

Seattle
 Public
Utilities

2011

Recycling Rate Report

July 1, 2012

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I. INTRODUCTION

The report starts out by explaining the report’s scope, how the recycling rate is calculated, and recycling program planning background. The second section presents overall 2012 results, as well as results for each solid waste “sector.” The third section, on waste prevention, talks about waste prevention activities that touch all sectors. Section four lays out recycling program actions for 2012. The report concludes with references and links for further information. Comments on the report from the Seattle Solid Waste Advisory Committee are attached, as required by Resolution 30990.

I.1 SCOPE OF THE REPORT

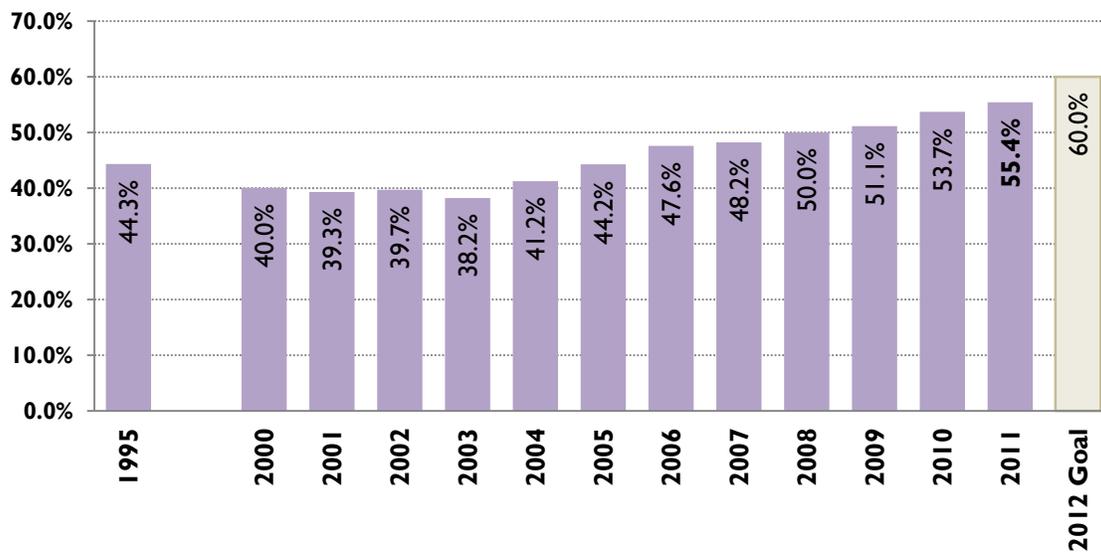
This is the fifth annual recycling report for the City of Seattle, as called for by the 2007 Seattle City Council Resolution 30990.

“SPU will report to Council by July 1 of each year on the previous year’s progress toward recycling goals, as well as further steps to be taken to meet goals in the current and upcoming years.”

The Resolution set Seattle’s goal to reach 60% recycling of municipal solid waste (MSW) by the year 2012, and 70% by 2025. Four different sectors contribute to the overall MSW rate: single family residential, multi family residential, self haul, and commercial.

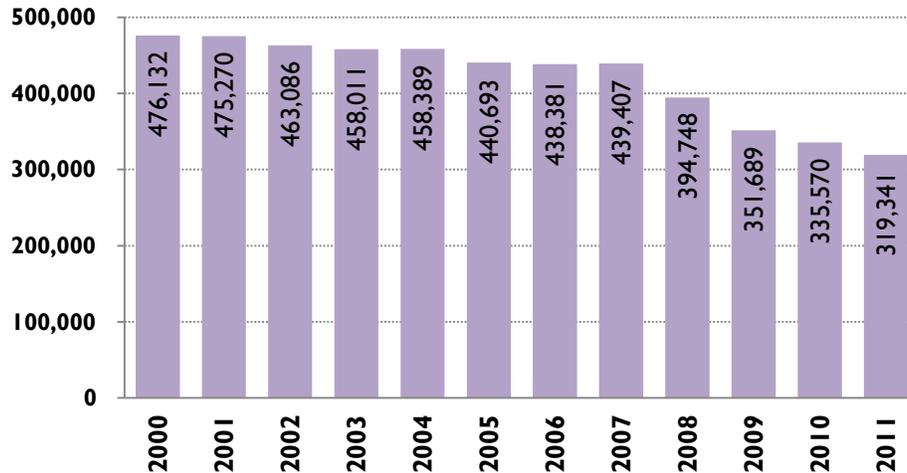
In 2011, Seattle recycled 55.4% of its MSW, an increase of 1.7 percentage points over 2010. The recycling rate has risen 17.2 percentage points since the 2003 low of 38.2%.

Figure I MSW Overall Recycling Rate Progress



In addition to the recycling goal, Resolution 30990 set another goal to reduce total MSW tons disposed by one percent each year. Tons disposed in 2011 dropped 4.8% compared to 2010.

Figure 2 MSW Tons Disposed in Landfill



1.2 ABOUT THE RECYCLING RATE

Seattle's recycling rate is the percentage of municipal solid waste (MSW) diverted from the landfill by reuse, recycling and composting.

Seattle's MSW includes:

- Organics managed onsite by Seattle residents (yard debris and food scraps)
- All garbage, organics, and recyclables that businesses and residents set out for collection
- All garbage, organics, and recyclables hauled to the city's recycling and disposal stations for reuse, recycling or composting

Seattle's 60% goal combines separate goals for each of the four primary MSW sectors: single family residential, multi family residential, self haul, and commercial. The specific recycling goals for each sector are different since waste stream materials, opportunities to recycle, and likelihood of participation vary between the sectors.

The MSW recycling goal excludes construction and demolition (C&D) material. Seattle does not currently have a C&D recycling goal, but we expect to set a C&D goal upon adoption of the solid waste management plan update currently under review. C&D tons disposed and recycled are counted separately in the C&D stream.

The MSW goal also excludes other special wastes. Moderate Risk Waste (MRW) includes household hazardous waste (HHW) like garden pesticides, and small quantity generator waste (SQGW) like solvents used at a small business. The Local Hazardous Waste Management Program (LHWMP) manages Seattle's moderate risk waste. The LHWMP is a joint program supported and implemented by Seattle, King County, Public Health - Seattle & King County, and the Suburban Cities Association. The Seattle Municipal Code prohibits disposal of HHW and SQGW in the garbage.

Further, the recycling goal does not include other special categories of waste such as: biomedical wastes, biosolids, asbestos, petroleum contaminated soils, and Dangerous Waste (generally industrial), which state regulations exclude from MSW.

1.3 ACTION PLANNING BACKGROUND

In 1998, the Seattle City Council adopted Seattle's Solid Waste Plan *On the Path to Sustainability*. It set a policy framework for the city focused on sustainability and stewardship, and established the goal of eliminating the maximum possible amount of waste as a guiding principle. It also identified programmatic goals and programs to achieve these goals. The 2004 Plan Amendment renewed Seattle's commitment to these policies and goals. The 2011-12 plan revision currently underway contains further recommendations for recycling programs and goals. This Plan Revision will be submitted this summer to the City Council for approval.

2. RECYCLING RATES

This section first presents recycling rates for MSW: overall, single and multifamily residential, self haul, and commercial. Following the MSW sectors, the section goes on to present the results for construction and demolition debris (C&D), which is tracked separately from MSW, and to discuss public space and parks outdoor open space recycling.

2.1 OVERALL MSW RECYCLING PERFORMANCE

In 2011, Seattle's MSW recycling increased from 53.7% to 55.4%, an increase of 1.7 percentage points. This marks the eighth straight year of continuous recycling rate growth since 2003.

Table 1 Recycling Rates All MSW Sectors 2000-2011

Year	Residential			Self Haul	Commercial	Overall
	Single Family	Multi Family	Res Total			
2000	58.0%	17.8%	47.8%	17.2%	41.6%	40.0%
2001	57.0%	22.0%	48.5%	17.8%	39.6%	39.3%
2002	57.5%	21.5%	48.3%	18.1%	40.7%	39.7%
2003	57.5%	22.2%	48.4%	18.1%	37.3%	38.2%
2004	58.9%	22.2%	49.4%	18.8%	42.5%	41.2%
2005	61.4%	25.2%	52.1%	19.2%	46.6%	44.2%
2006	64.0%	26.3%	54.3%	18.8%	51.7%	47.6%
2007	64.8%	27.6%	55.1%	19.2%	52.5%	48.2%
2008	65.4%	28.3%	55.9%	18.4%	54.7%	50.0%
2009	68.7%	27.0%	58.4%	16.7%	54.9%	51.1%
2010	70.3%	29.6%	60.3%	13.5%	58.9%	53.7%
2011	70.6%	28.7%	60.2%	13.1%	61.4%	55.4%
2012 Goal	70.0%	37.0%	60.0%	39.0%	63.0%	60.0%

Overall, Seattle generated 8,160 fewer total MSW tons in 2011 than in 2010. Recycling grew by 8,069 tons. These changes lead to reduced disposal, which dropped by 16,229 tons.

Table 2 Tons MSW Overall 2000-2011

Tons of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)				
Year	Generated	Disposed	Recycled	Recycle Rate
2000	793,842	476,132	317,710	40.0%
2001	782,809	475,270	307,539	39.3%
2002	768,346	463,086	305,260	39.7%
2003	741,094	458,011	283,083	38.2%
2004	780,044	458,389	321,655	41.2%
2005	790,457	440,693	349,763	44.2%
2006	836,499	438,381	398,118	47.6%
2007	848,759	439,407	409,352	48.2%
2008	789,608	394,748	394,860	50.0%
2009	719,424	351,689	367,735	51.1%
2010	724,468	335,570	388,898	53.7%
2011	716,308	319,341	396,967	55.4%

2.2 TOTAL MSW DISPOSED

This section addresses the Resolution 30990 (2007) goals set for total MSW waste disposed (landfilled). Specifically:

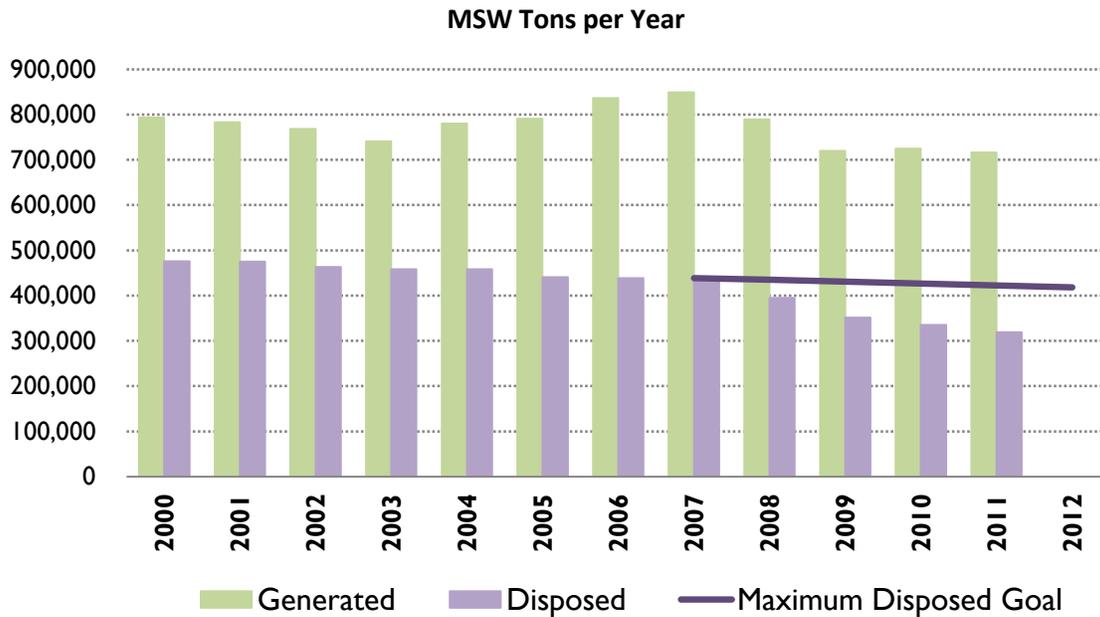
- The city will not dispose of any more total solid waste in future years than went to the landfill in 2006 (438,000 tons MSW), and;
- For the next five years, the city will reduce the amount of solid waste disposed by at least 1% per year (2008-2012).

Seattle disposed 16,229 fewer tons in 2011 compared to 2010, a 4.8% decrease. Compared to 2007 (when generation peaked), disposed tons are down more than 27%, or 120,066 annual tons.

Table 3 MSW Tons Change – Overall Generated & Disposed

MSW Tons Change from Prior Year				
Year	Generated	Percent Change	Disposed	Percent Change
2000	793,842	NA	476,132	NA
2001	782,809	-1.4%	475,270	-0.2%
2002	768,346	-1.8%	463,086	-2.6%
2003	741,094	-3.5%	458,011	-1.1%
2004	780,044	5.3%	458,389	0.1%
2005	790,457	1.3%	440,693	-3.9%
2006	836,499	5.8%	438,381	-0.5%
2007	848,759	1.5%	439,407	0.2%
2008	789,608	-7.0%	394,748	-10.2%
2009	719,424	-8.9%	351,689	-10.9%
2010	724,468	0.7%	335,570	-4.6%
2011	716,308	-1.1%	319,341	-4.8%

Figure 3 MSW Tons Disposed Compared to Goal



We anticipate that further growth in our recycling and waste reduction programs will reduce MSW tons disposed. However, this effect can be muddled by factors in the overall economy that also drive MSW tons generated. We suspect that a good share of the sizable drop seen since 2007 is due to the economic downturn. For example, an analysis looking the decline in

commercial tons between 2004 and 2009 indicated that about half the decline in tons disposed was due to factors related to the economy and about half due to new programs.

2.3 RESIDENTIAL: SINGLE FAMILY RECYCLING PERFORMANCE

The single family sector includes households on “can” (or cart) garbage service (as opposed to dumpsters). These are mostly single family, and duplex to 4-plex households. They set out garbage (disposal), recycling and organics (yard and food) for collection at the curb. They also compost some food and yard waste at their homes.

In 2011, the single family sector reached its **highest ever recycling rate** and **exceeded its long-standing 70% goal**. Recycling increased 0.3 percentage points to 70.6%.

2011 also saw a 1.5% decrease in total generated tons. Recycled tons decreased by 1,757 (-1.2%), and disposed tons decreased by 1,530 (-2.4%).

Figure 4 Recycling Rate – Single Family

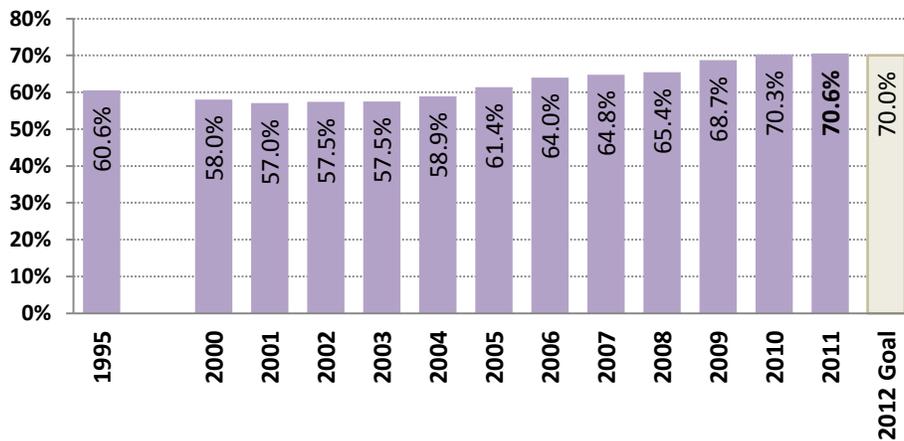


Table 4 Tons Single Family 2000-2011

Tons - Single Family				
Year	Generated	Disposed	Recycled	Recycle Rate
2000	208,468	87,499	120,969	58.0%
2001	211,982	91,072	120,910	57.0%
2002	206,474	87,834	118,640	57.5%
2003	205,748	87,426	118,322	57.5%
2004	209,132	86,029	123,103	58.9%
2005	208,675	80,478	128,197	61.4%
2006	216,946	78,078	138,868	64.0%
2007	220,128	77,494	142,634	64.8%
2008	213,889	73,961	139,928	65.4%
2009	215,015	67,229	147,786	68.7%
2010	216,484	64,309	152,175	70.3%
2011	213,197	62,779	150,418	70.6%

Program Highlights – Single Family

- \$100,000 in grants were awarded to neighborhoods and businesses through Waste Management and CleanScapes' Neighborhood Recycling Rewards programs.
- 80,000 compostable kitchen compost bags were provided to residents via a partnership with Glad.
- More than 1,000 kitchen compost containers, 2,000 reusable bags and 3,000 recycling fliers were distributed at 30 community events.
- Seattle residents purchased more than 2,000 discounted kitchen compost containers during Compost Days, a partnership with Cedar Grove Composting.

2.4 RESIDENTIAL: MULTI FAMILY RECYCLING PERFORMANCE

The multi family sector includes apartment and condominium buildings. These buildings contain five or more units and generally use dumpsters instead of tote carts for garbage. Material collected includes garbage, recycling, and food and yard waste.

In 2011, recycling in the multi family sector dropped 0.8 percentage points to a level of 28.7%. Total multi-family waste generation also dropped 553 tons. Disposed tons increased by 205 tons.

Figure 5 Recycling Rate – Multi Family

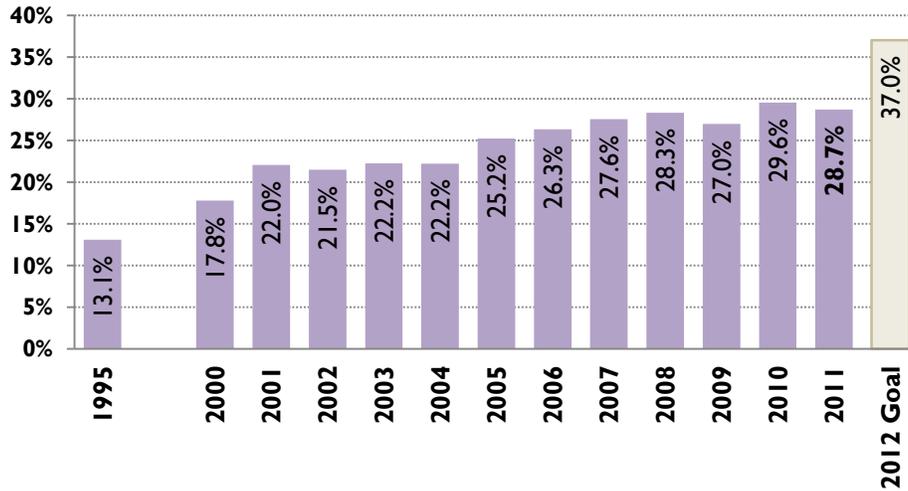


Table 5 Tons Multi Family 2000-2011

Tons - Multi Family				
Year	Generated	Disposed	Recycled	Recycle Rate
2000	70,944	58,333	12,611	17.8%
2001	68,611	53,487	15,124	22.0%
2002	70,144	55,076	15,068	21.5%
2003	72,149	56,106	16,043	22.2%
2004	72,640	56,498	16,142	22.2%
2005	72,325	54,080	18,245	25.2%
2006	75,545	55,643	19,903	26.3%
2007	77,108	55,847	21,261	27.6%
2008	74,223	53,199	21,024	28.3%
2009	70,524	51,497	19,028	27.0%
2010	70,675	49,788	20,887	29.6%
2011	70,122	49,993	20,129	28.7%

Program Highlights – Multi Family

- The food waste service requirement was expanded to all apartments as of September 2011. The full roll-out of this expansion was completed by January 2012.

2.5 SELF HAUL

The self haul sector includes material brought (or “self hauled”) by residents, businesses and governmental agencies to the two city-owned recycling and disposal (transfer) stations. It does

not include the material transferred by Seattle’s contracted collection haulers. Recycling in the self haul sector includes organics (food and yard waste, clean wood), appliances and metals, and other recyclable material.

In 2011, the self haul sector recycling rate fell 0.3 percentage points compared to 2010, continuing the trend in annual decreases since 2007. Compared to the high in 2007, the 2011 self haul recycling rate dropped 6.1 percentage points (for a 31.7% proportional drop).

Looking deeper into the numbers offers some possible explanations for self haul recycling decreases.

- Since 2007, self haul yard waste (organics) has dropped by 52.3% (from 14,247 tons to 6,794 tons). This drop is likely due to three factors. First, because of the recession there may be less demand for landscape and yard care services. Second, residents and landscapers may be taking advantage of competing yard waste drop-off locations in or nearby Seattle. Third, homeowners may be making greater use of their food and yard waste curbside collection service. In 2009 it became mandatory for all single family customers to sign up for food and yard waste collection. At the same time, food and yard waste collection increased from every other week to weekly service.
- Compared to 2007, recycling decreased by 58% (from 11,200 tons to 3,949 tons), whereas self haul garbage tons decreased by 34%. Since the bulk of drop-off recycling is metals, mostly appliances, the decrease in appliance tons may be a result of less purchasing in general, as well as the overall drop in economic activity.

Self haul trips to the stations also continued to decrease--by 8.3% or 20,477 fewer trips in 2011 compared to 2010.

Figure 6 Recycling Rate – Self Haul

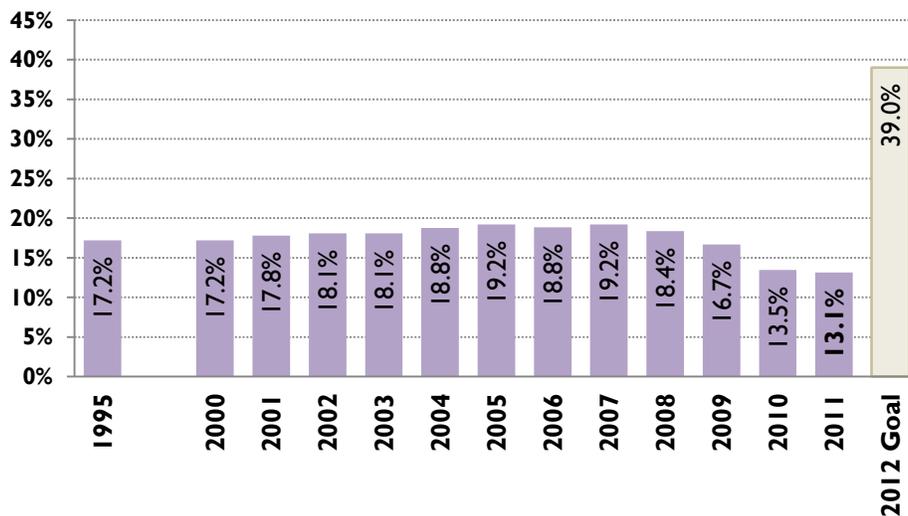


Table 6 Tons Self Haul 2000-2011

Tons - Self Haul				
Year	Generated	Disposed	Recycled	Recycle Rate
2000	123,024	101,883	21,141	17.2%
2001	124,453	102,305	22,148	17.8%
2002	125,710	102,981	22,729	18.1%
2003	123,597	101,232	22,365	18.1%
2004	122,819	99,750	23,069	18.8%
2005	124,364	100,499	23,865	19.2%
2006	127,444	103,429	24,015	18.8%
2007	132,545	107,098	25,447	19.2%
2008	111,229	90,814	20,415	18.4%
2009	97,893	81,565	16,328	16.7%
2010	91,618	79,293	12,325	13.5%
2011	81,776	71,033	10,743	13.1%

Program Highlights – Self Haul

SPU does not expect to see significant self haul recycling rate increases until the **station rebuilds** are complete. SPU expects completion of the first phase of the South Transfer Station rebuild this summer, with the replacement of both stations completed by 2016. Separated recycling and reuse drop-off areas ahead of the scale will provide easier access for self haul customers. The expanded floor space at new South Transfer will allow experimenting with post-dumping sorting of high grade construction and demolition loads.

2.6 COMMERCIAL

The commercial sector includes garbage, recyclables and compostable materials collected from commercial businesses.

The commercial sector's recycling rate increased 2.5 percentage points to its **highest ever rate of 61.4 %, just short of the present commercial sector goal of 63%**. This sector's recycling rate is up 24.1 percentage points since hitting a low in 2003.

Total commercial generation increased by 5,522 tons in 2011. However, recycled tons grew by 12,166 tons and disposal dropped 6,644 tons. Compared to 2007, disposed tons are down by 16.2%

Figure 7 Recycling Rate - Commercial

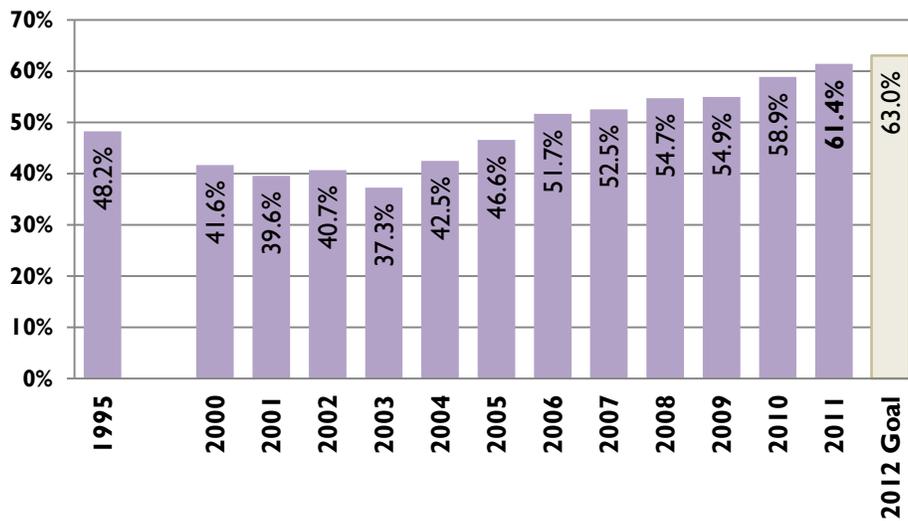


Table 7 Tons Commercial 2000-2011

Tons - Commercial				
Year	Generated	Disposed	Recycled	Recycle Rate
2000	391,406	228,417	162,989	41.6%
2001	377,927	228,405	149,522	39.6%
2002	366,224	217,195	149,029	40.7%
2003	339,844	213,247	126,597	37.3%
2004	375,739	216,112	159,627	42.5%
2005	385,093	205,637	179,456	46.6%
2006	416,564	201,231	215,333	51.7%
2007	418,979	198,968	220,011	52.5%
2008	390,267	176,774	213,493	54.7%
2009	335,992	151,398	184,593	54.9%
2010	345,692	142,180	203,511	58.9%
2011	351,214	135,536	215,678	61.4%

Program Highlights – Commercial

- Business food waste recycling continued to expand through City and vendor promotion
- Materials with notable recycling increases include yard waste, food waste, used oil, and white goods.

2.7 CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION DEBRIS (C&D)

The C&D sector is comprised of C&D materials (sometimes called “CDL” – construction, demolition, and land clearing debris) which are not mixed with MSW. These materials are collected by a firm under contract with the city for C&D, or are self hauled to private facilities. Smaller amounts of C&D materials mixed with MSW, and delivered to the SPU’s transfer stations, are counted as MSW and not included in the measure of C&D recycling and disposal.

The hierarchy of C&D materials that SPU tracks includes:

Recycling. Wastes separated for recycling or reuse.

Beneficial Use – not recycled or reused, but used for some other purpose like industrial boiler fuel. Counted as disposal in the recycling rate, and counted as diverted in the diversion rate.

Alternative Daily Cover (ADC) and Industrial Waste Stabilizer (IWS) –ADC covers the active face of a landfill instead of soil. IWS provides structure in specialized landfills. Counted as disposal in the recycling rate.

Disposal – material permanently placed in a landfill.

In addition to the recycling rate, for C&D we calculate the “**diversion**” rate, the sum of recycling and beneficial use.

In 2011, the C&D recycling rate rose nearly one percentage point. The C&D diversion rate for the same period decreased slightly, due to a one percentage point decrease in beneficial use. In general, C&D generation correlates closely with economic and building activity cycles.

Figure 8 C&D Recycling and Diversion Rate

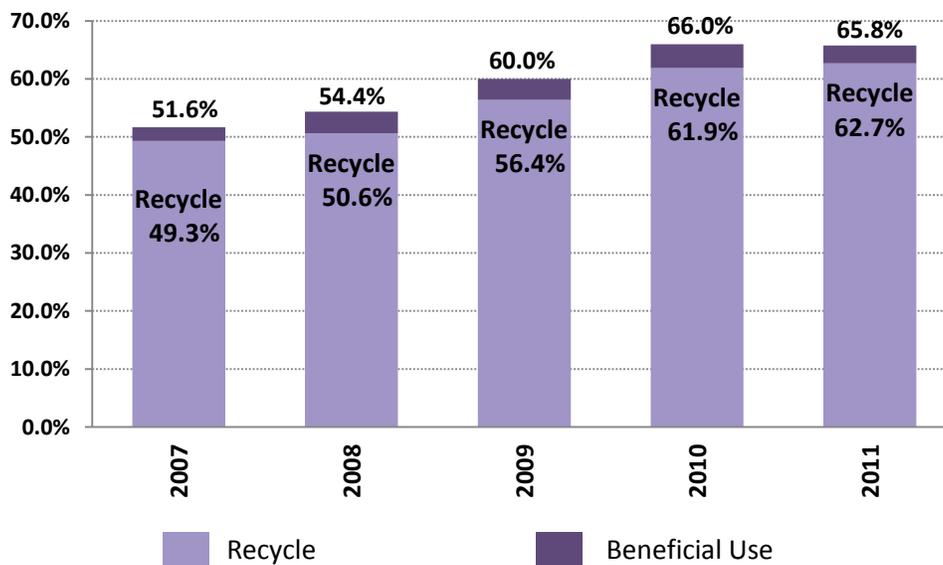


Table 8 Tons Construction & Demolition Debris 2007-2011

Year	Total Generated	Disposed*	Recycled	Beneficial Use	Recycle Rate	Diversion Rate
2007	415,801	201,156	204,907	9,738	49.3%	51.6%
2008	397,052	181,241	200,851	14,961	50.6%	54.4%
2009	288,551	115,446	162,742	10,362	56.4%	60.0%
2010	288,957	97,241	178,794	11,864	61.9%	66.0%
2011	284,123	96,946	178,130	8,752	62.7%	65.8%

*Includes ADC and IWS

Note: There are some changes to the 2009 and 2010 numbers compared to the 2010 recycling rate report, due to updated data from late recycler reports and revisions to preliminary and/or projected data.

Program Highlights – C&D

- **New Disposal Ban on Asphalt Paving, Bricks and Concrete (ABC):** In early 2010, the City Council approved an ordinance that bans the disposal of ABC from job site containers and from disposal at private and public transfer stations. This ban took effect January 1, 2012 with active enforcement to begin 2013. SPU will educate contractors about the ban in 2012. In 2011, 95% (146,612 tons) of ABC was recycled.

2.8 PUBLIC SPACE RECYCLING & PARKS OUTDOOR OPEN SPACE RECYCLING

In 2011, the Department of Parks and Recreation continued with recycling collection cans in open spaces in parks citywide. Collection cans are strategically sited based on lessons learned during a 2008 pilot project. Targeted materials include aluminum cans, and plastic and glass beverage containers.

State law requires recycling at large events. SPU is working with event promoters to ensure that their food vendors comply with the regulation that single-use food ware and packaging are either compostable or recyclable and collected for proper processing.

The public place recycling program pairs street side litter cans with beverage container recycling cans in commercial areas throughout the city. About half of all street side litter cans are paired with a recycling can.

3. WASTE PREVENTION

SPU's waste prevention programs work to reduce waste volumes from households and businesses. They also seek to reduce toxics in goods purchased by people, institutions and businesses. Wherever possible, SPU seeks to quantify results, and takes credit in the MSW recycling rate.

Program Highlights – Waste Prevention

- During 2011, 55,000 residents and businesses opted out of more than 390,000 individual phone directory deliveries saving 350 tons of paper never used.
- Cited 7 restaurants for using EPS (Styrofoam) containers

- Signed a 2-year MOA with the Seattle School District. Began composting in 10 public schools; collected 60 tons of food waste.
- Supported carpet product stewardship legislation sponsored by Sen. Jeanne Kohl-Wells.
- The Master Gardener-Composter program and Hotline continued.
- Organized conference “Product Stewardship for Local Governments” attended by 90 agency and industry representatives
- As member of NW Product Stewardship Council, supported product stewardship legislation covering leftover pharmaceuticals, mercury-containing lighting products, electronics, paint and carpet

4. RECYCLING & WASTE REDUCTION ACTIVITIES FOR 2012

The following list of waste reduction and recycling activities is excerpted from the “2012 SPU Recycling/Waste Reduction Workplan in Response to City Council Statement of Legislative Intent 114-A-2” which was submitted to the City Council early this year.

Table 9 Recycling Activities 2012

Work Item	Deliverable or Planned Outcome
1. Residential organics	Garden Hotline and Master Composter Soil Builder volunteer program management
2. Grasscycling	Promote grasscycling
3. Food Plus 4. Implement compostable, recyclable single-use food container requirements	Restaurant compliance at 60% by year-end: correct packaging, bins, collection service. All known EPS (Styrofoam™) users cited.
5. Support Take-It-Back Network	Fund brochure printing, oversee delivery of brochures to city locations
6. Market Development 7. Carpet 8. Asphalt shingles 9. C&D commodities	Increased recycling of carpet Ditto asphalt shingles; Several more carpet collection services open.
10. Green Purchasing	Conduct Green Purchasing webinars.
11. Promotion of Self-haul Alternatives	Maintain web pages connected with new web cams; promote alternative services in CWC, etc.
12. WP Community Grants Schools focus continues in 2012	Grants to schools for composting and lunchroom compost and recycling bins.
13. Washington Green Schools, other school staff training	School staff training in composting, recycling.

Work Item	Deliverable or Planned Outcome
14. Phone books and junk mail	Support City Attorney's Office as needed in lawsuit; implement junk mail opt-out system. Increase phone book opt outs to 100,000 from 67,000; increase junk mail from 10,000 to 25,000.
15. Plastic carryout bag ban – outreach	Co-promotion program with grocery associations; free bag distribution to low-income families
16. Transfer station diversion	Manage contractors (ReStore, Second Use) who divert usable building materials and household goods from weekend lines at NRDS and SRDS
17. Reuse & recycling, construction, lumber: Convene multi-agency task force to develop lumber-grading standards and procedures for salvaged dimensional (structural) lumber.	Task Force created with key stakeholders at table and agreement to go ahead.
18. Reuse & recycling, construction, house moving: Convene interdepartmental team to identify codes and regulations that are barriers to house moving and draft legislation amending those regulations where possible to simplify house moving.	List of needed regulatory changes. Decision to be made if legislation should be pursued this year.
19. Support NWPSC	Work on paint, battery, carpet EPR at state level
20. Recycler license/data collection 21. & SPU Annual Recycling Report	Drafting and mailing of forms to recyclers; submittals received on time for annual recycling report. Progress on project for on-line reporting system.
22. Pharmaceutical resolution (City)	City-signed resolution
23. Support Board of Health processes, including potential medicine take back	Local med take back program
24. Organics processing RFP & selection	Draft RFP (if no amendment to CG)
25. Recycling processing future options and procurement – if needed.	Internal agreement on contract extension, amendments or RFP.
26. C&D recycling ordinances and administrative rules	Ordinance and rules adopted.
27. C&D permit review process for C&D recycling	Business practices, forms completed
28. Certification Process for C&D Facilities	SPU business practices. Certification reporting. Web posting. Residual sampling at C&D recycling facilities
29. Every-other week garbage pilot	Business processes and outreach completed 2Q12. Go-live 3Q12.
30. Residential SF & MF food recycling increased	
31. MF FW requirement implemented	Deliver services to all apartments and assist.
32. Businesses recycling and food composting increased.	Meet Mayor Performance Recycling Target.

Work Item	Deliverable or Planned Outcome
33. Plastic film services increased.	
34. MF and business recycle ban enforcement	Increase enforcement action
35. Pilot floor sorting of C&D loads	Determine feasibility of directing rich loads of greater than 50% C&D to a separate unloading area and using equipment to load C&D into separate trailer.
36. Implement C&D ban on asphalt, brick, concrete (ABC)	Legislation already adopted. Begin implementation.

Recommended program actions for 2013 and beyond are included in [Seattle's Solid Waste Plan 2011 Revision, Preliminary Draft](#). The Plan contains discussion, timelines, and projected recycling rate analysis for proposed program changes.

5. CONCLUSION

We congratulate all the households in Seattle's single family sector for meeting and exceeding their recycling goal, and the commercial sector for making impressive gains in one year. All of these are remarkable achievements and demonstrate Seattle citizen and business commitment to environmentally responsible solid waste management.

Recycling continues to be a sound investment by the city as well as a key part of our climate action strategy.

More detailed sector and historical information may be found on SPU's web site at http://www.seattle.gov/util/About_SPU/Garbage_System/SolidWasteReports/index.htm, including:

- Waste composition
- Recycling composition
- Construction, demolition and land-clearing debris (C&D or CDL)
- Garbage disposed by sector by month
- Organics programs
- Residential recycling
- Recycling market and Seattle recycling value
- Seattle's solid waste plan

