

# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

The Clark County Solid Waste Management Plan was developed to provide the community with goals and policies for implementing, evaluating and modifying existing and future solid waste management programs. This Plan includes updated descriptions of existing conditions and programs to reflect progress and accomplishments over the previous years. It lists policies and practices reviewed by the Solid Waste Advisory Commission (SWAC), solid waste staff, representatives of the six cities, one town, interested citizens, solid waste industry representatives and others. The policies and practices recommended by SWAC were adopted by the Clark County Board of County Commissioners and City Councils. They will guide solid waste policy into the future and outline programs and approaches for the coming five years.

This Plan provides the community with several important tools:

- **Promotes sustainable practices** for governments, non-governmental organizations, businesses and residents;
- **Review of pertinent regulations** and other management plans;
- **Guidelines for the development** of programs, policies and operating plans;
- **Planning for solid waste infrastructure** and operations (including facility siting criteria and process);
- **Background information to support facility permitting** decisions by Clark County Public Health and other state and local government agencies;
- **The technical support and justification for grant applications**, capital project fund requests, budget planning and future programs;
- **Serves as education** and information to the public;
- **Identifies and presents opportunities for collaborations** with others in the region and statewide;

The Plan also provides the general public with information about solid waste management in Clark County. More program and historical information is available on the internet or through the Clark County Solid Waste Program.

The Clark County **Solid Waste Program** is administered through the Department of Environmental Services, Solid Waste and Environmental Education Division. The purpose of solid waste management activities in Clark County is to protect and preserve human health, environmental quality and natural resources through efficient, cost-effective programs and services.

## Plan Goals and Objectives

The intent of the Plan is to establish the foundation for a viable and functional system for the proper management of solid and moderate risk wastes in Clark County, both now and in the future. The Plan incorporates the following guiding or philosophical principles:

- **Promote sustainable actions** and behaviors that ensures resources and options for future generations
- **Maintain a solid waste system** that supports economic vitality and conserves natural, fiscal resources
- **Achieve a reasonable balance** among public convenience, public expenses, public health and the environment
- **Maintain flexibility** to anticipate future changes and needs
- **Promote source** reduction, reuse and recycling
- **Increase local control** of solid waste management
- **Maintain accurate waste stream** measurement and monitoring
- **Encourage cooperative and coordinated** efforts among government agencies, citizens and the private sector for managing solid wastes.



# Federal and State Guidelines and State Planning Requirements

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified the following hierarchy as the most environmentally sound strategies for managing municipal solid waste (Figure 1-1). Source reduction and reuse is the most preferred method, followed by recycling and composting. Last is disposal in combustion facilities with energy recovery and properly designed landfills.

As are all counties in the state, Clark County is required by the Washington Solid Waste Management, Reduction and Recycling Act (Revised Code of Washington [RCW] 70.95) to prepare a 20-year Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (the Plan). The Plan must be developed in association with cities and towns located in the county and reviewed (and revised if necessary) at least every 5 years.

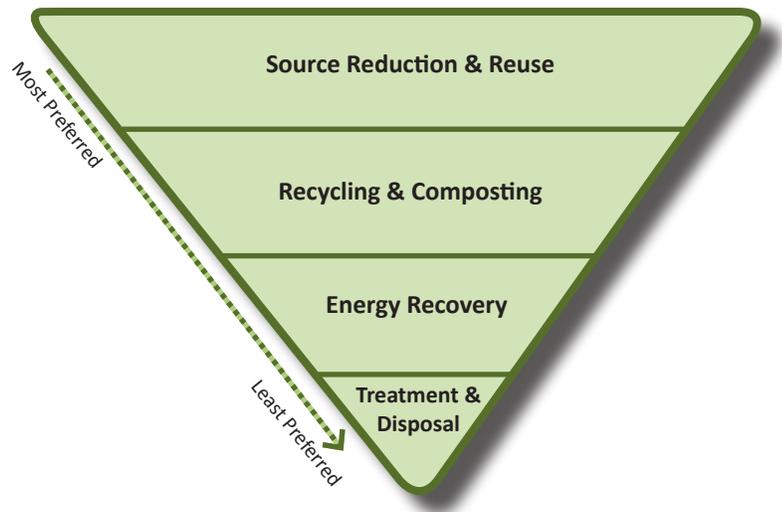


Figure 1-1

The Plan has been prepared in accordance with requirements and intent of RCW 70.95 and the Washington Department of Ecology's *Guidelines for the Development of Local Solid Waste Management Plans and Plan Revisions* (February 2010, Publication No. 10-07-005). Clark County is incorporating into this Plan priorities for solid waste handling which place energy recovery at a higher hierarchy level than the state. The County will continue to emphasize "Reduce, Reuse & Recycle" in its programs and messages. The County has established the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) hierarchy to assist in developing policy and programs for solid waste management.

In accordance with RCW 70.95, the Plan emphasizes the source separation of recyclable materials from solid wastes as a fundamental component of a local jurisdiction's solid waste management strategy, and implements waste reduction and recycling programs to assist the state in effectively reaching the state's goal of a statewide recycling rate of 50% of the waste stream.

The Plan includes an inventory and evaluation of existing programs and facilities, a twenty-year forecast of facility and program needs, an implementation plan and schedule, and methods for monitoring and evaluating solid waste management activities within the County and cities.



# Relationship to Other Plans and Reports

The following plans and reports that are already in effect or are being developed separately may interact with the contents of this Plan. The following summarizes the more significant of these and their connection with the Plan.

## Washington State Solid Waste Management Plan

“We can transition to a society where waste is viewed as inefficient, and where most wastes and toxic substances have been eliminated. This will contribute to economic, social and environmental vitality.”

- “Beyond Waste Plan”  
vision

Washington State, through the Department of Ecology, is required under [RCW 70.95](#) (*The Waste Not Washington Act*) to develop and maintain a long-range plan for the management of solid wastes. The goals and policies expressed in the state plan establish the framework upon which solid waste systems are to be administered and implemented throughout the state. Local plans should be consistent with these goals and policies, unless these management approaches are superseded by new state laws, regulations or plans. The current state plan, *Washington State’s Beyond Waste Plan*, was issued in November 2004 and updated in 2009 and 2014. The vision of the plan views waste as inefficient and challenges programs across the state to target toxics for elimination within one generation.

### 2014 State Waste Plan Sections

1. Managing Hazardous Waste and Materials
2. Managing Solid Wastes and Materials (includes some MRW, building materials)
3. Reducing Impacts of Materials and Products (includes some MRW, building materials)
4. Measuring Progress
5. Providing Outreach and Information

The vision, goals and recommendations of the *Beyond Waste Plan* are being incorporated into this Plan and will be included in program opportunities during the upcoming 5 years.

## Oregon State Solid Waste Management Law

In addition to the requirement of the State of Washington, this Plan must also meet the State of Oregon’s requirements. All out-of-state local government jurisdictions that use Oregon solid waste disposal facilities must comply with Oregon statutes. Clark County and its cities therefore must also meet the applicable Oregon Recycling requirements. In 1983, Oregon Revised Statute ([ORS 459](#)) required source-separated curbside collection for residents. The law was updated in 1991 ([ORS 459A](#)) with additional requirements for curbside collection and education, including curbside recycling, the expansion of the promotion / education of recycling programs and requirements for multi-family facilities to provide recycling options.

## Previous Clark County Solid Waste Management Plans

Solid waste planning in Clark County was initiated in 1967 with the adoption of the County’s first Solid Waste Management Plan. The County adopted updates to the Plan in 1973, 1981, 1985, 1994, 2002, 2008, and this current update. The Plan was also amended in 1986, 1988 and 2006 to address particular focused needs. The Milestones in *Appendix G* provides an overview of the planning history. This Plan is the most current plan for Clark County’s rapidly changing solid waste system and replaces all previous plans.

## Comprehensive Growth Management Plan

The [Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan](#) was updated in 2007 with amendments in 2008, 2009 and 2010. This land use plan established a framework for how Clark County land should be used in the future, including areas designated for urban development and areas identified and designated for rural and natural resource preservation. Plan updates are scheduled for 2016.

## Emergency Debris Plan

The Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency (CRESA) is a regional public safety agency that provides 9-1-1 dispatch, emergency management, and other public safety

related activities to the community. CRESA's service area includes each of the six cities and one town within Clark County as well as the unincorporated areas of the county. These services are provided through an Interlocal Agreement.

Response plans have been prepared and can be seen online at [www.cresa911.org/response-plans](http://www.cresa911.org/response-plans). As a part of their responsibilities, CRESA activates the Emergency Operations Center to help emergency responders effectively coordinate during emergencies. Environmental Services, Public Works and Public Health Departments all participate in the Emergency Operations Center.

During an emergency event, the County will work with the cities, CRESA and the Emergency Operations Center to facilitate and coordinate the removal, collection, and disposal of debris following a disaster. Natural and man-made disasters precipitate a variety of debris. The quantity and type of debris generated from any particular disaster is a function of the location and kind of event experienced, as well as its magnitude, duration, and intensity.

### Moderate Risk Waste Management Plan

The original *Moderate Risk Waste Management Plan* was prepared for both Clark County and Skamania County and was adopted on December 14, 1988. The *Moderate Risk Waste Management Plan* was amended in May 1991, July 1991, July 1992, September 1992 and March of 1994. The two counties prepared separate plans when the *Clark County Moderate Risk Waste Plan* was incorporated as a chapter into the *Clark County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan* (the 2002 and 2008 updates). The *Moderate Risk Waste Plan* has been updated as a chapter in this Plan. In 1997, program responsibility for Moderate Risk Waste for Clark County shifted from the Southwest Washington Health District (now known as Clark County Public Health) to the Clark County Solid Waste Program.

### Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the Plan

A Determination of Non-significance has been issued with this Plan. The *Determination of Non-significance and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Environmental Checklist* for this Plan are in *Appendix B*. This *Checklist* evaluates the environmental impacts associated with implementing the programs or the non-site-specific aspects of the programs and facilities recommended in the Plan.

### Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission Cost Assessment

A cost assessment has been prepared for submittal to the *Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission* (WUTC) as part of the Plan. This cost assessment is required by *RCW 70.95* and provides the WUTC with an opportunity to review and comment on the impacts of implementing the Plan's programs on solid waste collection rates. The report was prepared to conform with the *Cost Assessment Guidelines for Local Solid Waste Management Planning* (Second Edition) revised and issued by the WUTC in August 2001. The cost assessment is presented in *Appendix C*



*Emergency Response Source: C2G Environmental*

## Biosolids Management Plan

Currently, the county, cities and biosolids handlers use EPA's 40 CFR Part 503, [WAC Chapter 173-308](#), and the Washington Department of Ecology's Best Management Practices (BMP's) as guidance to maintain regulatory compliance.



## NPDES Stormwater Management Program

The [NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permits](#) (issued by the Washington Department of Ecology) govern how jurisdictions manage their municipal separated stormwater sewer system (MS4s) to protect stormwater runoff per the Clean Water Act. Clark County is a Phase I permittee while the cities of Battle Ground, Camas, Vancouver and Washougal are Phase II permittees. Secondary permittees include Clark College, Port of Vancouver and Washington State University - Vancouver. The Department of Ecology issued updated modified permits in December 2014 outlining updated requirements for the permittees. The stormwater management programs are designed to reduce the amount of pollutants discharged to waterways, such as streams, lakes and wetlands, from municipal-owned stormwater sewers to the maximum extent practicable. The Solid Waste Program education on proper storage, use, and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials supports the stormwater programs. The Solid Waste Program for Household Hazardous Waste collection and disposal is an important effort to reduce pollutants that may enter stormwater. Other Solid Waste Program actions that support stormwater management are projects or activities that reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers, such as natural gardening. The Green Business program and Business Technical assistance program educates businesses on solid waste issues that may contribute to stormwater pollution.

## Groundwater Management Plan

In order to protect the quality of the existing groundwater resources, the county, cities and major water purveyors have engaged in ongoing groundwater planning. These planning efforts involve close cooperation among local governmental agencies within the county. The primary objective of these planning projects is to develop and implement programs that will protect the quality and quantity of the groundwater resources.

Clark County's Groundwater Management Planning Program was initiated in 1987 following Ecology's recognition of Clark County as a critical groundwater supply area. A network of advisory committees were established to guide the development of plans. Information and programs developed for the planning efforts supports the county's effort to comply with the state Growth Management Act and Federal Clean Water Act. It also provides valuable information to comply with the Endangered Species Act.

The City of Vancouver has the [Water Resources Protection Ordinance](#) to protect the rivers, lakes, streams and groundwater in the community. The Ordinance requires everyone to follow minimum standards that help protect the "critical" aquifers underlying the entire city. It also establishes greater standards of compliance for businesses and industries that manage hazardous materials; creates "Special Protection Areas" around the City's water stations as an additional safeguard; and provides cooperative, cost-effective solutions through technical assistance, education

and public outreach.

A variety of plans and programs are now in place to guide planning efforts, coordination, protection and enforcement related to groundwater resource assets. The [2011 Coordinated Water System Plan Update](#) outlines the various components that are currently in place. The plan outlines the role of the county as well as the cities that utilize the area's aquifers.

## Shoreline Management Plan

The [Washington State Shoreline Management Act](#) requires counties and cities to update their Shoreline Master Programs (SMPs). SMPs govern activities on and near lakes, streams, and rivers. Battle Ground, Camas, Clark County, La Center, Ridgefield, Vancouver, Washougal, and Yacolt partnered in a two- to three-year effort to update their respective SMPs. The plan's process included:



1. Determine "shoreline jurisdiction" or where the SMPs apply;
2. Inventory, analyze, and characterize shoreline functions, ecosystem processes, public access opportunities, shoreline uses, and potential protection and restoration areas;
3. Develop goals, policies and regulations for shorelines regulated by the SMPs. Analyze cumulative impacts;
4. Develop a restoration plan and demonstrate no-net-loss of ecological functions;
5. Adopt individual Shoreline Master Programs; and,
6. The County approved the updated [plan](#) in September 2012. SMP regulations are included in Clark County [Code Chapter 40.460](#).

## System Related Contracts

The County and cities have entered into major long-term contracts with private service providers for solid-waste-related services. The Columbia Resource Company (CRC) contract, between Clark County, the City of Vancouver and CRC, gives CRC responsibility for developing and operating transfer stations and a recycling processing facility. The contract is for processing and marketing of residentially collected recyclables and for transfer, transport and landfill disposal of wastes at the Finley Buttes and Wasco Landfills in Eastern Oregon. CRC is a wholly owned subsidiary of Waste Connections, Inc.

The County and cities have entered into other contracts with private companies for collection of residential recyclable materials and yard debris. Some cities contract for garbage collection if this is not done through municipal crews or through state franchises. Additional contracts have been entered into for the recycling and disposal of household hazardous waste.

### Post Closure Agreements:

*The Disposal Agreement* between Clark County, the City of Vancouver and the Lechner Brothers Land Reclamation Corporation establishes responsibilities for closure, post-closure maintenance and groundwater remediation of the closed Lechner Landfill.



The *Settlement Agreement* is between Clark County, the City of Vancouver, Clark County Disposal Group companies and the WUTC. The agreement establishes funding channels for closure, post-closure maintenance and remediation activities at the Leichner Landfill.

*Other Closed and Decommissioned landfills* - The County contracts for landfill gas monitoring and groundwater monitoring at the closed English Pit Landfill. The Rufener Landfill has been inactive for more than a decade and has been closed and decommissioned. More information on these landfills is located in Chapter 10 Landfill Disposal.

### Solid Waste & Recycling Contractor Services

	Single-family Recycling	Multi-family Recycling	Yard Debris	Garbage
Ridgefield	Contractor: WCW Expires: December 31, 2019 Option to extend for 2 – 5 year periods			
Camas*	Contractor for recycling & yard waste: WCW Expires: December 31, 2019 Option to extend for 4 – 5 year periods			
	Contractor for roll off service: WCW Extended through December 31, 2018 Option to extend for 1 more 5 year period			
Washougal	Contractor: WCW Expires: April 1, 2024 Option to extend for 4 – 5 year periods			
Vancouver	Contractor: WCW Expires: January 31, 2020 Option to extend w/annexations. The City may extend the contract for two additional one-year periods			
County-Urban (includes City of Battle Ground)	Contractor: WCW Expires: December 31, 2018 (one-year extension)		Contractor: WCW Expires: July 31, 2023 with two 1-year options to extend.	WUTC
County-Rural (includes City of La Center, Town of Yacolt)			La Center through WUTC	WUTC

\* *Camas hauls residential*

<b>Regional solid waste disposal system</b> (includes recycling processing) - facilities used by County & all municipalities	Clark County contracts with Columbia Resource Company for the regional long-term disposal system. Contract Expires: December 31, 2021. Option to extend for 1-5 year period. Note: Under State law, the County is required to plan for solid waste facility needs twenty years into the future. After conducting a competitive process, in 1990 Clark County entered into a contract with Columbia Resource Company (CRC) to provide processing, transfer and disposal of municipal solid waste and processing of recyclable materials.
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**Waste Connections of Washington (WCW)** - [www.wasteconnections.com](http://www.wasteconnections.com) ; [www.wcnorthwest.com](http://www.wcnorthwest.com)

**WCW:** Holds contract for School Recycling (Battle Ground, Camas, Evergreen, Hockinson, La Center, Ridgefield, Vancouver, and Washougal school districts). Expires September 31, 2018. No additional options to extend on this contract.

**Stericycle:** Mobile Collection & Door-to-Door. Contract expires: December 31, 2015. [www.stericycle.com](http://www.stericycle.com)

**EmpowerUp:** Contract expires December 31, 2015 for foam collection services.

# Plan Development and Adoption Process

The Solid Waste Advisory Commission (SWAC) used the following evaluation criteria to determine if a recommendation should be implemented for this Plan:

- **A practical commitment to sustainability** that ensures resources and options for future generations
- **Reasonable balance among public convenience, public expenses, public health,** and the environment.  
*Recommendations* should look at solid waste management practices in the context of attempting to balance environmental values/benefits with both economic and social equity considerations and natural resource conservation and environmental health values.
- **Flexibility to anticipate** future changes and needs.  
*Recommendations* should support long term goals and allow for changing circumstances.
- **Commitment to waste prevention,** reduction and recycling.  
*Recommendations* should support the prevention and reduction of toxicity and solid waste as well as encourage recycling and other waste diversion opportunities.
- **Increased local control** of solid waste management.
- **Solid waste services should be regulated** by the appropriate level of government as close to the citizens as possible instead of policies set for other regions. The County and Cities should have the management tools to achieve the goals of the Plan while fostering competition among service providers.
- **Integrity of waste stream measurement** and monitoring.  
*Recommendations* should allow the County to measure, compare and report our past and present efforts in a way that allows us to plan for the future and evaluate the effectiveness of our programs and the resources that we devote to them.
- **Encouragement of cooperative and coordinated** efforts among government agencies, citizens, and the private sector for managing solid wastes.
- **The County should maintain its commitment** to collaborative management of solid waste by informing and involving citizens, other agencies, and the private sector.

The current process for this update involved an internal and external review of the chapters with recommended language changes. Updates include changes in the solid waste system and recommended changes or additions/deletions to alternatives. This language was reviewed by the cities and town. SWAC reviewed each chapter along with staff. This included a status review of Plan recommendations and any suggested changes. Analysis and discussion occurred during the regular monthly SWAC meetings. SWAC reviewed and recommended the Preliminary Draft Plan.

A Preliminary Draft Plan was submitted to the Washington Department of Ecology for review and comment and to the WUTC for evaluation for collection ratemaking purposes. On the basis of the comments received from the Washington Department of Ecology and the WUTC, revisions were made to the Plan. The Plan was reviewed and adopted in public meetings by the participating cities in accordance with the Interlocal Agreements with those jurisdictions. The Plan was adopted by the Clark County Board of Commissioners in a public hearing.

# Plan Modification and Revision

RCW 70.95 requires that the Plan be reviewed and revised, if necessary, at least every five years; updating can occur at the five-year review or at other points in time, as needed. With each update, the Plan must be extended to show a revised 6-year construction and capital acquisition plan and any long-range needs for the next 20 years. The next plan review and update will be scheduled for 2020.

The County and/or participating cities may elect to modify the Plan prior to the full plan update. Minor adjustments to the plan are within the five-year planning window and are termed amendments. In addition, the Washington Department of Ecology maintains the authority to require minor changes to the Plan. For minor revisions, such as not undertaking activities from the 5 or 20-Year Plans, the County will:

- **Explain in writing** how the deviation will better contribute to accomplishing one or more goals of the Plan;
- **Notify all cities** and town;
- **Notify and give the public** an opportunity to comment, either prior to, or at a regular SWAC meeting;
- **Notify the Washington Department of Ecology** of the proposed modification;
- **Discuss the issue with SWAC** and schedule their vote on the changes.

Plan revisions (such as those which undertake actions outside of the 5 or 20 Year Plans, or alter the goals of the Plan) and would go through a full approval process (all cities and towns, the Washington Department of Ecology, plus Council) and required a new or revised WUTC cost assessment.

*End Chapter 1*

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