

# **2010 Recycling Committee Recommendations to the Kingston Board of Selectmen**

**Our goal is to maximize the recycling benefits to the town and the environment while minimizing the cost and environmental impact of waste disposal.**

- **This requires that the layout of the Transfer Station be easier to use and will accommodate increased recycling.**
- **This requires that users become more knowledgeable about the benefits and more committed to recycling.**

**Our recommendations are based on a three year comprehensive study of:**

- **Mass DEP mandates and literature.**
- **South Shore Recycling Cooperative resources**
- **Mass Recycles Paper workshops and literature.**
- **North East Recycling Council literature review**
- **Surrounding community's literature, policies, and procedures, to determine what options work best. Duxbury, Plymouth, Hanson, Pembroke, Nantucket, and Wellesley were studied.**

**Other towns have put programs in place to transform what would be an expensive trash disposal problem into a potential revenue source or at least significantly reduced cost center. Their recycling efforts not only maximize cost avoidance but some actively managed facilities actually generate money year after year. Their investment in recycling infrastructure creates a potential revenue source that goes into the town's general funds to offset the cost of operating the facility and disposal of non-recycled and hazardous material.**

**All of the most successful programs are actively managed, driven by management and staff passionate about developing a well thought out design that make recycling user friendly. They run the operation like a for profit business to maximize benefits to the residents and use financial incentives to encourage and enhance recycling and minimize solid waste disposal volume and cost. This whole concept supports the creation of an enterprise fund.**

We recommend that Kingston develop a "Materials Management" plan.

- Hire a dedicated Recycling Materials Manager: for the Transfer Station using grants from Mass DEP, Plymouth County Commission, Green Communities Act, and Stimulus funds via Green Job Creation initiatives. Our staffing levels are lower than other comparable towns.
- Work with Board of Health to institute and enforce recycling regulations for private haulers doing business in Kingston via their permitting process as other towns do.
- Install comprehensive signs with graphics and verbiage
- Configure a new Transfer Station design, policies and procedures to maximize sustainable revenue and minimize cost. The current number of containers and their configuration will not support increased recycling according to Paul Basler.
- Actively manage recycled commodities i.e. seek highest vendor payouts and lowest cost solutions. Next best is to bid out sale of recyclables in a long term contract or join the NRRRA and let them do the marketing.
- Change the name of the facility to promote recycling i.e., Kingston Recycling Center
- Provide ongoing recycling education for residents and Recycling Center staff.
- Work with SSRC, NERC, and MASS DEP to develop regional solutions to waste management.
- Work with schools, residents, and business towards zero waste.

The Kingston Recycling Committee has researched several methods available to the Town in dealing with our trash.

### Single-stream Recycling

In single-stream recycling, all recyclable materials go in one bin.

This is a very easy recycling system for individuals because there is no requirement to separate the various materials. Also, it requires only one bin at the transfer station instead of multiple bins. The amount of time spent in recycling and dumping is minimal.

However, the quality of the materials recycled is lower due to contamination. Also, it requires a plant that can process commingled recyclables. Materials that are contaminated must then be sent to a trash disposal plant so the rate of recycling is actually lower than it appears to the consumer.

The current cost to dispose of single-stream recycling material is \$25 per ton. There is currently no revenue from this method.

In pay-as-you-throw towns, some residents hide trash in their recyclable materials in single-stream because it is more difficult to distinguish between trash and recyclables.

### **Source Separated Recycling**

In source separated recycling, materials are separated by type and are disposed of in separate containers at the transfer station.

This process requires a bit more time on the part of the resident, both at home and at the transfer station. It requires separate trips to the recycling plant for each container of recyclables.

However, the result is a cleaner, higher value product that is a more desirable commodity. In other words the Town would receive the highest payment for the recyclables.

### **Curb-side Pickup**

Curb-side pickup of trash and recyclables is the easiest for the residents because they do not have to make a regular trip to the transfer station.

However, the yearly fees to each resident would exceed our current transfer station ticket price. While most of the costs associated with the transfer station could be eliminated, there may still be a need to have a minimal transfer station operation for certain items that a commercial company would not accept on a regular trash pickup.

There would also be the issue of trash and recycle bins sitting at the curb all day. This could be an esthetics issue as well as safety in the event the containers blew into the street or interfered with snow removal.

The contractor might require that trash and recyclables be picked up on separate days. This could add somewhat to traffic congestion.

**Save-as-you-throw or Pay-as-you-throw or Pay-as-you-save or SMART (Save Money And Reduce Trash)**

This process involves the sale of specific bags or stickers for each bag of trash. The resident pays individually for each bag of trash. The bags used should be biodegradable so as to not add to the volume of plastic in the trash stream.

This method allows the resident to control the amount of trash they throw away, thereby controlling their trash disposal costs. Because individuals are trying to reduce their costs, they tend to recycle more materials to reduce their volume of trash.

As of 2006, 59.1% of all communities in Massachusetts used this method and several more have chosen this option since 2006.

This method requires close scrutiny and substantial fines for those trying to game the system by reusing the special bags. Other individuals might be inclined to dispose of their trash in illegal ways such as roadside dumping rather than pay the cost of the trash disposal. Some individuals may ask friends in neighboring towns to dispose of their trash. Others may try to burn trash on their properties which is illegal and not good for the environment.

**Conclusion: Our recommendation for Kingston would be a hybrid of the most successful programs: Source Separated Recycling combined with the SMART program. This combination would provide the most revenue potential for recyclables and very quickly reduce the costs of trash disposal necessary before our contract with SEMASS expires and tipping fees triple.**