

The Shawnee County Recycling department receives its operating budget from two sources. The first being the host fee we receive from the landfill each month. The host fee is \$1.50 for every ton of trash the goes into the landfill. The second funding source is the sale of the commodities we collect, commodities prices are ever changing and follow the economy. In the first three quarters of 2008, commodity prices were very high and then in the last quarter they tanked and continued to fall and/or remain low through the first quarter of 2009. Prices have come back up but nowhere near where they had been. These two funding sources are not enough to continue to provide a free drop off service, as well as run the Household Hazardous Waste Facility. We have survived this long only because we had a large cash reserve, which is now almost gone. It is very much like using up your savings because you are out of work and still not being able to find a job that pays well enough to pay the bills.

We have put a plan in front of the Board of County Commissioners that outlines single stream (nothing separated) curbside recycling on a voluntary subscription service. In order to get this going we have asked for a \$1.8 million loan that would be paid back over time.

This service would cost each subscriber \$5.00 per month and we could become a self-sustainable department in less than 18-months. In an online survey, we conducted earlier this year we received over 1500 responses and 93% said they wanted curbside recycling. At the time of the survey we believed that we would have charge \$7.50 per month and still 64% of our respondents said they would be willing to pay for curbside recycling. We believe the support is there and we know people will pay for it, especially now that we have lowered the price to \$5.00 per month.

The Commission has discussed making everyone in Shawnee County pay for recycling by putting the department under the general fund of the county's budget. Translated, this means TAX based. In reality, there is nothing wrong with this, but why make everyone pay for it when it can be done through voluntary subscription. Although everyone would pay, participation would still be voluntary.

The other piece to this is that in order to have single stream curbside recycling you have to have a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF – "merf) close enough to make collection and hauling worthwhile. Right now, the closest MRF is 60-miles away, much too far. A company, Sonoco Recycling, currently has a small presence here in our county and they are ready to build a full MRF (approx. \$8 million) here if we get curbside in place. They are a very large company and are expanding in a number of places, so each day that passes is one more day that they point their attention in a different direction.

You can get involved by letting the commissioners know how you feel about this. I never believe in stacking the deck, so I want people who are for or against this project to contact their commissioner –they need to be informed about what their constituents think.

You can contact me at my office 785-233-4774, my work cell phone 785-806-1593, and my personal cell phone 785-233-4774 or via email steve.bolton@snco.us .

You can contact the Board of County Commissioners by phone at 785-233-8200 ext. 4040, or via email commission@snco.us .

Thank you for your interest.

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