

# Chapter 2

## ADMINISTRATION

The Solid Waste Management Plan has many different elements, and each is implemented through its own combination of public and private agencies, contracts and laws. The private sector operates practically all solid waste collection, transport, processing and disposal operations in Clark County, while public agencies have responsibility for ensuring their effectiveness and implementing public policies, as well as protecting the public health and welfare. Thus, the public-private relationships set forth in a variety of contracts and laws are vital to the economic health of solid waste management in the county. This chapter looks at the administrative roles of jurisdictions for solid waste management in the county. Chapter 16, Enforcement, reviews solid waste regulations which govern local government, the solid waste industry and solid waste generators. County background, demographic and economic information and data are available at [www.gis.clark.wa.gov](http://www.gis.clark.wa.gov).

**Regulations Governing Local Government** - State law requires the county to prepare and update a 20-year solid waste management plan, including plans for solid waste handling facilities, programs to reduce the amount of waste generated, incentives for source separation, residential recycling collection, education and promotion on waste reduction and recycling and plans to manage moderate risk wastes. The Washington Department of Ecology enforces the planning requirement, in part, through distribution of grant funds for projects which help implement the plan. State law, [RCW 36.58](#), [RCW 35.21](#), [RCW 81.77](#), regulates how cities and counties contract for solid waste services and how they generate revenues to fund solid waste management activities. Refer to Chapter 17, Funding and Financing, to review funding options.

### Administrative Roles

Local governments, collection, disposal and processing companies, regulatory agencies and a variety of other businesses, agencies and organizations work together to manage solid waste in Clark County. Administration is a cooperative effort between city and county elected officials, county and municipal staff, and state agencies.

#### Clark County

**Department of Environmental Services** - Solid Waste and Environmental Education Division administers the Solid Waste Program. This includes managing the long term solid waste planning and facility development within the County. Through this authority, the County provides regional coordination, regional services, services to cities and other agencies and local services in the unincorporated areas of the county.

The County:

- Prepares and updates the County's 20-year Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan;
- Works with over 30 public and private agencies to coordinate solid waste management activities, including the County [Solid Waste Advisory Commission \(SWAC\)](#);
- Contracts for long-term disposal of waste generated throughout the county and for household hazardous waste collection and disposal;
- Supervises maintenance and monitoring of two closed landfills in the county;
- Provides contract administration services to cities and school districts;
- Promotes waste reduction through a variety of educational efforts throughout the county;
- Provides technical assistance on proper waste management and related environmental topics to businesses throughout the county;
- Contracts for recycling collection programs in the unincorporated areas, including residential curbside and multi-family recycling collection, yard debris collection and recycling collection at schools;
- Plans for potential recovery or disposal of disaster related debris.

**Clark County Public Health** - the designated enforcement agency for solid waste regulations in Clark County. Public Health administers the state's permit system for solid waste facilities, such as landfills and transfer stations, and enforces the State's Solid Waste Handling Standards, including handling of municipal and industrial sludges and petroleum-contaminated soils. Public Health enforces County code for regulations on solid waste, hazardous waste, and biomedical waste and responds to complaints regarding illegal dumping, burying and accumulations of waste on private property.

## Clark County Solid Waste Advisory Commission

Clark County's **Solid Waste Advisory Commission (SWAC)** was originally formed in 1977 by Clark County Ordinance 1977-10-2, in accordance with the provisions of RCW 70.95. This ordinance, as modified over time, has been codified as Clark County Code (CCC) Chapter 24.16. Clark County's SWAC currently consists of nine members, appointed by the Clark County Board of Commissioners, and represents the following interests:

- Vancouver City Council
- Councils of remaining cities, towns
- Public interest groups
- Clark County business community
- Solid waste management industry
- Citizens of North Clark County
- Citizens of Southeast Clark County
- Citizens of Southwest Clark County
- Citizens of Clark County at large

The role of the SWAC is to advise the County Board of Commissioners on solid waste matters; to comment on rules, policies and ordinances; to assist in the development of plan updates; to serve as a means for citizens, industry or other bodies and individuals to participate in solid waste planning; and to advise on any other solid waste matters, as directed by the Board. The SWAC has reviewed and actively participated in the preparation of the Plan.

## Cities within Clark County

State law assigns solid waste planning authority to individual local governments (**RCW 70.95.08**) and requires each county in the state to prepare a plan in cooperation with cities and towns within that county. Cities may choose from the following three options in order to meet their planning requirements:

- Prepare and deliver, to the county auditor, a plan for the city's own solid waste management to be integrated into the county's plan;
- Enter into an agreement with the county in which the city participates in preparing a joint city-county plan for solid waste management;
- Authorize the county to prepare a plan for the city's solid waste management to be included in the county's plan.

The local governments who participate in the preparation of this joint county-city *Solid Waste Management Plan*, by interlocal agreement with the County, are the Cities of Battle Ground, Camas, La Center, Ridgefield, Vancouver, Washougal, and the Town of Yacolt. The City of Woodland, a small portion of which lies in northwest Clark County and the remainder in Cowlitz County, is participating in *Cowlitz County's Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan*. After preparation of the Plan, participating jurisdictions will formally consider adoption of the Plan through local resolutions of adoption. Interlocal agreements with the participating cities are included in *Appendix D* and includes language on mandatory regional coordination to provide direction to the County concerning the Regional Solid Waste System.

A list of cities and their services are as follows:

**City of Vancouver** - Accounts for about 40% of the county’s residents. City of Vancouver staff performs the following roles:

- Administers a recycling (both single and multi-family), yard debris and garbage collection contract for the city. This function includes serving as a liaison between the collection contractor and customers on billing and service issues, as well as developing rate structures and rate modeling;
- Operates an on-going neighborhood clean-up program and a leaf disposal program;
- Licenses haulers of commercially-generated recyclable materials;
- Coordinates with contractor to offer a base level of recycling for all commercial customers
- Participates in and coordinates with the educational programs offered by the County, the collection contractor, and other partners;
- Maintains data on city programs and produces informational materials and reports;
- Reviews and provides input into county solid waste program annual priorities, project work plans, publications and proposed annual budgets;
- Administers and enforces Vancouver solid waste ordinances and responds to complaints.

**City of Camas** - Provides garbage collection with city staff and vehicles and contracts for recycling collection, yard debris, and other services.

**City of Washougal** - Contracts for garbage, recycling and yard debris collection.

**City of Ridgefield** - Contracts for garbage, recycling and yard debris collection.

**City of Battle Ground** - Participates in Clark County’s recycling collection contracts for single-family, multi-family and yard debris.

**Yacolt and La Center** - Receive recycling collection services through county-administered contracts.

**Garbage collection in Battle Ground, Yacolt and La Center** are administered through the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC). The cities conduct periodic clean-up events within their borders. La Center administers yard debris collection through the WUTC.

**Cities review and provide input** into county solid waste program annual priorities, project work plans, publications and proposed annual budgets.

The region’s cities and town account for 52.5% of the population and 60.5% of the region’s disposed waste stream.

**Table 2-1 Percent of Waste Volumes by Population Center**

Jurisdiction	% of Waste	% of Population
Battle Ground	3.5%	4.2%
Camas	4.5%	4.7%
Clark County	39.5%	47.5%
La Center	0.6%	0.7%
Ridgefield	1.7%	1.4%
Vancouver	45.1%	37.8%
Washougal	4.8%	3.4%
Yacolt	0.3%	0.4%
	100.0%	100.0%
Cities Combined	60.5%	52.5%

Source: Data Report (Plan Appendix J), an average of waste volumes for the last 5 years, population data was taken from the Washington Office of Financial Management.

## Regional Solid Waste System Steering Committee

Agreements between the County and the cities and town includes language outlining the role of the Regional Solid Waste System Steering Committee (the "RSWSSC"). The role of the RSWSSC is to provide direction to the County concerning the development of the Regional Solid Waste System, and its infrastructure, and the implementation of the recommended priorities and programs set forth in the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan. The RSWSSC provides recommendations to the County on matters such as: contracts; budgets; public education, outreach and marketing; resource sharing; system analysis and improvements. The RSWSSC reviews the priorities for waste reduction and waste recycling set forth in the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan, to assure that these priorities are incorporated in the budget proposals and work programs of member organizations, to assess the results of programs and projects and to assure that future infrastructure needs are addressed through operational practices and procedures. The RSWSSC will maintain regular communication with the Clark County Solid Waste Advisory Commission and elected officials.

## Southwest Washington Clean Air Agency

The Southwest Washington Clean Air Agency (SWCAA) is responsible for enforcing federal, state and local outdoor air quality standards and regulations in Clark, Skamania, Lewis, Wahkiakum and Cowlitz counties. The primary role of SWCAA, with respect to solid waste management, is regulation of emissions from incinerators and landfill gas control systems and implementation of the ban on outside burning in the non-attainment areas of the county. This burn ban is described in the chapter on *Enforcement*.

## Washington Department of Ecology

The Washington Department of Ecology is the state agency responsible for oversight of solid waste management. Since passage of the first Solid Waste Management Act in 1969, the focus of solid waste laws and regulations in the state has evolved from the closing of open burning dumps to the current implementation of a comprehensive statewide management plan, Beyond Waste, that relies on sophisticated management strategies. The state retains authority for setting standards for solid waste handling systems, while operations and management responsibilities are generally delegated to local governments. The Washington Department of Ecology controls compliance with [RCW 70.95](#), [WAC 173-304](#), and [WAC 173-350](#) through its review and approval of solid waste management plans and facility permits. Regulatory authority over solid waste facilities is delegated by the state to local jurisdictional health departments. Approval of permits by local health departments may be appealed by the Washington Department of Ecology to the Washington Pollution Control Hearings Board.



*Compost Facility Operator Training*

Source: WA Department of Ecology, D. Corum

**Washington  
Utilities  
and  
Transportation  
Commission**

The **Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC)** regulates solid waste collection activities under **RCW 81.77**, through the issuance of certificates entitling private companies to provide solid waste collection services of a certain type — garbage, refuse and demolition waste — within specified geographic areas of the state. The authority of the WUTC, under RCW 81.77, is limited to collection of solid waste from generators and does not extend directly to the regulation of hauling solid waste from transfer stations.

Under RCW 81.77, the WUTC also regulates the collection of source-separated recyclable materials from residences, if the local government does not contract for that service. The state’s solid waste statutes do not give the WUTC the authority to regulate the collection or transportation of recyclable materials from drop-boxes or buy-back centers; nor, do the statutes provide authority for regulating the collection of recyclables from commercial or industrial generators. Transportation of these materials is regulated under Chapter 81.80 or is taken on by the cities. Although the WUTC does have authority to regulate this transportation, this authority is not exclusive.

Administrative roles in solid waste collection are summarized in Table 2-1. Administrative roles for solid waste management in Clark County are summarized in Table 2-2.

**Table 2-2 Waste Collection Administration in Clark County**

Geographic Area	Administering Agency & Operator		
	<i>Garbage</i>	<i>Recyclables</i>	<i>Yard Debris</i>
Unincorporated Clark County	WUTC, WCW	County Contracts, WCW	County Contract WCW
Vancouver	City Contract WCW	City Contract WCW	City Contract WCW
Camas	City, WCW	City Contract WCW	City Contract WCW
Washougal	City Contract WCW	City contract WCW	City Contract WCW
Ridgefield	City Contract, WCW	City Contract WCW	City Contract WCW
Battle Ground	WUTC, WCW	County Contracts WCW	City Contract WCW
La Center	WUTC, WCW	County Contracts WCW	WUTC
Yacolt	WUTC, WCW	County Contracts WCW	N.A.

WUTC - Washington Utilities & Transportation Commission;  
 WCW - Waste Connections of Washington  
 N.A. - Not Available

**Table 2-3: Solid Waste Management Administrative Roles in Clark County**

Solid Waste Roles	Responsible Agencies	
	Primary	Secondary
Regional Plan	Clark County	Cities, Ecology, WUTC, SWAC
Regional coordination	Clark County	SWAC, Cities, neighboring jurisdiction
Long-term safe disposal (includes transfer & transport)	Clark County	Ecology, SWAC, Cities
MRW collection & disposal	Clark County	
Monitor closed landfills	Clark County	Ecology
Coordinate regional waste reduction education & promotion	Clark County	Cities, neighboring jurisdictions
Regional MRW Education	Clark County	Cities
Local education & promotion	Clark County, Cities	
Environmental assistance to businesses	Clark County, Cities	
Garbage collection administration	WUTC, Cities	Clark County
Recycling collection administration	Clark County, Cities, WUTC	
Recyclables processing	Clark County	
Local clean-ups, seasonal collections	Cities, Clark County	
Solid Waste management data & reports	Clark County, Cities	Ecology
Development of new solid waste programs	Clark County, Cities	Ecology
Siting of solid waste handling facilities	Clark County, Cities	Ecology
Plans for potential recovery or disposal of disaster related debris	Clark County, Cities, neighboring jurisdictions (i.e. Metro, DEQ)	

# Recommendations

- 1. Maintain a Regional Solid Waste System Steering Committee (RSWSSC) through Interlocal Agreements** to formalize roles, make recommendations of such matters as: contracts; budgets; public education; outreach and marketing; resource sharing; system analysis and improvements. (2-3)
- 2. Coordinate with other agencies for educational and technical assistance programs.** (2-3)
- 3. Work with Portland Metro to advance proposals that would mutually benefit both regions;** provide for a reciprocal exchange of technical assistance and input for areas of mutual concern; enhance communication; and when appropriate use joint contracts. (1-3)

*End of Chapter 2*

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