



**Dakota County Solid Waste Master Planning**  
**Final Compilation of School District Interview Results**  
**December 13, 2016 through January 24, 2017**  
 Current to: January 24, 2017

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## Introduction

### Background

Dakota County is currently revising its [2012-2030 County Solid Waste Master Plan](#). The revised Master Plan will guide proper waste management within Dakota County for 2017-2037, and include strategies to divert waste from the landfill and comply with state mandates and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Policy Plan.

Everyone in Dakota County produces waste, which is why all stakeholders should be involved in the Master Plan revision process. The revisions will impact residents, businesses, haulers and waste facilities. The County's promise is to work with all stakeholders to ensure that concerns and aspirations are reflected in the strategies developed and provide feedback on how stakeholder input influenced the decisions. See phases at right.

- **Phase 1 – Gather stakeholder input** on solid waste issues, barriers, and solutions (Oct 2016-Feb 2017)
- **Phase 2 – Draft Solid Waste Master Plan strategies and gather stakeholder feedback** (Mar-May 2017)
- **Phase 3 – Draft and revise Solid Waste Master Plan** (June-Oct 2017)
- **Phase 4 – Finalize and approve Solid Waste Master Plan** (Oct-Dec 2017)

### Contents and Navigation

Phone interviews were conducted in December 2016 and January 2017 with all the school districts in Dakota County as listed below.

- Burnsville-Eagan-Savage
- Farmington
- Hastings
- Intermediate District 917 (special education)
- Inver Grove Heights
- Lakeville
- Northfield
- Randolph
- Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan
- South St Paul
- West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan

These results will be shared and used to inform the Phase 2 draft strategies; stakeholder feedback will be sought on those draft strategies in spring 2017.

Obvious misspellings were corrected, but no other content changes were made. In the sections below, responses are organized by question and then by school district respondent, although the specific districts are not identified. The Table of Contents and footers will help with navigation.

### For More Information

For more information about the project or this compilation, see the project [website](#), [sign up](#) for project updates, or contact Dakota County project manager Caroline McFadden, Dakota County Environmental Resources Department, [caroline.mcfadden@co.dakota.mn.us](mailto:caroline.mcfadden@co.dakota.mn.us) or 952-891-7132.

## Waste and Toxicity Reduction and Reuse

Reducing waste is the starting point for any solid waste management effort. This might include reusing furniture, donating goods that can be used again, using non-hazardous chemicals, going paperless, etc. What is your district doing right now to support and encourage waste reduction in schools and other district buildings?

- Placing recycling containers in high visibility areas
  - Elem have "Green warriors teams" that educate staff and students
  - Both elementary schools have a organics recycling programs
  - HS/MS in process of implementing now adding organics recycling and county is helping
  - Working with county staff are doing waste audit and assessments
  - Composting yard waste 100% with help from City
  - All hazardous waste is generated in science labs. Annual disposal is done brought down to county site recycling zone. Waste oil brought down to nearby gas stations. Stockpile until hazardous waste until haulers picks up
- Districtwide, try and reuse furniture, auction/sell it, or recycle what we can
  - For hazardous chemicals, we've moved to greener products; and instead of ordering individual plastic bottles for custodians, etc., we order larger containers, premixed, and they just refill their bottles as needed -- so we're not throwing out as many chemicals
  - District does the majority of our administrative work on Google Drive, so from routing slips to HR forms, everything is an online form so we are nearly paperless -- very limited printing districtwide
  - We put all our extra equipment and furniture inventory online within the district, and have everyone go there first, which has significantly increased our reuse and reduced our purchasing (we don't have a central warehouse, so this functions as such); then auction or recycle the rest; as a growing district, we were able to very quickly build out new Kindergartens using this list
- My focus is on getting things in the right bin -- we do that with help from DC plus ourselves -- we have labels on the bins, recycling bins by all trash bins and sometimes organics
  - Obvious applications in cafeteria, but adding signage and bins in bathrooms also for towels
  - Environmental magnets are doing trash, recycling, and organics bins
  - Live Green is the name of our overall program; every other month or so we do events around special issues -- such as recently we worked on purging Styrofoam from our buildings -- we don't buy anything with it, but people still bring in things, so we did an educational event around that. Did a week-long event with each on a different topic related to recycling, energy conservation, water quality, etc. We also work on things like zero-waste day in the cafeteria
  - We have a public compost sale around Earth Day as part of an awareness campaign (6 months ago this was a hamburger and now it's great soil to help your tomatoes grow!)
  - We don't do many specific efforts that reach into families -- just what kids share with their families
- Encourage less printing, m
  - Participating in composting program,
  - We comingle recycling, anything that doesn't "fit" goes in regular trash
- A program detailing how to deal and dispose of hazardous and nonhazardous materials is loaded on all classroom/staff desktop computers. Instructions include how to dispose and clean up for spill or accident (through Minnesota State University system))
  - Bins for different types of recycling
  - Paperless efforts, digital communications, shared documents
  - Sort by type of waste (paper, plastic)
  - Hauler uses the resource recycling center
- Recycle co-mingled paper, glass, etc.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Moving to paperless system</li> <li>● Encourage recycling</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recycle comingled paper, glass, etc.</li> <li>● Have organics recycling in place in all schools; does better in some buildings than others</li> <li>● District puts lots of unused items on public surplus website -- primarily to keep stuff out of landfill; we sell a lot of items that way</li> <li>● Initiatives with cafeteria recycling; have containers, signage in cafeterias; encourage recycling; schools have gotten pretty good at it -- kids separate items on way out of cafeteria -- has been an education process for students and staff -- ongoing program</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conducted a survey of what's in trash containers in classrooms and found that almost everything is recyclable, so now we recycle all that; used to recycle c. 20%, now recycle 35% of what we produce and compost 6%</li> <li>● Put furniture up on internal district exchange but if not taken it goes up on statewide exchange; if not taken, the district seeks to donate more widely nationally or internationally; otherwise, it's trashed</li> <li>● Food sharing program, so kids who don't drink their milk, for example -- it's saved, refrigerated, and given to other kids like in after-school or evening programs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Co-mingled recycled</li> <li>● Different color garbage bins for ease in recycling</li> <li>● Moving away from paper (to Chromebooks)</li> <li>● Composting yard waste</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Composting yard waste: The district composts yard waste.</li> <li>● Composting food scraps: Participates in an organics program through Foodservice. I think we use Blue Bag.</li> <li>● Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, and plastics: Moving towards less paper, doubts that they will ever be able to go totally paperless. Also undergoing going a 1:1 integration that will mean less workbooks and textbooks. We have bins throughout the building and feel we do a pretty good job.</li> <li>● Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: all hazardous chemicals are bring disposed of properly</li> <li>● Bulk items: they really don't have any. Any carpet recycling is handled by the contracted installer.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Paper and plastic recycling</li> <li>● Reduced paper usage (ordering less)</li> <li>● Water-based paint for septic use</li> </ul>

## Recycling Barriers and Supports

Thinking about your schools and district facilities, for each of the items below...

What *prevents* them from doing these (or doing more)?

- Composting yard waste:
- Composting food scraps:
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, and plastics: have containers out in high visibility areas, recently with county support did an audit of that process.
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste:
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.

What would *encourage* them to do these (or do more)?

- Composting yard waste:
- Composting food scraps: We had to show people that there would be no smell (or the same smell as it organics were in a dumpster), so more education about the dispelling myths of such a program
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics: More education is needed. Go to point of decision to interrupt wrong choice.
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste:
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.: Offering additional education about how and when. If you make it easy for people to participate they are more apt to do it.

What *prevents* them from doing these (or doing more)?

- Composting yard waste: We do wood chips with the city; we mulch
- Composting food scraps: Nothing, except that compostable bags are expensive
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics: Staff and custodians aren't always on board or aren't clearly supported by principals and deans; In summer 2015, with DC and Dick's Sanitation to create a professional development opportunity to visit with DC and Dick's Sanitation -- very well received and valuable
  - MSs and HSs don't do as well, likely because administration doesn't emphasize it
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: We arrange with vendors for HW recycling in the spring and summer; beyond that, there's confusion about things like batteries
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.: No major issues; do internal reuse database, auction some, and recycle some

What would *encourage* them to do these (or do more)?

- Composting yard waste: They will check with maintenance staff and find out gaps there may still be
- Composting food scraps: We use a compostable bag system (green bags), and have taught staff how to use bags more efficiently and also now are sizing bins better
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics: Active support by principals and deans; special projects by teachers/students in buildings; all pre-K kids (in one building) are learning about and doing recycling, so they're coming in to K with these skills and expectations -- and those kids are teaching their parents; would like to identify a champion for each building *beyond* the custodian; internal positive reinforcement and publicity
  - Making bins visible, accessible, convenient
  - Making it part of the school climate and culture
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: We need more detailed information about what is hazardous and what's not, and how to recycle lots of specific things that "seem" like they're hazardous but aren't, and specifically what to do with them (like latex paint)
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.: For carpet, going to carpet tiles vs. broad looms for more efficient replacement, and also working with new carpet vendor who will recycle

old carpet back to original carpet plant. They still have some leftover furniture parts -- like wood tops for tables/desks -- that are still being landfilled; they talked with Dick's Sanitation but they couldn't help; would recycle them if we could figure out how...

What *prevents* them from doing these (or doing more)?

- Composting yard waste: Nothing; district composts all yard waste -- we have no barriers
- Composting food scraps: Though we have compost bins everywhere, of course we still miss stuff. Elementary and middle school students do this really well; high school students are much tougher -- in some cases it's a language barrier, some "don't care," and others don't know; Master Recyclers have volunteered at times and that's been successful, but when they're not there it doesn't happen at all as well. We're working as a district to get rid of everything that's actually trash (can't be recycled) to eliminate the problem entirely.
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics: Less supportive administrations in some school buildings; for example, when kids bring food into classrooms -- better if there were some accountability for that waste
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: Nothing; we take care of it all in our receiving department -- everything is handled responsibly
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.: We recycle parts of these to the extent possible; rest is trashed. Carpet replacement company recycles old carpet. Don't know of other options.

What would *encourage* them to do these (or do more)?

- Composting yard waste
- Composting food scraps: We have a homeowner close to one of our schools who asked to add organics from the neighborhood to the school's organics bin -- this *kind of idea, partnering with neighborhoods* - might be a great way for everyone to benefit
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics:
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: NA
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.: We're part of a group of school district facilities and we share/reuse as much as we can.

What *prevents* them from doing these (or doing more)?

- Composting yard waste: availability of program
- Composting food scraps: availability of program. School participates in that at school and trying to do in community but too many obstacles in a city-wide effort
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, and plastics: No barriers to prevention. Area is strong areas of the district's efforts.
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: districts work with recycling for ballast and florescent tubes, other stuff works with environmental consultants
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.: logistics of having to figure out how to about it.

What would *encourage* them to do these (or do more)?

- Composting yard waste: Increase public awareness of programs availability
- Composting food scraps: changing the simplicity of doing it. Perception of difficulty. Messy, smelly, flies...
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics: nothing, People are aware and doing it. Its been long enough that people know
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: public awareness and having a hazmat drop off day one every day (more frequent)

- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.: I don't think enough people know who to call how to do it. (Garbage hauler?)

What *prevents* them from doing these (or doing more)?

- Composting yard waste: no groundskeeping (contracted) so n/a
- Composting food scraps: n/a
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics: lack of awareness, education and convenience (multi-bins). How to know what goes where. Staffing for custodial and cleaning. Limited time must-to-do versus nice-to-do
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: Lack of knowledge of where is best place to dispose
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.: knowing more about where and vendors who would pick them up and what do they do with them. Convenience - not aware of recycling options.

What would *encourage* them to do these (or do more)? Education, attitude and habit for all

- Composting yard waste:
- Composting food scraps:
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics:
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste:
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.:

What *prevents* them from doing these (or doing more)?

- Composting yard waste: Aesthetics and space.
- Composting food scraps: Awareness, time spent in bins, cleanliness (flies in warm weather)
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics:
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: Access and awareness. Cost in some cases
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.: Access to sites, disposal fees. Often just left / dumped outside, especially in rental areas

What would *encourage* them to do these (or do more)?

- Composting yard waste: Providing containers
- Composting food scraps: Additional awareness and containers ease frequency of pick ups
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics:
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: awareness / access to ecosite 1x a year, lower or no fees
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.:

What *prevents* them from doing these (or doing more)?

- Composting yard waste: We mulch all our yard waste and let it stay in place
- Composting food scraps: Use the Blue Bag system to control odors especially in the warm months, and the cost of those may become an issue over time -- already quite expensive
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics: No major barriers, but it's an ongoing education effort -- there isn't specific curriculum, so it's an effort of the service clubs at schools and custodial staff, which is difficult
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: Use outside companies to pick this up; staff must contact Operations to dispose of this -- Ops keeps the manifest for this to track and report it annually; this works well right now
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.: Carpet contractors remove old carpet, but not all contracts include a recycling requirements; District puts lots of unused items on public surplus website; other bulky items just get hauled by Dick's Sanitation, and presume that's landfilled vs. recycled (don't know what's in contract regarding recycling these items)

What would *encourage* them to do these (or do more)?

- Composting yard waste:
- Composting food scraps:
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics: Embedding this in the curriculum vs. relying solely on volunteer service clubs and custodial staff; sent the County's e-letter off to curriculum team that's working on the science curriculum right now, so looking at where it best fits; have an active group of kids in elementary and hoping it will just continue up into the middle and high schools as they age. For us to move forward, this has to be a priority for the administrators and staff/teachers in our buildings, who then infuse it into the school climate -- make it normative. The proper containers and dumpsters are in place already to handle this.
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste:
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.: Knowing more about options, including this in contract

What *prevents* them from doing these (or doing more)?

- Composting yard waste: Nothing; we mulch, wood is chipped/shredded and reused
- Composting food scraps: Pretty good composting program for the elementary school food, put in compostable bag, and Dick's Sanitation composts it; County staff Renee Burman worked with Rosemount to build a district-wide composting program with Republic/BFI -- within just a few months this collapsed at the high school because kids were so disrespectful, and we've found that these habits *do not* continue from elementary through MS and HS; we'd need a lot of help to advance this district-wide and be successful. There was some initial help from secondary adults, but even that faded after a while; no secondary adult leadership for SW at this point.
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics: our districtwide commingling is successful and pays for itself
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: nothing; many years ago we went green with all chemicals; for leftovers and other items like fluorescent lamps we work with specialized firms who provide certificates of recycling
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.: Work with company that recycles carpet; don't recycle more furniture because when we had a dumpster for metal the city (Apple Valley) *at that time* told us we couldn't have that

What would *encourage* them to do these (or do more)?

- Composting yard waste: NA
- Composting food scraps: Help from County, volunteers monitoring and supporting composting at the secondary buildings; would like to learn more recycling bathrooms waste paper, etc. (thought those weren't recyclable; will talk with hauler about that)
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics: We're doing nearly all of this already; every once in awhile we overfill our trash before the hauler arrives, so trash gets put in with recycling and contaminates it
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: NA; we've gone to more bulk purchasing and solid chemicals vs. liquid
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.:

What *prevents* them from doing these (or doing more)?

- Composting food scraps: Used to give food scraps to a local pig farmer, but stopped after a resident complained that public money shouldn't be used to fund private business.

- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics: Kids throwing away everything instead of recycling. Age is a factor and more adherence elementary/middle schools. For instance, recycling milk cartons in MS means rinsing and they had a hard time getting students to do that
- Properly disposing of. Has a company come in pick up hazardous waste 1x a year
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.: Unaware of the option

What would *encourage* them to do these (or do more)?

- Composting yard waste: Make it more convenient
- Composting food scraps: More education, address issues such as smell, fruit flies and bees
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics: use different color bins to make it for easier for people, comingling has helped a lot. Different color dumpsters for custodial staff
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: Eliminate having to take it somewhere and pay for it- maybe subsidize?
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.: Additional education

What *prevents* them from doing these (or doing more)?

- Composting yard waste: n/a
- Composting food scraps: We contract out our food service program. Compost as much as we can.
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, and plastics: Staying on top of current and changing guidelines and changing habits of use. For example, we were putting milk cartons in composting pile but were told during a visit by an official that milk cartons were now to be rinsed and recycled. We didn't know that and don't have the time or manpower to make keeping up-to-date with changes one person's job.
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: As far as we know, we are doing a good job, but if there is a change in process or how certain things should be disposed of, we may not know about it.

What would *encourage* them to do these (or do more)?

- Composting yard waste: n/a
- Composting food scraps: Education for students, but understanding that education doesn't always lead to action. How do we get them to action?
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, and plastics: We often rent facilities to community groups for weekend tournaments and those groups often do not compost or recycle. Educating them would be helpful. Overall, maybe ask people what people need to do more recycling/composting, donations, etc.
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: n/a
- Bulk items: if things are too broken or unusable to donate, what do we do with them?
- For all, considering additional teachings and training and offering rebates for costs incurred by districts. Also, what if the County could offer an audit that wasn't punitive? What if they visited schools and business to help them do a better job by pointing out things are being incorrectly? That would be beneficial.

What *prevents* them from doing these (or doing more)?

- Composting yard waste: They currently leave clippings on the grass
- Composting food scraps: Staffing, knowledge
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics: recycle a lot. Staffing (someone to physically do the work)
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: If it's not being done properly - it's due to a lack of knowledge.
- Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc. Any of this is handled by the coy contracted to do the work.

What would *encourage* them to do these (or do more)?

- Composting yard waste: n/a
- Composting food scraps: Having the staff to implement and monitor
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics:
- Properly disposing of household hazardous waste: Recycling bulky items such as carpeting, furniture, mattresses, etc.

## Emerging Technologies

Recent studies indicate that significant amounts of recyclables are still being included in trash and disposed of in landfills. One idea is to separate these recyclables from the trash using new technology prior to or at a landfill or resource recovery facility. An example is to remove recyclables from trash at a mixed-waste processing facility (dirty MRF). Another is the Blue Bag Organics® recycling program that collects separated organics with trash. These new technologies would be planned and designed to complement, not replace, traditional source-separated recycling programs.

What are some benefits of this approach?

- If current system is working well they why add new layers that might break it? That said, if there are items that are falling between the cracks then additional assistance offered through technology is appreciated.

What are some of the challenges, and how might those challenges be overcome?

- Cost might be a challenge. Can it be subsidized?
- Perception of additional work that needs to be done by already busy staff

What are some benefits of this approach?

- Could make it a lot easier for us for things like furniture that have lots of different components, some currently recyclable and some not...
- Good to remove *all* recycling from trash to reduce what goes to the landfill

What are some of the challenges, and how might those challenges be overcome?

- Additional costs?

What are some benefits of this approach?

- One more opportunity to capture what's missed -- and this will always be the case because there will be a percentage of people who don't get it right; it's been amazing talking with people from some other countries who take this *so seriously*

What are some of the challenges, and how might those challenges be overcome?

- Technical difficulties

What are some benefits of this approach?

- Anything that makes it easier is good. Lessing individual involvement and automation makes it more efficient.

What are some of the challenges, and how might those challenges be overcome?

- Facilities: hand sorting and humans digging through the trash and picking out recyclables is not a job many want.

What are some benefits of this approach?

- Better sorted at the source help improve the quality to the environment. But any additional efforts, such as Blue bag - are helpful.
- Continue to talk about the importance of environment and its connection to water quality

What are some of the challenges, and how might those challenges be overcome?

- Make it seamless and convenient
- Drive down to source / user level so there is less need for additional resources

What are some benefits of this approach?

- Last piece of oversight. As consumers are not perfect, many public facilities that are (rentals) all goes in the garbage, Last step provided, to those with a ecological/environmental conscience, that is a comfort

What are some of the challenges, and how might those challenges be overcome?

- Wasting time sorting instead of doing other custodial tasks
- Prospective political climate (anti-environmental)

What are some benefits of this approach?

- More is recycled

What are some of the challenges, and how might those challenges be overcome?

- Potential for additional costs if this were to discourage source separation...might raise costs for everyone --- or perhaps lower them...not sure

What are some benefits of this approach?

- NA

What are some of the challenges, and how might those challenges be overcome?

- NA

What are some benefits of this approach?

- Makes it easier on schools

What are some of the challenges, and how might those challenges be overcome?

- NA

What are some benefits of this approach?

- Make it easier. If people don't have to think, then they are more likely to follow through.
- Make it as simple and easy as possible.

What are some of the challenges, and how might those challenges be overcome?

- Not know what or how is always a barrier.
- Cost (if more than currently paying)

What are some benefits of this approach?

- Anything that benefits the environment is good.
- If it takes away some (or all) of the work from district staff that's a benefit

What are some of the challenges, and how might those challenges be overcome?

- Staffing, additional cost for Blue Bag

## Resource Recovery

The State of Minnesota “Restriction on Disposal” law requires all waste to be sent to a resource recovery facility rather than a landfill, and a different law requires public entities to send their waste to a resource recovery facility. For the solid waste your district generates, what ideas do you have to maximize the amount of waste that goes to a resource recovery facility rather than a landfill?

- Trash is brought to the incinerator and recycling center so nothing from their district is going to landfill
- Expand scope of law to apply to more entities
- Every once in awhile we’ll get an email from Dick’s Sanitation about contamination in our organics -- mostly when the public dumps something in our organics dumpster that doesn’t belong there
- We could improve how we handle recycling/trash for our school/public events
- A city-organized annual pickup for bulky or hazardous materials that *includes* our schools and district facilities; our city doesn’t do any of that right now -- even better, a multi-city or county-wide effort, which would get support from *lots* of people
- Not enough information to comment; we use Dick’s but don’t know anything about what happens after it leaves our district
- Having it sorted well at schools, pulling out everything that they can. Try to send only stuff that can't be used elsewhere
- Education about how to sort, convenient way to store until picked up.
- Current hauler is using RRF
- Awareness and understanding and ease of doing
- Address fact that it is more work for staff to comply
- Put this in our hauling contract
- Talked with hauler; great that it’s being processed, but learned that c. 10% doesn’t get to Empire because of scheduling problems or missed routes, etc. When they bid it, they *expect* 100% to be processed and now finding out it’s not 100%, they will follow up with hauler
- Reduce the cost of hauling it away. Get teachers involvement to get student involvement.
- Age is a factor. Younger kids are gung-ho. Older ones are less interested in participating
- Make it easy
- Make it simple
- Make it affordable
- Be done on the front end, need to pay for staffing. Staff is stretched thin.
- Education, signage, bins/containers

## Waste Management

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's draft Policy Plan includes a number of key strategies to improve solid waste management. Please share your perspectives on those below.

- *Reduce food waste by changing practices and habits, and donating excess food*
- *Require organics diversion by large generators of organic materials by 2022*

What barriers do or will you face implementing this/these requirement(s)?

- Schools are required to give certain food. Can't recycle unused healthy foods. Some food is donated if not used. Unsure where it is donated but a charity gathers.
- Second strategy is not applicable as they already do that but others might have a fiscal impact. People thought it was extra work and smelly but has been generally well acceptable. Bags are expensive and extra dumpster both cost money.

What ideas do you have for overcoming those barriers in the future?

- NA

What barriers do or will you face implementing this/these requirement(s)?

- No problems with organics diversion
- For food waste, trying to provide food kids will eat and order more precisely to reduce waste; have sharing tables at elementary and secondary schools; haven't explored donation at all yet, but district staff knows about food to hogs program

What ideas do you have for overcoming those barriers in the future?

- Need to learn more about what donation options are possible (and meet Health and other legal requirements), as well as things like food to hogs program

What barriers do or will you face implementing this requirement?

- Logistics barrier to donating extra food is getting it where it needs to go (and also following health rules like around milk); with varying amounts per school/day, we haven't come up with a sustainable solution and also that doesn't overly burden food service staff; there also aren't lots of leftovers -- and in general I don't have the authority to do much more

What ideas do you have for overcoming those barriers in the future?

- We have a share table at many schools
- Would love to do more with any kind of waste; UM did a study on our district and found we have very small quantities of food waste right now

What barriers do or will you face implementing this/these requirement(s)?

- Laws impact present donating food. (MDH)
- Being diligent serving students what they will eat. Reviewing menus, balancing healthy foods with stuff they'll eat. Watch closely what is thrown away.
- Participation issue, Changing mindset. Good in younger kids, but high school years are tough. How do we help them understand to be ecologically responsible?

What ideas do you have for overcoming those barriers in the future?

- Having it monitored peer standing at barrels and instructing

What barriers do or will you face implementing this/these requirement(s)?

- Food waste, offer portion control, staff and students awareness of taking what you'll eat. Lack of training resources for serving staff

What ideas do you have for overcoming those barriers in the future?

- More training

What barriers do or will you face implementing this/these requirement(s)?

- The person power to make that happen, training kids and staff, frequency, storage, not overly complicated

What ideas do you have for overcoming those barriers in the future?

- NA

What barriers do or will you face implementing this/these requirement(s)?

- Organics diversion: no significant barriers, as we have infrastructure and containers
- For donating excess food: our schools have a sharing table, but don't believe there's provision to donate
- Don't participate in the food to hogs program -- don't know anything about it

What ideas do you have for overcoming those barriers in the future?

- Started all this about 4 years ago in all buildings, so hoping that as kids go from elementary to MS to HS they carry these commitments with them and it becomes a part of the culture
- Could do more work with the adults in our buildings
- Could look for cost-effective ways to monitor what's happening in buildings and better track our overall progress

What barriers do or will you face implementing this/these requirement(s)?

- Last year there was a company willing to pick up unused food for donation, but it became a challenge this year because we're outside the metro core
- Here in Rosemount, there's a food recovery organization (Rosemount Resources?) that provides support services and a food shelf, but only a small amount of certain foods (packaged, whole fruit, etc.)
- So barrier is finding an organization to take donated school food
- Inability to motivate secondary staff and students to participate in composting

What ideas do you have for overcoming those barriers in the future?

- Finding organizations to take excess food
- Active support for food composting in secondary buildings -- so there is active buy-in from the school board through all the school administrators and staff

What barriers do or will you face implementing this/these requirement(s)?

- Throw away more food since healthy choices because we force kids to take what we know they won't eat. Maybe kids can get more exercise instead of forced food choices

What ideas do you have for overcoming those barriers in the future?

- Eliminate the forcing of "healthy" food on kids and let them eat what they want.

What barriers do or will you face implementing this/these requirement(s)?

- The healthy food initiative is challenging. We are required to put food on kid's plates that we know they won't eat and will throw away. Yet the district only gets reimbursed if we offer a complete meal.
- Food donations are difficult due to health issues.

What ideas do you have for overcoming those barriers in the future?

- NA

What barriers do or will you face implementing this/these requirement(s)?

- Nutrition guidelines would have to change. Law tell us we have to put it out there.

- Once it gets it on a plate can't be donated
- Unfunded mandates are an issue. May be substantial so we need funding.

What ideas do you have for overcoming those barriers in the future?

- Nutrition guidelines would have to change.
- Let districts know about programs or opportunities to donate that don't violate health codes and laws

## Public-Public Partnerships

The County is committed to a collaborative approach to solid waste management.

How could the County best support long-term partnerships with public entities like yours to reduce waste and increase recycling?

- Program we have going with Dakota County's staff members Ali and Megan is helping a lot. Keep that up. Good at marketing the program. Tenacious. Expand to other entities if it is only being done for schools.
- Would like the County to provide links to lots more info about things like the *details* of how to recycle lots of different things
- County helping bring together districts to learn from each other and do some things together
- County to help bring together County, municipalities, and school districts so we can all work together much better, learn from each other, share information with each other to learn ourselves and help educate our kids/families/staff and residents
- County to provide information we can share with our students, staff, and families
- Continue providing infrastructure (bins, labels, supports to get them into place); we started in 2009 and got the word out; composting was Lisa's idea and so she's done all that; we're continuing to expand this into staff lounges, bathrooms, etc. There's also staff turnover and some of the recycling rules are confusing.
- It would be helpful to have more training/retraining provided to all our staff on a more regular basis, beyond what she can do on her own
- Districts could partner with our cities to jointly educate with shared messages, serve as collection sites, etc.
- Would be great for district, city, and county staff working on these topics to get together and share ideas/build partnerships
- Not sure. Financial incentives to pay more attention. Feels pretty good about what they are doing at the district. Diligent at their level. Pretty ingrained in their processes
- Organics is tough. Figure it out.
- Better awareness of what services and resources the country has available and how to integrate it into their everyday action
- Want to be involved, but figure out how to get away from random levels of interest and involvement. and day-to-day to get it done
- Our county is much more proactive with recycling efforts than others.
- Consistent contact. When support wanes the process wanes at the same. Check and balance by contacts
- County has helped district launch their recycling efforts -- containers, signage; that's been great
- If Blue Bag cost became an issue, some financial assistance could help
- Help set the standards and requirements for all hauling/recycling contracts, so each district doesn't have to make this up on our own or face uniquely higher costs -- takes that entire issue out of the bidding mix
- Help create more transparency about what happens to waste after it leaves district facilities, so each district-hauler combination doesn't have to deal with this individually
- If we're to make composting a high priority, we need funding or people to teach, model, and monitor this daily
- Convenient, local collection spots for bulky things like metals, wood, etc., we could pick it up and haul it there ourselves rather than having to store it, schedule special hauling runs -- would benefit a lot by municipal support for things like metal recycling

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opportunity to partner with other districts, cities, or even the whole county for collective solid waste contracting; we're all public entities, it seems it would benefit us all to do this together, better, more efficiently, and more cost-effectively</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Training and instructions for training of kids (give teachers curriculum)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We would love an annual audit to help us do a better job.</li> <li>● The county could provide a website where they could have regular tips and tricks emails sent out regularly, share best practices and provide support (answer questions)</li> <li>● Provide stickers for recycling / organics bins for easier identification.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Financial support</li> <li>● Training</li> <li>● We'd love to do better/do more. But our staff is stretched thin already so we just don't have the resources for additional work.</li> </ul>