

## **Trash and Recycling Collection Study Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: What is the Integrated Solid Waste Management Program and why does the City need one?**

**A:** Approved by voters in 1991, the ISWMP is a system to collectively manage the City's landfill, recycling collection centers, yardwaste recycling center, hazardous household chemical collection center, and recycling education programs. Each component of this system works in concert with the others to provide Springfield citizens a way to dispose of their trash. Solid Waste disposal is an essential function of our community, and without a program to manage the overall system, Springfield citizens would have limited options for trash disposal. The ISWMS does not receive tax revenue nor does it fund other programs.

**Q: Do Springfield citizens benefit from owning their own landfill?**

**A:** Springfield is one of a few communities in Missouri that owns and operates its own landfill. This is an enormous benefit to our citizens for a number of reasons. A local landfill provides our community with.....

.....a source of funding for community programs such as yardwaste recycling and hazardous household chemical collection. Because the City owns the landfill, and the landfill does not make a "profit", all revenue collected at the landfill is used to support solid waste services in our community.

.....a local option for trash disposal. Without a local landfill, every piece of trash in Springfield would have to be transported approximately 60 miles to another landfill.

.....a local disposal option for area homes and businesses. The Springfield landfill has historically maintained the lowest tipping fees in the state. This is a huge benefit to area businesses and trash haulers.

**Q: Why should I care about recycling?**

**A:** Landfills are an environmentally friendly way to dispose of solid waste. However, all landfills have a limited amount of space. Recycling allows us to reduce the amount of waste going to the landfill, preserving this space for future generations. In addition, recyclable materials can be reused or repurposed, which reduces our dependence on the finite sources of new materials our planet has to offer.

**Q: If more citizens recycle, won't that negatively impact revenue at the landfill, which is used to fund much of our current recycling efforts?**

**A:** Approximately 78% of the material that comes to the landfill is currently recyclable. If we divert some of this material away from the landfill through recycling, there would presumably be less material and, thus, less revenue (since the landfill charges by the ton). However, some of this loss in revenue is offset by the value of the recycled materials. In addition, economies of scale can create new markets for some of these materials, making them more valuable. And finally, if recycling efforts were to increase through citizen efforts, such as curbside recycling collection, there would be less funding needed for community-wide programs such as the recycling drop-off sites.

**Q: What options does the City have for managing Solid Waste in our community?**

**A:** The combination of options are limitless, but our community has three basic tools to consider:

- 1) Our Community can decide **WHO** picks up the trash: In many communities, trash collection is done through franchise agreements between private waste haulers and the City.
- 2) Our Community can decide **HOW** trash is collected: By making changes to the City Code, we can establish rules regarding pickup times, set out times, and services offered.
- 3) Our Community can decide **WHERE** their trash goes: Since Springfield owns its own landfill, we can enact flow control ordinances which require a certain amount of trash goes to our landfill. The revenue from these landfill fees are used to fund community programs related to solid waste.

**Q: Why are we doing something now?**

**A:** There are two reasons:

- 1) For several years, Citizens have been asking that the City address concerns with the current system where several trash companies all serve the same street. These concerns included more consistent trash service, reduced noise and traffic congestion from trash trucks, reduced impacts of trash trucks on public infrastructure, as well as more services and better recycling options.
- 2) The City currently has contracts with two of the largest haulers to bring trash to the City landfill. This trash creates the stable funding stream that is used to support the overall Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan. These two contracts expire in 2019 and a new plan is needed to make sure Springfield citizens have options available for recycling, yard waste, and hazardous chemicals. If we don't address the funding portion of the ISWMP, then many of these services would likely go away.