



# 2022 Solid Waste Progress Report

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# Glossary

**Generator:** A person or business whose daily activities create solid waste.

**Household hazardous waste:** Items found in the home like cleaning supplies, aerosols, antifreeze, paints and solvents, lawn and garden products, and most other products labeled dangerous, flammable, poison, combustible or corrosive.

**Municipal solid waste (MSW):** Trash created by individuals and businesses.

**Organics:** Materials like food scraps, yard waste and compostable paper.

**Per capita generation:** How much solid waste each person in Dakota County produces.

**Resource recovery:** The process of converting waste into energy. On the preferred waste management hierarchy, resource recovery is one step above using a landfill.

**Waste abatement:** The practice of reducing waste.

**Waste diversion:** Redirecting waste from landfills.

# Introduction

The 2022 Solid Waste Progress Report provides an update on the implementation of Dakota County’s (County) 2018 – 2038 Dakota County Solid Waste Master Plan (Master Plan), including progress toward state waste diversion goals and results for county waste management programs.

Minnesota Statute requires metropolitan counties to have solid waste plans that identify strategies to meet waste diversion goals found in the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency’s (MPCA) Metropolitan Solid Waste Policy Plan. The MPCA’s [2016 – 2036 Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Policy Plan](#) (Policy Plan) set waste management objectives for Twin Cities Metropolitan Area counties for each waste management method in order to achieve legislative goals, including the statutory goal to recycle 75 percent of total solid waste by 2030 (includes organics diversion; Minn. Stat. § 115A.551).

Table 1: MPCA Policy Plan Objectives for Municipal Solid Waste Management

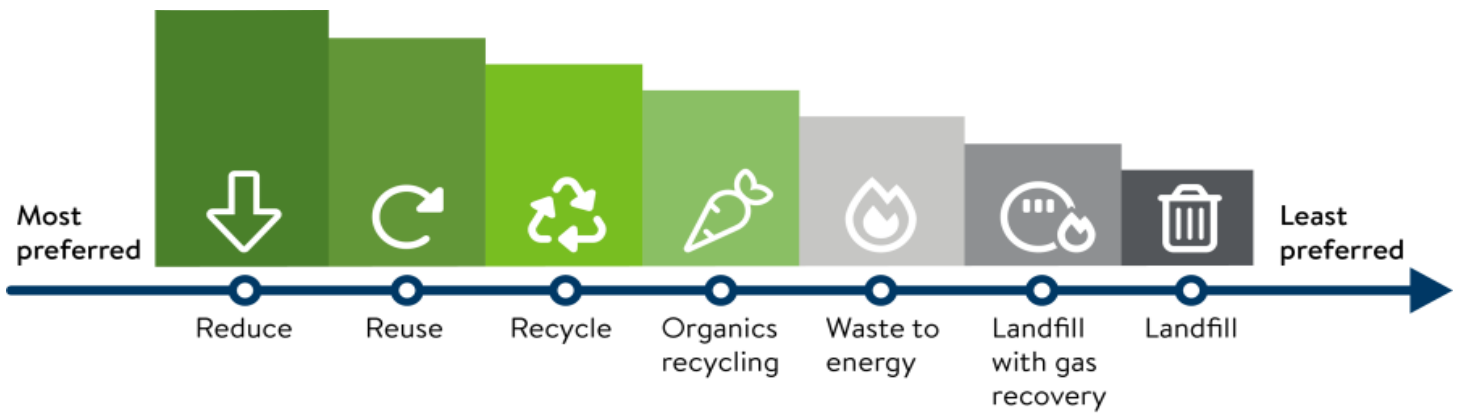
Management Method	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2020 Goal	2025 Goal	2030 Goal
Source Reduction and Reuse			1.5%	3%	4%
Recycling and Organics	54%	55%	63%	68%	75%
Resource Recovery	2%	1%	35%	31%	24%
Maximum Land Disposal	44%	44%	2%	1%	1%

Dakota County developed its Master Plan in 2018 to make progress the goal of recycling 75 percent of waste by 2030. The Master Plan demonstrates Dakota County’s commitment to its goal for “A healthy environment with quality natural areas that protects and maintains natural resources for the health and enjoyment of current and future residents.” The Master Plan provides a framework for the County, residents, businesses, schools districts, cities, the waste industry and others to properly manage municipal solid waste (MSW). Strategies focus on increased use of existing educational, regulatory, and financial tools, increased accountability and partnerships, and focused work in new areas such as multifamily residences, multi-unit residential buildings and commercial large-volume generators.

## Waste management summary

Dakota County’s waste management goals are guided by Minnesota’s waste management hierarchy, pictured below. The waste hierarchy uses a preferred order of management: waste reduction, reuse, recycling and organics recycling before controlled waste incineration (waste to energy) or disposal in landfills. The waste management hierarchy directs Minnesotans to manage waste to have the biggest environmental benefits. By prioritizing waste reduction and recycling over permanent disposal options like waste to energy and landfilling, the waste management hierarchy helps Minnesotans manage waste in a fashion that best protects the environment and public health (Minn. Stat. § 115A.02).

County programs and initiatives use this preferred order. Many programs are new or continuously adjusted to meet the needs of our community, with some of the benefits not yet realized.



## Progress towards state goals

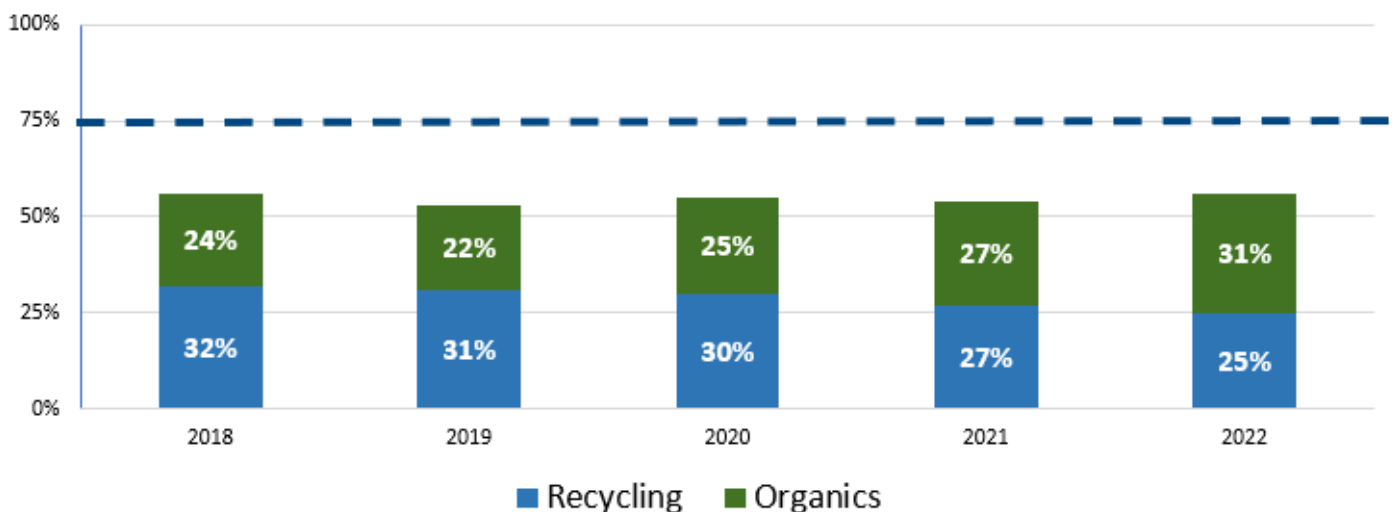
In 2022, Dakota County generated 524,511 tons of solid waste -- recyclables, organics (food scraps) and trash—a two percent increase from 2021.

Material Managed	2021	2022	Percent difference
Recycling	139,762	130,102	-7 percent
Organics	139,632	160,377	+15 percent
Combined	279,394	290,478	+4 percent

- 55 percent of waste was recycled or managed as organics (recovered to feed people and animals or composted)
- 1 percent of waste was sent for resource recovery
- 44 percent was landfilled

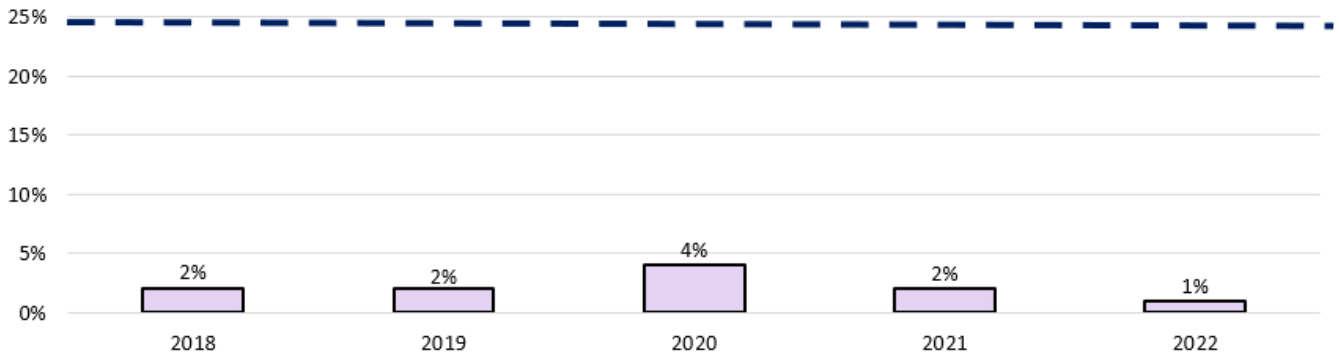
## 56 percent of waste kept out of landfills in 2022

**Recycling and Organics Rates**  
2030 Goal: 75%



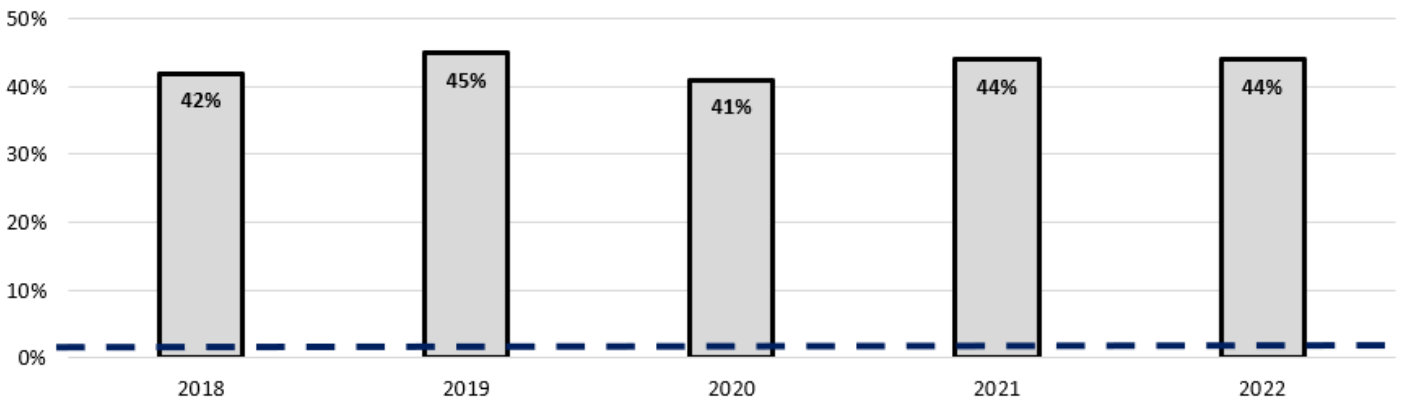
### Resource Recovery Rates

2030 Goal: 24%



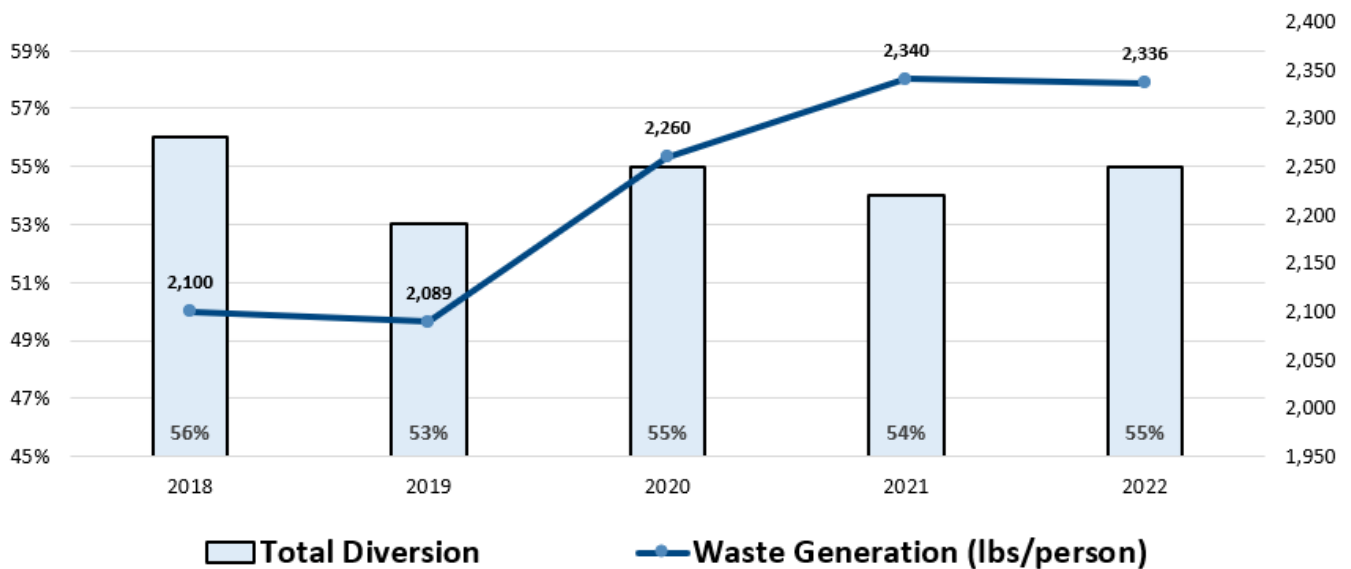
### Landfill Disposal Rate

Maximum 2030 Goal: 1%



### Waste Diversion vs. Waste Generation per Person (lbs)

Diversion rate includes recycling and organics



# Waste Reduction & Reuse

Dakota County uses the per capita generation of MSW to track waste reduction. Overall waste in the county increased by two percent in 2022 compared to 2021. However, the total amount of MSW created per person in the county decreased slightly from 2,340 pounds in 2021 to 2,336 pounds in 2022.

The county offers several programs, such as Fix-It Clinics, swaps and collections, to encourage waste reduction and reuse.

## Waste Reduction

### Fix-It Clinics

Dakota County Fix-It Clinics provide free, hands-on assistance from knowledgeable volunteers to troubleshoot and repair broken household items. These events help build community and skills and keep useful items like clothes, small appliances, lamps and more out of the landfill.

In 2022:

- The County hosted 12 monthly clinics at rotating libraries and city locations.
- Out of the 661 total items brought to the clinics, 89 percent was repaired onsite, or the resident was shown how to fix an item later.
- 47 volunteers helped 384 residents repair their items.
- Nearly 31,000 pounds of items were kept from being trashed.



### Community swaps and collections

The county's Community Waste Abatement Program provides funding and resources to cities to host reuse opportunities for residents. With help from county funding, cities organized 14 collections for reuse, including one swap for gardening tools, multiple winter clothing swaps, three clothing/textile collections, six athletic equipment collections, an entertainment (game) swap, a Halloween costume swap and a furniture collection.

### Success Story: Outdoor gear swaps

The county hosted two outdoor gear swaps at county parks.

- 131 residents participated.
- Residents brought a total of 291 items and swapped 194 items. The remaining gear was donated to reuse organizations, including to a local non-profit organization that provides resources to individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Over 900 pounds of gear was reused instead of going to the landfill.

### Reducing waste in schools

Dakota County provides funding and assistance to schools to implement or improve recycling and organics diversion projects (e.g., technical assistance, containers, labels). While the grant program was modified to include support for waste reduction and reuse activities, annual fund allocations were not able to meet all school's needs.

**Success Story: Dakota County awarded MPCA Waste Reduction and Reuse Grant**

To increase waste reduction practices in schools, Dakota County applied for the MPCA's Waste Reduction and Reuse Grant and was awarded \$55,174 to purchase reusable products for schools, including metal utensils, reusable trays and bulk milk dispensers (including reusable cups). The use of these products helps keep single-use products out of the landfill. Staff are partnering with eight schools in four school districts over the multi-year grant to increase use of reusable products in cafeteria and food service areas.

## Reuse

**Success Story: Connecting people with mattresses**

For the third year, Dakota County partnered with Certified Recycling, a private company that recycles mattresses, to offer affordable curbside pickup of mattresses, making it easy for residents to recycle or donate their mattresses and box springs. Certified Recycling picked up from 289 homes, including 49 multifamily residences. Twenty-four mattresses and box springs in good condition were separated and donated to the non-profit organization Bridging and provided to people in need.

**Reuse at The Recycling Zone**

The Reuse Zone is located at The Recycling Zone, Dakota County's household hazardous waste and recycling drop off facility. The Reuse Zone puts out dropped off items still in good condition for reuse. Items are stocked daily during open hours and residents can shop items for free. This year, 309,539 pounds of items such as paint and household cleaners were reused by residents, saving the county \$147,483 in disposal costs.

**Reuse in county operations**

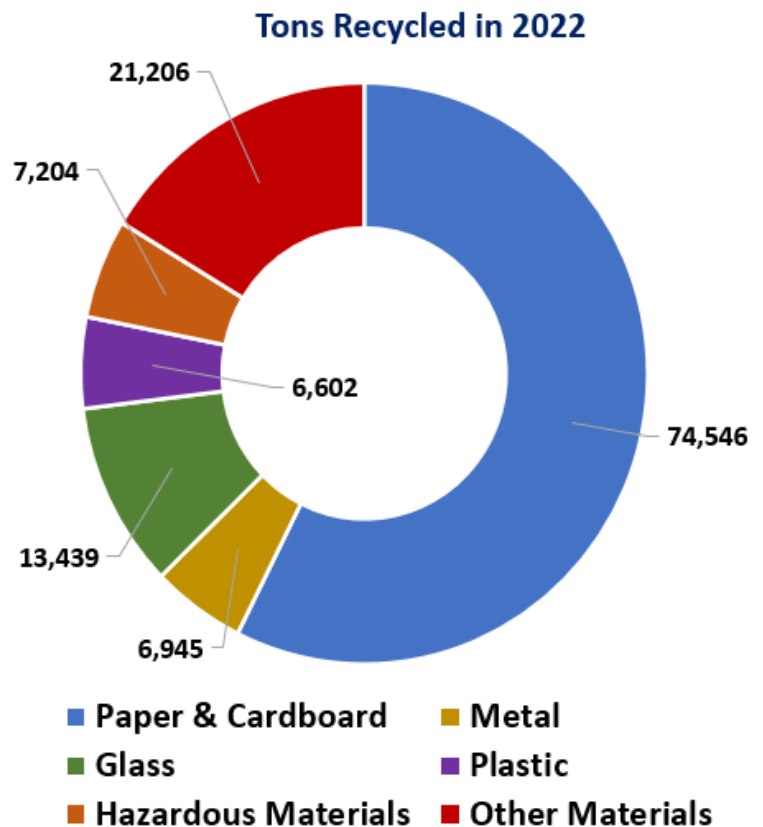
Dakota County held 113 public auctions for surplus county equipment such as benches, tables, security cameras and cabinets. The County sold 47 items and collected 21,819 pounds of electronic waste for recycling.

# Recycling

The Master Plan’s recycling strategies focus on all sectors – public, commercial, residential, schools and multifamily residences.

In 2022, total recycling decreased by 7 percent, from 139,762 tons in 2021 to 130,102 tons in 2022. Overall, Dakota County residents and businesses recycled 25 percent of their solid waste.

- ↑ Plastic recycling increased by 37 percent (1,773 tons)
- ↑ Other recyclable materials – appliances, tires, carpet, electronics, clothing, mattress/box springs and batteries – increased by 14 percent (2,549 tons)
- ↓ Paper and cardboard recycling decreased by 4 percent (2,992 tons)
- ↓ Glass recycling decreased by 3 percent (356 tons)
- ↓ Metal recycling decreased by 57 percent (9,214 tons)
- ↓ Overall recycling decreased by 7 percent (9,660 tons)



## Recycling in cities

Municipalities in Dakota County are required to implement solid waste abatement programs that align with county’s Master Plan. Through the Community Waste Abatement Grant Program, Dakota County provided funding and assistance to 14 cities to implement waste recycling activities, such as recycling education for residents, special collection events for challenging materials and recycling bins in public spaces.

- Cities conducted 23 in-person community events to teach nearly 3,500 residents about waste reduction and recycling.
- 100 percent of single and multifamily households (161,529) received articles with standardized information about recycling, hazardous waste, organics recycling and reuse.
- Cities verified that their municipal buildings and parks have paired and properly labeled trash and recycling containers indoors and outside.



### Event recycling and special collections

- Cities held 54 special collection events for residents which kept about 248 tons of recyclable or reusable material from the landfill. This included 69 tons of shredded paper, 47 tons of mattresses/box springs (1,836 pieces), 16 tons of electronics, 22 tons of scrap metal, and 103 tons of pumpkins.
- 35 community events had recycling containers and signage showing residents where and what to recycle.
- 18 city and county locations collected 3.4 tons of holiday string lights for special recycling.

## Recycling in rural Dakota County

Rural cities and townships collected nearly 12 tons of mattresses, tires, cardboard, and shredded documents from residents living in one of the County's 13 townships or the rural cities of Coates, Hampton, Miesville, New Trier, Randolph, and Vermillion. In total, 124 rural households helped recycle nontraditional items. Dakota County partnered with the Metropolitan Mosquito Control District to sponsor tire recycling, the Dakota County Sentence-to-Service program for work crew assistance and Dakota County's Fleet Management for the event location and planning.

Greenvale, Sciota and Waterford Townships collected nearly four tons of tires through the County's Rural Solid Waste Abatement Grant Program.

### Film plastic recycling

During the county's seasonal collection of plastic film boat wrap, nearly three tons of boat wrap was collected and taken to Up North Plastics to be recycled into new film plastics.



### Success Story: Agricultural film plastic recycling

Dakota County and farmers partnered with Revolution Plastics to recycle eight tons of agricultural film plastic like silage bags, bunker covers and greenhouse film. Farmers brought film plastic to two central drop-off locations with county-provided collection bags.

## Recycling at businesses

### Business Recycling Incentive Program

The county's business recycling program provides businesses and non-profits resources and funding up to \$10,000 to implement waste reduction and recycling activities, including organics recovery. Program participation increased in 2022 as business operations became more normalized after the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022:

- Dakota County conducted 96 site visits at businesses.
- 21 businesses received funding for infrastructure improvements.
- Participating businesses diverted over 128 tons of new materials from the landfill.
- Businesses ordered nearly 4,800 container labels and educational resources.

Since 2016, more than 200 businesses have participated in the program and diverted an additional 2.7 million pounds (1350 tons) of material from the landfill.

### Success Story: Northfield Hospital and Clinics

Paired and labeled bins make recycling accessible to employees and visitors and help prevent contamination at Northfield Hospital's patio. Northfield Hospital and Clinics started a single stream recycling program at its flagship campus, recycling an additional 21,840 pounds of material each year.



## Recycling at multi-unit buildings

### Multifamily Recycling Program

The county's Multifamily Recycling Program provides funding and resources to support recycling improvements in multi-unit buildings, such as apartments, condominiums, townhomes, and independent senior living. The county partners with cities to help promote and implement the program. In 2022:

- The program helped 46 properties (19 public housing properties) or 3,100 households receive recycling education.
- 8 properties received labeled recycling containers.
- 38 properties received recycling guides, posters and labels.
- 580 residents staff received in-person recycling education.



City partners sent letters to almost all multifamily property owners and managers with information about recycling requirements and resources. The program received many responses and requests for help.

The program also connected property managers with local organizations to recycle large, non-traditional items mattresses and furniture and promoted organics drop sites.

The program has reached over 14,000 households and more than 21,000 residents since the County's multifamily services began in 2017.

# Recycling at schools

## School Waste Prevention and Recycling Grant Program

All public and private schools located in Dakota County are eligible to receive support including educational resources and grants up to \$10,000 to help start or improve waste management practices and educate students and staff. The 2022-2023 grant program awarded 10 grants to assist 15 schools, including 13 public schools and two non-public schools. Projects included:

- Expanding indoor and outdoor recycling collection with new containers (including stadium and field complexes).
- Enhancing cafeteria waste collection with stainless-steel sorting tables and color-coded containers and signage.
- Reducing wasted food using food-share tables, flavor stations and a cafeteria timer.
- Replacing single-use items with washable clamshells, bowls and cups and a dishwasher stipend.
- Transitioning to bulk service with condiment dispensers to replace single-use packets.
- Adding an outdoor compost bin.
- Piloting a cart lifter to help empty items into the recycling dumpster without plastic bags.
- Starting student Green Teams to support ongoing waste abatement efforts.

The County offers free waste education opportunities for in-school recycling performances and field trips. In 2022, 12 Tricia and the Toonies ENVIRO-SHOW performances for K-3 students were hosted throughout Dakota County elementary schools.

## 8<sup>th</sup> Annual School Recycling Workshop

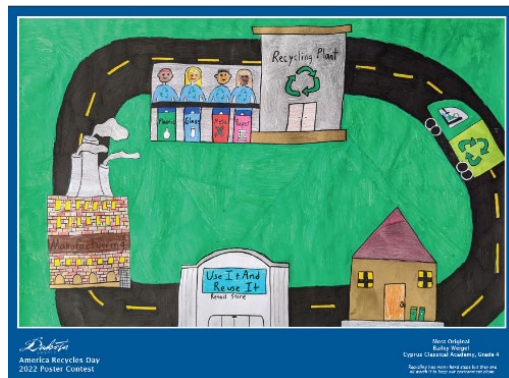
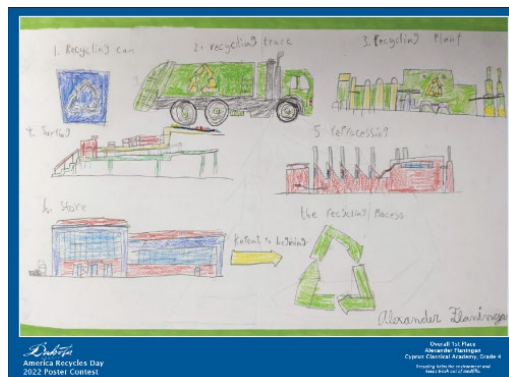
County staff hosted its eighth annual free School Recycling Workshop. The workshop had 83 attendants. Presentations covered new school organics requirements, food donation and wasted food prevention opportunities, food service waste reduction initiatives and more with continuing education units offered. Survey results showed that 97 percent of participants found the workshop valuable and 86 percent plan to change their actions or suggest improvements because of the workshop.

## America Recycles Day poster and video contest

Students were encouraged to celebrate America Recycles Day (Nov. 15) by participating in Environmental Resources' poster and video contest. The contest theme was "Follow Your Recycling."

All fourth-grade students were invited to participate in the poster contest. The contest received a record 35 entries. A student from Cyprus Classical Academy in Burnsville was selected as the overall first-place winner for the poster's easy-to-understand illustrations and thoughtful messaging to show how items get made into new things. Another Cyprus Classical Academy student was awarded the most original winner for use of a circular road to explain the journey of recycling. Professional prints of the winning posters were displayed at the Dakota County Galaxie Library and shared with the students' school. All contestants received a participation letter to proudly demonstrate their commitment to recycling and educational materials to share knowledge with others.

All students in 5-12 grades were invited to submit a 30-second video. A video submitted by Nicollet Middle School students was selected as the overall first place winner for the use of humor to show the importance of recycling.



# Recycling in County operations

A robust recycling program in Dakota County buildings collects a large amount of recycling and provides an example to partners and visitors.

- Around 275 tons of recyclables were collected at county office facilities based on dumpster audits. Weight data is not provided by the county's contracted hauler.
- Trash and recycling containers at the Administration Center and Judicial Center were paired and updated with color-coded labels containing consistent, standardized messaging and images.
- Staff organized an all-staff email and created a post on DC Works, the county's intranet, to provide standardized recycling education to all employees. In 2024, staff will host two question and answer sessions open to County employees.
- Dakota County trained housekeeping staff on recycling procedures, including acceptable materials, best management practices and housekeeping responsibilities.

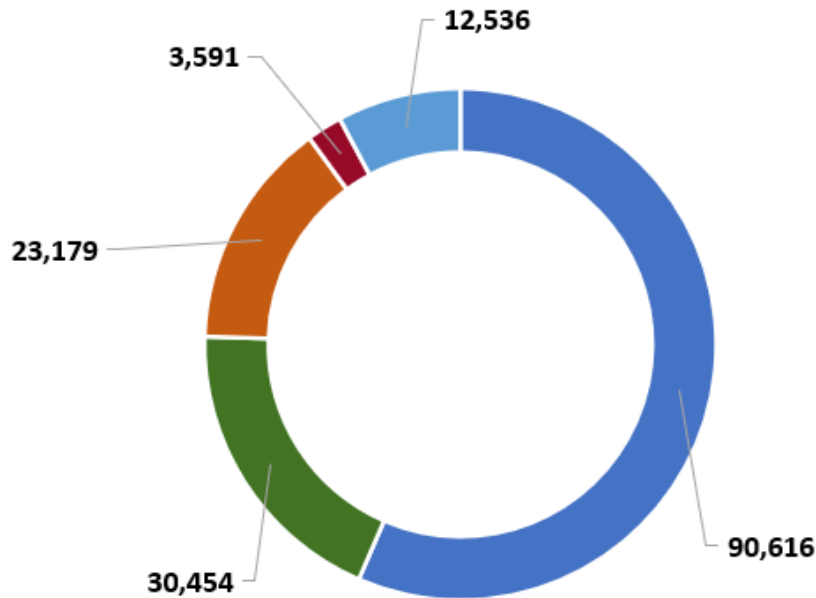
# Organics

Dakota County uses different ways to keep organics – food scraps, compostable materials and yard waste – out of the landfill:

- ↑ 90,616 tons of yard waste were composted (24 percent increase)
- ↑ 23,179 tons of organics were made into animal feed (20 percent increase)
- ↓ 30,454 tons of food scraps and compostable products were commercially composted (30 percent decrease)
- ↓ 3,591 tons of edible food were donated to people in need (7 percent decrease)
- ↓ 12,536 tons of fats/oils/grease collected for animal feed

Total organics collection increased 4 percent in 2022, from 226,796 tons in 2021 to 229,565 tons in 2022. Overall, Dakota County residents and businesses kept 31 percent of food scraps, yard waste and other organic materials out of the landfill.

**Organics Management Methods (in tons)**



- Commercially composted
- Manufactured into animal feed
- Recycled
- Food scraps commercially composted
- Edible food donated



# Organics diversion for residents

## Organics drop sites

The County partners with cities to provide residents food scrap drop off locations. Collected food scraps are composted at a commercial compost facility.

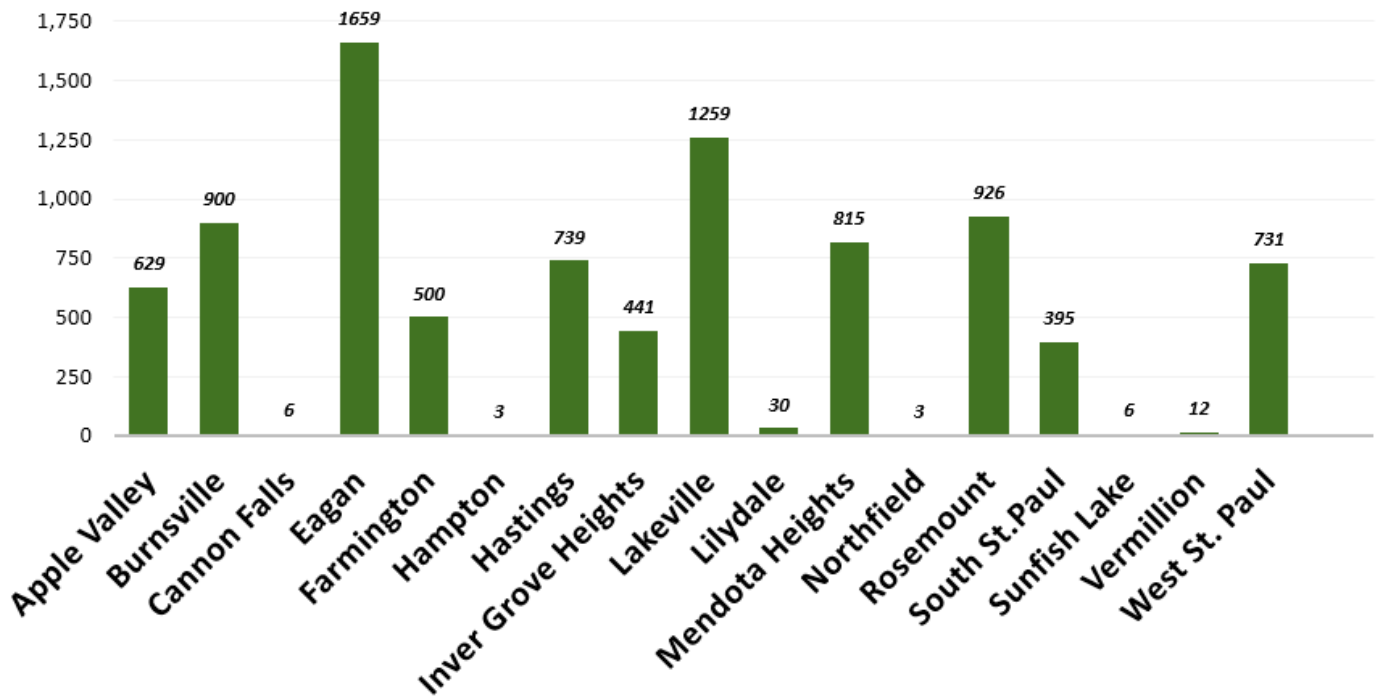


Dakota County partnered with Rosemount to add a drop off location at their Public Works Facility, making a total of nine drop sites available for county residents. Prior to opening the Rosemount site, staff provided three training sessions – two online and one in-person – providing 40 residents with an overview of the program. Another 31 households stopped by a kickoff event held at the new drop-off site to see how the program works.

In 2022, 1,451 new households joined the organics drop-off program, bringing the total to just over 9,000 registered households.

Residents dropped off approximately 900 tons of food scraps and other compostable materials.

**Households Registered by Municipality for the Organics Drop-Off Program**



## Compost Week Awareness

Dakota County celebrated International Compost Awareness Week (May 1-7) by hosting virtual and in-person presentations on how to backyard compost and how to participate in Dakota County's organics drop-off program. The Mulch Store's open house gave residents an inside look at how food scraps turn into a rich fertilizer. Partners and volunteers staffed Six of Dakota County's organics drop-off sites to educate residents about the program and benefits of composting.



## Annual Compost Bin Sale

Through the Recycling Association of Minnesota spring sale, residents purchased 126 backyard composting bins – an 11 percent increase from 2021. Dakota County promoted the event and provided residents with a 30 percent discount.

# Organics projects for schools

## Free compost delivery for Dakota County schools

Dakota County offered up to five cubic yards of free compost delivery to interested schools that have participated in the school grant program and collect organics to close the loop on organics collection and educate students on the benefits of composting. Specialized Environmental Technologies (The Mulch Store) delivered yard waste-derived compost to schools and provided general guidance on appropriate application of the compost.



- 8 schools requested a total of 34 cubic yards of compost soils that were used in vegetable and flower gardens, on-site plantings, potted plants and turf or grass repair.
- More than half of schools had not previously used compost on school grounds.
- Survey results show that 100 percent of participants found the compost delivery valuable, and 83 percent had students help spread the compost.

### Reducing wasted food in schools

The School Waste Prevention and Recycling Grant Program has incorporated best practices to prevent wasted food in school cafeterias.

- 3 schools updated food share tables. Students placed packaged food, whole fruit and unopened milk cartons on these tables which are put back into cafeteria circulation or donated outside the school.
- 3 schools added flavor stations allowing students to customize their meals making them tastier and preventing wasted food.
- 1 school implemented a cafeteria timer to improve student time management with a focus on eating at the end of lunch.

## Food scraps collection at events

### Dakota County Fair

Staff helped vendors and visitors recycle and keep food scraps out of the trash at the Dakota County Fair. Over 100 recycling containers were paired next to trash containers throughout the fairgrounds. County staff worked with food vendors to set up back-of-house (e.g., food prep areas) food scraps collection. Transitioning away from collecting organics in public areas resulted in cleaner organics. All 63 food vendors received a recycling guide and were offered a green bucket or container and compostable bags to collect food scraps from their food preparations. Seventy-nine (79) percent of food vendors participated in food scrap collection.



## New land lease for commercial composting

Specialized Environmental Technologies (SET) received a new lease for continued organics composting on County-owned land in Empire Township through June 30, 2027. New requirements in the lease are designed to improve the quality of the incoming organics at the facility. SET is required to provide yearly standardized messaging to its customers about accepted materials inspect each incoming load of organics, complete an inspection form and reject any loads exceeding six percent contamination.



# Waste-to-Energy and Landfill

## Waste-to-energy

Just one percent (4,468 tons) of waste generated in Dakota County was converted into energy at resource recovery facilities – 55 percent less than in 2021.

### Waste-to-energy partnership

State law requires public entities in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area to use waste to energy facilities prior to land disposal.

Over the last few years, waste to energy facilities in the Metro Area have closed or reached capacity. Some of Dakota County waste was delivered to the Hennepin Energy Recovery Facility in Minneapolis and the Recycling and Energy Center in Newport. The City of Red Wing's Resource and Recovery Facility was the closest facility with capacity to accept a larger amount of waste from Dakota County. Trash from the cities of Hastings and Farmington and Dakota County's parks and buildings was delivered to Red Wing Resource and Recovery Facility.

## Landfill

Landfilled MSW increased by 1 percent from 2021, with 44 percent (229, 565 tons) of the MSW generated in the county taken to a landfill.

The County continues to face challenges in meeting the Policy Plan objective to send a maximum of 1 percent of trash to landfills by 2025 due to the close location of private landfills for waste haulers.

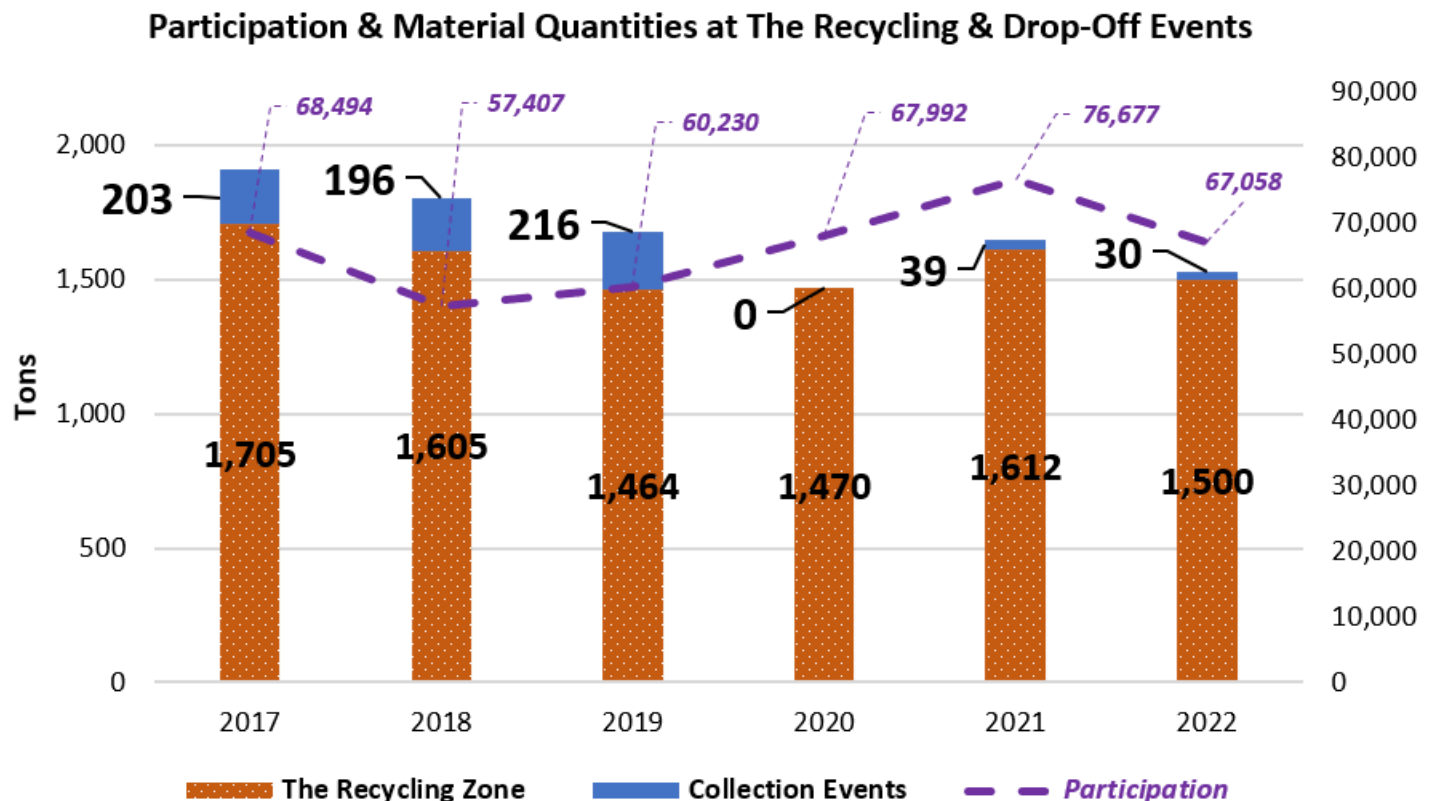
# Hazardous Waste

## The Recycling Zone

The Recycling Zone provides a year-round, convenient location for residents to drop off household hazardous waste and other materials. In 2022, 66,032 vehicles dropped off 4,227,653 pounds of hazardous waste, electronics, tires and recycling.

Last year, 317 businesses with small amounts of hazardous waste dropped off 97,087 pounds of materials.

Dakota Valley Recycling and Dakota County held one household hazardous waste collection event in Burnsville. Over 1,000 households dropped-off nearly 60,000 pounds of hazardous wastes and electronics.



# Outreach and Education

Outreach and education do not have specific measurement goals in the Policy Plan. The Master Plan has strategies to address the public education requirements in Minn. Stat. §§ 115A.552 and 115A.96 and support the county's solid waste programs and activities.

Dakota County staff and municipal partners educated residents on recycling in multiple ways:

- Dakota County reached 3,338 residents at 23 in-person events, providing direct education about waste reduction, recycling and organics recovery.
- City partners reported 1,584,632 impressions on waste reduction content like social media, newsletters and emails.
- 25 residents attended Internal Compost Awareness Week training and 50 people came to The Mulch Store's open house.
- 40 residents attended the new Rosemount organics drop-site training session and 31 people came to the kick-off event.

## Recycling Ambassador Program

The Dakota County Recycling Ambassador Program is a six-week, one class each week course on waste prevention, recycling and composting and effective communication skills taught by industry experts and community leaders. The training also includes field trips to local waste processing and recycling facilities.

At the end of the course, participants commit to volunteering 30 hours of their time teaching others how to reduce waste.



In 2022:

- The County hosted two in-person, 6-week classes.
- Recycling Ambassadors educated 4,929 people.
- The program welcomed 46 new participants into its eighth year, bringing the total number of Recycling Ambassadors to 419.
- 28 Recycling Ambassadors came to the Recycling Refresher Course.

Recycling Ambassadors gave 711 hours of their time, a 28 percent increase from 2021. Two Recycling Ambassadors completed their full, 30-hour volunteer commitment.

## E-News

The Dakota County e-newsletter service provides waste and recycling education tailored to each audience:

Audience	E-Newsletters	Subscribers	Open rate
Residents	13	2,486	55 percent
Businesses	6	404	33 percent
Schools	3	859	40 percent
Organics Drop Sites	12	7,243	67 percent

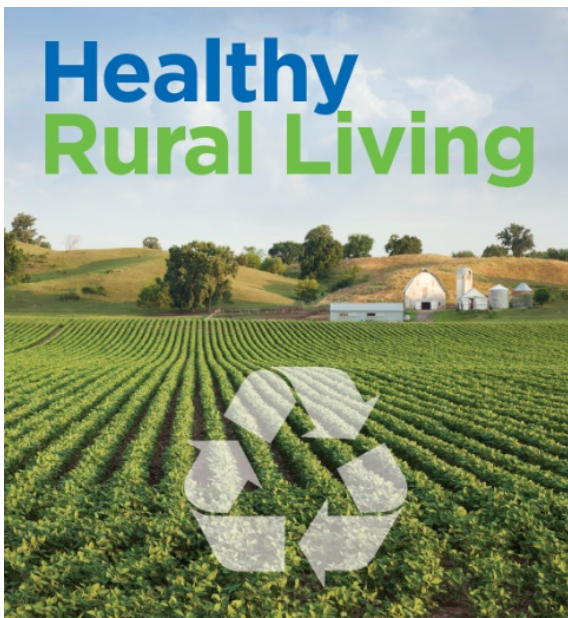
### Promoting The Recycling Zone

The County sent a promotional mailer to all households (with adults 35 and younger) promoting The Recycling Zone's year-round, easy drop-off option. The design and content of this mail focused on items that people upgrade and/or are used more around the holidays like electronics, holiday lights and batteries. The County also used social media and e-newsletter articles to promote this message.



### Targeted Recycling Education to Rural Residents

Dakota County's Rural Solid Waste Abatement Program provides waste management education to rural residents. In July, nearly 6,200 rural households received a newsletter on various recycling options for challenging items like mattresses, electronics, tires and more. The newsletter also included information on what to recycle, recycling requirements, organics drop-off sites and local reuse opportunities.



# Regulatory Initiatives

Dakota County Solid Waste Management Ordinance (Ordinance 110) revisions were adopted in 2019 to implement the regulatory strategies in the Master Plan and support managing waste to align with the waste management hierarchy. Requirements phase-in through 2025.

Ordinance 110 changes included new recycling and waste management requirements for residents, commercial entities and the waste industry. Requirements are designed to standardize recycling and organics collection to:

- Reduce waste going to landfills by universally mandating source separation of recyclable materials;
- Improve the quality of materials recycled and organics collected with designated lists for recyclables, organics and contaminants; and
- Make progress toward the state's goal to recycle 75 percent of waste by 2030 with established best management practices.

New 2022 requirements:

- Haulers must collect residential recycling weekly and label all hauler-provided trash, recycling and organics containers according to the County's labeling rules.
- Large commercial organics generators (food wholesalers, distributors and manufacturers and grocery stores) are required to separate back-of-house food scraps from other trash and ensure delivery for food recovery or to a permitted facility (e.g., compost facility or food-to-animal operations).
- All property owners and managers are required to correctly label all trash, recycling and organics containers according to the county's rules.

## Regulatory Compliance

County staff continued following its strategic, multi-year ordinance implementation plan that prioritizes compliance outreach with businesses that have the highest opportunities to help the county make progress towards the 75 percent recycling rate goal (e.g., businesses that generate high amounts of organics and waste haulers).

### Commercial Generators

Businesses, schools, multifamily properties, governments.

#### Requirement:

All commercial generators must collect the designated list of recyclables and follow best management practices, including:

- Keep the designated list of contaminants out of recycling;
- Label containers in accordance with commercial generator label standards;
- Ensure sufficient collection schedules and capacities for all indoor and outdoor container locations, public spaces, and communal spaces;
- Ensure each trash container (or trash chute) is co-located within 10 feet from a recycling container (or recycling chute), ensuring equal access;
- Ensure trash, recycling and organics (if collected) is delivered to the appropriate permitted facility;
- Provide standardized waste abatement messaging in accordance with commercial education standards; and
- Annually report compliance on county forms.

**Regulatory support:** County solid waste inspectors continued building education and compliance relationships with food manufacturers, wholesalers and distributors by conducting annual inspections. Staff also started to conduct education and compliance inspections at grocery stores. County regulatory inspectors helped get inspected businesses into compliance. County resources were offered to help with improvements, including grant funding, technical assistance, container labels and employee education guides. In addition, recycling compliance education continued to be a component of business hazardous waste inspections.

## **Residential Generators**

Households.

**Requirement:** All residential generators must collect the designated list of recyclables and keep the designated list of contaminants out of the recycling.

**Regulatory support:** The county promoted recycling using standardized messages throughout the year using various communications channels (e.g., county newsletter, social media, e-news, website, MRC classes, resident programs, campaign videos and direct mail). Cities also used standardized messages in their communications channels.

## **Solid Waste Abatement Program**

**Requirement:** All of Dakota County's cities with populations over 10,000 adopted recycling requirements for multi-unit residential properties and large events to mirror county Ordinance 110 requirements. City codes that incorporated these requirements were adopted by Apple Valley, Burnsville, Eagan, Farmington, Hastings, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Rosemount, South St. Paul and West St. Paul.

**Regulatory support:** The county continued to hold reoccurring county-city coordination meetings to share compliance and enforcement procedures and successes for city multi-unit residential building and event requirements.

## **Waste Haulers**

**Requirement:** Haulers are required to collect residential recycling weekly and label all hauler-provided trash, recycling and organics containers according to the County's labeling rules.

**Regulatory support:** County solid waste staff engaged haulers on container labeling and weekly residential recycling collection compliance. Haulers were asked to self-report compliance status on both new requirements. County staff then worked with haulers to establish compliance plans with timelines of expected compliance.

The hauler inspection program continued in 2022 with annual site inspections being completed at MSW haulers based in Dakota County. Hauler inspections covered all county hauler requirements while emphasizing the two new requirements discussed above. County staff also remained focused on hauler collection and transportation data reporting in efforts to continually improve data quality and accuracy.