



RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING

Achieve a Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) recycling rate to 70% by 2022 and maintain this rate through 2050.

Seattle is a nationally recognized leader in recycling and composting, and currently diverts 53.7 percent of all MSW generated. This rate, achieved through the City's numerous innovative policies and programs, is among the highest in the country and already generates significant environmental benefits, including avoided greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The City is already on a path toward greater waste diversion through recycling and composting. In its 2011 Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) Revision, the City laid out a plan to achieve 70 percent diversion by 2022 through new recycling and composting programs, increased enforcement, additional material disposal bans, and enhanced outreach and education. By implementing the recommendations of the 2011 SWMP and taking additional actions, the City can reduce GHG emissions from its waste management activities, and substantially increase the amount of avoided emissions achieved through recycling and composting.

MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING

Achieve a MSW recycling rate of 60% by 2015 and 70% by 2022 by implementing new MSW recycling and composting programs and material disposal bans, increasing enforcement, and enhancing outreach and education to residents and businesses.

CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION RECYCLING

Achieve a construction and demolition (C&D) recycling rate of 70% by 2020 by phasing in C&D material disposal bans, and coordinating with local industry to develop a processing facility certification program.

FOOD WASTE LANDFILL DIVERSION

Maximize diversion of food waste from the landfill and promote composting of food scraps by increasing technical assistance to expand and improve the use of compostable food service products, and increasing enforcement of food packaging and food scrap composting requirements.

LOCAL RECYCLING MARKETS AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT

Expand local recycling markets by aligning market development efforts with disposal bans and focusing on potentially recyclable materials with persistently low recycling rates.





COLLECTION, PROCESSING, AND DISPOSAL

Reduce emissions from waste management activities, including collection, processing, and transportation, and from landfill disposal.

GHG emissions from MSW management and disposal arise from three different sources: in-city collection, processing and transfer; long-distance transport; and from methane released from a landfill. Although the City has already made great strides in reducing emissions from these sources, even more can be done in the coming years.

Across all waste management activities, the City can monitor and adapt programs and management practices to incorporate new technologies and markets as they become available.

COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

Identify, test, and adopt practices that maximize efficiency in collection, processing, and transfer operations.

DISPOSAL AND LANDFILL MANAGEMENT

Explore opportunities to reduce methane emissions from landfills, and consider the City's ability to influence methane capture rates through contracting.

TECHNOLOGY AND MARKET INNOVATION

Monitor and adapt programs and management practices to incorporate new technologies and markets as they become available.



SOURCE REDUCTION AND PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP

Reduce total waste generation through source reduction, and encourage product stewardship and producer responsibility programs.

The City can reduce GHG emissions within its geographic boundaries and globally by reducing total generation of waste through source reduction, also known as waste prevention. Source reduction is achieved through actions that encourage extension of product life, such as repair, refurbishment, and reuse; product design and manufacturing practices that reduce the amount of material used; more efficient use of consumable products; and less consumption of materials overall.

Source reduction reduces GHG emissions from collection, processing, and disposal, and also results in avoided emissions from manufacturing. Avoided emissions due to source reduction are often larger than any other waste management option, including recycling and composting.

Source reduction can be challenging to implement, as the City has less direct control over the quantity of waste generated than over how it is managed once it is generated. Nonetheless, there are many ways the City can influence waste generation and encourage source reduction through setting policies, implementing programs, influencing pricing, supporting product stewardship, and educating and engaging residents and businesses.

MSW SOURCE REDUCTION

Reduce total MSW generation by expanding investment in existing waste prevention programs and establish new programs that facilitate source reduction by households and businesses.

C&D SOURCE REDUCTION

Facilitate source reduction of C&D waste through support of new and expanded programs promoting salvage, deconstruction, and reuse.

PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP AND PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

Collaborate with local, state, and regional partners to encourage and support product stewardship and producer responsibility programs, and pursue local regulation for select products, where appropriate, when state and regional action is not forthcoming.

SOURCE REDUCTION IN CITY OPERATIONS AND PURCHASING

Use the City's purchasing power to support source reduction, product stewardship, reuse, cradle-to-cradle manufacturing, and recycled-content production; and employ source reduction strategies in City operations.