



case study

City of Malden Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) Program

In a Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) solid waste program, residents purchase preprinted stickers or bags for disposal of trash, thereby paying directly for the amount of solid waste they generate. There is no direct fee for recycling.

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| Community Population: | 56,000 |
| Households Served: | 17,783 (FY09) |
| Services Provided: | Weekly curbside trash and dual-stream recycling collection |

Program Overview

- Residents pay \$2 for each 33-gallon bag, or \$1 for each 15-gallon bag, to offset the cost of trash disposal.
- The average household spends less than \$200 annually in PAYT trash bags.
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money is used to pay for bags for residents who are income eligible.
- All residential trash must be in City-approved bags. There is no limit to the number of PAYT bags a resident may purchase and use each week.
- All residents are eligible to receive one free recycling bin; additional bins are sold for \$5 each. Residents can also obtain free recycling stickers, which can be used to convert an existing container or trash receptacle into a recycling container.
- The residential PAYT Program serves all residential dwellings up to 6 units, as well as the Malden Housing Authority and other municipal buildings.
- The City was awarded a PAYT start-up grant of \$71,132 from MassDEP.

History

- In 2000, the City of Malden successfully instituted a commercial PAYT Program for residential buildings with more than 6 units, mixed-use buildings and businesses.
- In order to balance the FY09 budget, the Mayor of Malden proposed a residential PAYT Program, citing an estimated \$2.5 million dollars could be freed up (from disposal cost savings and revenue from the sale of PAYT bags), avoiding substantial program and personnel cuts.
- The City Council approved the PAYT ordinance in June 2008.
- Directly following the vote, a campaign was launched to educate and inform the public. The City spent \$47,000 on outreach efforts.
- In October 2008, Malden implemented a full PAYT program, whereby all residential trash must be placed in City-approved bags.

Implementation

- The PAYT bag vendor manufactures bags, warehouses inventory and delivers bags to stores. PAYT bags are sold at 16 local retailers as well as several municipal locations (City Clerk's Office, City Treasurer, DPW).
- The City initially ordered 750,000 33-gallon bags representing a projected 4-month inventory. Two months later, the City Council voted to offer a smaller bag option (15 gallon capacity, sold for \$1 each) for residents who do not fill a 33-gallon trash bag weekly.
- Retailers place bag orders with the bag vendor (Waste Zero). Waste Zero then drop-ships bags to retailers and bills them.
- Retailers, in turn, pay the City. The City keeps Waste Zero apprised of which retailers are delinquent on paying bills.
- Retailers receive no mark up for selling bags.

Administration and Enforcement

- All PAYT bag revenue currently goes into the General Fund. It is anticipated that the City will establish a Solid Waste Enterprise Account.
- Non-compliant trash bags are not collected and residents are notified to re-bag.
- Repeat offenders are issued a bright yellow violation notice and fined \$50 (minimum) plus a disposal charge.
- A hotline was created for residents to report non-compliance.
- The City of Malden has noticed no increase in the amount of illegal dumping since the implementation of PAYT.
- The City strengthened its illegal dumping ordinance, increased fines to \$300 and posted signs around the City (targeting known illegal dumping sites) warning that illegal dumping carries a \$300 fine.

Additional Waste Services

- The City allows the collection of 1 bulky item (burnable items that will not fit in PAYT bag) per property per week at no fee.
- White goods may be picked up curbside or dropped off. Disposal stickers cost \$20 each and must be purchased in advance from DPW.
- TVs, computers, monitors must be dropped off at DPW with \$5 fee per item.
- Hazardous Waste collection days are held on a quarterly basis.
- Yard waste: Curbside collection varies by season.

Successes to be Replicated

- Mayor formed four working groups to tackle Communication, Enforcement, Finance and Ordinances; these groups met weekly to work out the details of the program
- Strong outreach to the community included: Informational meetings, a clear and consistent message, a dedicated hotline, FAQ document and other notices delivered to homes in multiple languages, press releases, TV announcements, as well as PAYT programming on local cable channel.
- Customer service training.

Waste Reduction Results in First Year (October 2008-September 2009)

- Compliance rate: Over 98 percent.
- Recycling rate: Up 74 percent.
- Solid waste tonnage: Down 49 percent.

Financial Results

- Nearly \$2.5 million in savings to the City.
 - Solid waste disposal savings (\$801,723).
 - Revenue from sale of PAYT bags (\$1.7 million).

Positive Outcomes

- The City of Malden received a 2010 EPA Merit Award for this program.

For More Information

- Malden DPW: (781) 397-7162
- Web site: www.cityofmalden.org

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