0	23	0
Other	10	1	6	1	9	4
Give away	73	0	72	0	69	0
Sell	2	0	5	0	4	0
Used by local government	7	0	4	0	5	0
Becomes property of private contractor	15	0	15	17	24	0



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facilities having liners and leachate collection systems.

The number of local governments providing for the collection and disposal of yard trimmings increased from 291 in FY 2006 to 343 in FY 2010. The number providing the service themselves has increased from 253 in FY 2006 to 286 in FY 2010. The type of collection service options ranged from accepting yard trimmings at solid waste management facilities like a solid waste transfer station to curbside collection programs.

Annually, DCA surveys local governments to determine how they collect, process and use yard trimmings generated within their communities. During FY 2010, 26 cities and 29 counties reported actively promoting waste minimization practices such as home composting or beneficial reuse of yard trimmings. During FY 2010, 298 cities and 45 counties reported collecting yard trimmings for diversion from MSW landfills. It is not surprising, given lot sizes and population densities, that cities lead the way in providing yard trimmings collection services. Most local governments also reported that they provided the collection services with just a few indicating they contracted with a private vendor to collect yard trimmings. In many areas, especially urban and suburban communities, the visible result of the yard trimmings ban has been the presence of large paper bags of leaves and grass at curbsides. Collection of yard trimmings in paper bags enables them to be ground into a mulch or feedstock for composting. The majority of local governments who reported collecting yard trimmings either ground or shredded the collected material for use as mulch, however 75 local governments reported disposing the collected materials into an inert landfill. Twenty-five cities report burning yard trimmings. Composting and chip into mulch were also reported as common processing methods.

Number of Jurisdictions Collecting Commercial Materials for Recycling by Type FY 2007 - 2010

	2007	2008	2009	2010
Automobile components				
tires	47	31	24	22
auto batteries	13	26	23	25
motor oil	14	24	24	25
Metals				
aluminum	187	74	83	80
scrap metal	94	49	52	49
Paper				
newspaper	252	69	83	81
magazines	67	48	75	78
corrugated cardboard	174	83	88	96
phone books	71	60	69	72



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Yard trimmings, when processed properly, have numerous beneficial uses in a community. The use of compost and mulch is extremely beneficial for slowing storm-water runoff and retaining moisture around plants. Many local governments use processed yard trimmings as mulch for their landscaping and civil engineering applications or report offering the processed yard trimmings to their citizens for residential landscaping.

Number of Jurisdictions Collecting Residential Materials for Recycling by Type FY 2007 - 2010				
	2007	2008	2009	2010
Automobile components				
tires	127	224	108	112
auto batteries	88	167	81	76
antifreeze	24	78	23	32
motor oil	100	187	79	88
oil filters	25	75	29	24
Metals				
aluminum	463	448	310	314
steel cans	228	289	160	154
scrap metal	204	294	173	184
aerosol cans	35	101	39	41
Paper				
newspaper	507	492	307	305
magazines	381	430	266	271
corrugated cardboard	386	431	254	251
phone books	324	415	233	242
paper board	105	293	148	173
junk mail		198	175	195
Misc.				
#1 plastic	363	378	244	249
#2 plastic	324	348	214	208
other plastic	72	238	99	110
glass	311	361	199	202
white goods	222	324	192	213
Christmas trees	254	363	206	213
C&D materials	45	0	37	43
agricultural	8	37	12	13
chemical containers				
electronics	102	221	119	123
Household Hazardous Waste				
paint	27	93	44	39
cleaning products	0	44	17	19
pesticides	4	19	8	11