

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan for Hall County and its Municipalities is a result of the planning requirements established by the Georgia Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act. This Act requires that two goals be met by the plan:

1. Achievement of a 25% per capita reduction in solid waste disposed of by 1996, based on the amount disposed of in FY 1992; and
2. Assurance of adequate solid waste handling capability and capacity for the subsequent 10-year period.

The plan includes the following elements:

1. Waste Disposal Stream Analysis
2. Waste Reduction
3. Collection
4. Disposal
5. Land Limitations
6. Education and Public Involvement
7. Litter Reduction and Beautification (not required by DCA)
8. Implementation Schedule

Waste Disposal Stream Analysis

Source, composition and generation is dealt with in this element. An analysis of available data found the following breakdown of all Hall County generated waste disposed at in-county and out of county landfills by source for 2002.

Waste Sources Delivered to Hall County Landfill

| | November 13-25, 1991 | October 20-25, 2003 |
|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Commercial | 56.8% | 16.6% |
| Industrial | 28.5% | 21.6% |
| Residential | 14.7% | 52.6% |
| Construction/Demolition | N/A | 9.2% |

Total Hall County Waste Generation

The sum of all waste generated and disposed within the county, as well as all waste generated within the county and exported to out of county disposal facilities gives the total waste generation from Hall County as 246,853 tons in 2002.

Disposition of Hall County Generated Waste 2002

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|
| Hall County Candler Road Landfill | 67,528 tons | 26% |
| RTS Landfill | 88,000 tons | 33% |
| Crystal Creek Landfill | 15,600 tons* | 6% |
| Exported | 91,325 tons | 35% |
| Total | 262,453 | |

* estimated at 1,000 cu. yds./week and 600 lbs./cu. yd.

Assuming that virtually all of the waste exported from Hall County is commercial and industrial, except for the documented 1,065 tons known to be exported by cities (residential), would result in the breakdown shown below. It is interesting to note that the overall contribution of residential waste to the total is still roughly 15% (see Table 1). The vast majority of waste generated in Hall County is still from other than residential sources.

Waste Generated By Source 2002

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Commercial/Industrial | 47% |
| Residential | 15% |
| Construction/Demolition | 38% |

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Waste Reduction

EnviroShare Program

This successful local program should be continued and expanded, in conjunction with the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce. The materials exchange component should continue to include materials matching via e-mail and the Internet through the www.enviroshare.org web site to those non-profit groups and agencies doing “public works” in Hall County. This could provide them with needed non-financial resources to benefit the community while diverting waste from disposal. Ways to facilitate materials exchange with the general populace should also be explored.

Cooperative marketing of recyclables should be pursued to assist businesses.

Education and Enforcement

Citizens need to be educated regarding efforts that may be implemented in the household to reduce waste generation. This educational program should be conducted by Resource Recovery. The county should support the continuance of state funding, through the State’s Solid Waste Trust Fund for education and enforcement in regards to solid waste management. When the funding mechanism sunsets in 2005, the County should lobby, through ACCG (Association County Commissioners of Georgia) for renewal.

Drop and Swaps

Drop and swaps are one-day events that can be offered for the purpose of reusing items such as paints and furniture. Such programs have been successful in other areas. The same could also be done with household hazardous wastes on a more limited basis.

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Drop Off Recycling

The current drop off recycling program at compactor sites should be continued and expanded. Additional recycling opportunities should be provided as warranted/available. The additional materials that should be considered include personal computers, due to their anticipated increase in the waste stream and their heavy metals content.

Recycling and Composting Bins Distribution

Home composting units could be distributed at reduced cost to residents of the planning area. Possible state funding should be pursued via grants. Additionally, waste pallets should be made available for use in making home composting bins. Educational efforts promoting home composting should be part of the educational outreach program.

Study Curbside Recycling-County

Curbside recycling would be included in the recommended collection system analysis.

Drop Off Collection Frequency Changes

To better serve residents, a goal of changing collection frequency of recycling roll offs from collection as determined by a set schedule to collection on an as needed basis should be pursued.

Curbside Recycling-Cities

Curbside recycling should be practiced in any municipality that offers curbside refuse collection, with the possible exception of Gillsville, which could do well with a drop off program.

Commercial/Industrial Recycling

A focused effort to show businesses that waste reduction can save them money must be launched. This should be continued via the EnviroShare program and with possible assistance from the Chamber's Environmental Management Committee and others.

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Recycling Center

An evaluation of the Chestnut St. facility should be conducted as to adequacy of the facility to accommodate additional growth during the planning period. This evaluation could also include the ability to process up to 50 tons per day of commingled recyclables.

Collection

Municipalities

Municipalities offering solid waste collection should require curbside collection.

Recycling should mimic solid waste collection by also being collected at the curbside.

Residents would be required to separate recyclables from solid waste and place both at the curb for collection. Collection of refuse and recyclables would be once per week.

Municipalities should continue to handle residential waste collection or contract for service with qualifying private contractors. Privatization of commercial and industrial wastes collection should be encouraged.

Yard trimmings should be collected separately at the curb for separate management.

County

The existing transfer station system should be evaluated. It is recommended that the Solid Waste Plan Implementation Committee (PIC) be given the task of looking into the many issues, serving as a conduit for public input and developing recommendations, which may include identification of further information needs and options for further study. This committee could possibly recommend the hiring of a consulting firm to undertake a thorough study.

Disposal

Hall County's current landfill, Candler Road Landfill, is projected to have in excess of 30 years capacity remaining. This is more than adequate to ensure the required ten year disposal capacity. Measures should be continue to be undertaken, such as waste reduction

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and alternative daily cover to extend its useful life still further. Alternative daily cover practices can have the equivalent impact of as much as a 10.5% waste reduction.

Land Limitation

In regard to plan consistency of solid waste handling facilities, the following are recommended:

1. Financial assurance provisions should be investigated and developed more fully than possible here, to include specific minimums for various types of solid waste handling facilities.
2. The need for local ordinances to back these key plan consistency provisions should be investigated as well as a determination as to whether each municipality must adopt similar ordinances.

Education and Public Involvement

Educational efforts will work through the combined use of available resources consisting of organizations, media, facilities, and special promotions and programs.

The Chamber of Commerce should conduct workshops for local businesses to provide them information regarding how they can implement waste reduction efforts.

A speakers bureau, consisting of representatives from Resource Recovery, county and city sanitation departments, Keep Hall Beautiful and others, should be formed to make educational presentations to professional, business, church organizations, and others.

Hispanic Community Needs

Due to the county's considerable Hispanic population, consideration needs to be given to this segment of the population and the communications difficulty resulting from the language barrier and cultural differences. There appears to be a need for more and perhaps, personalized, one on one, communication.

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The effort would involve many groups and agencies, such as, but not limited to, local Hispanic organizations, Keep Hall Beautiful, Hall County Department of Public Works, Gainesville Department of Public Works and the citizens in the neighborhoods themselves. The goals of the sweep program would be an improved quality of life in the particular neighborhoods and the planning region and a lessened concern of potential code violations.

Solid Waste Management in Times of Disasters

Weather-related or man-made disasters may result in quantities of wastes requiring special operations. The severity and manner of a disaster will dictate how the planning region will react with respect to solid waste management functions. A localized, less severe event that might generate debris, which could be dealt with by the affected local government on its own. However, a more severe or widespread event dictates activation of a county-wide response.

Hall County and all the municipalities in the county have adopted a “Local Government Resolution for Emergency Management”, which places coordinated emergency management functions with Hall County, as the lead, through the Emergency Management Agency Director.

In responding to disasters, public safety is always job one. After this, operations will proceed with consideration given to reduction measures, collection and disposal. As when dealing with past disasters to hit the planning area, a system of staging areas would be utilized to amass debris until further arrangements could be made.

Contingency plans are in place to handle collection and disposal in times when back up operations are needed.

Implementation Schedule

Costs for collection should continue to be funded by self-supporting enterprise funds. Enterprise funding of solid waste management should be developed for those without

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them. Expenses must be covered by revenues generated by users of the system. Variable rates, where users pay according to the amount of waste generated, should be implemented.

A special local option sales tax (SPLOST) should be considered to provide the funding needed for constructing and equipping new facilities necessary to carry out this plan. Thereafter, operation and maintenance should be funded through a specific enterprise fund.

There should be no direct charges assessed residents for participation in waste reduction activities such as recycling, and drop and swaps. In some cases, such as household hazardous waste collection programs, which are quite costly, user fees could be considered to offset costs.