

Program Report Card: Recycling in Connecticut, CT DEP

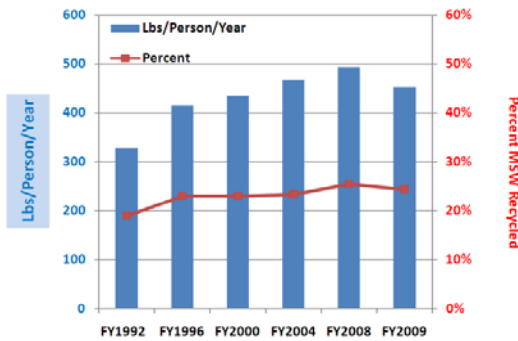
Quality of Life Result: All Connecticut residents live in a “clean and wholesome” environment in which natural resources are conserved and protected.

Contribution to Result: Waste minimization and prevention programs (source reduction, materials reuse, recycling, composting) optimize the percentage of solid wastes diverted from disposal, thereby minimizing the volume of waste burned or disposed. This saves energy, prevents greenhouse gases, conserves natural resources, saves landfill space, reduces pollutants and toxicity, and lowers the potential for degradation of air and water. *Less waste means less waste problems and a better environment.*

Partners: Municipalities, CRRA, regional resources recovery and solid waste authorities, DECD, OPM, CT General Assembly, regional solid waste and recycling operating committees, academic institutions, environmental advocacy groups, property tax reform advocates.

Performance Measure 1: STATEWIDE RECYCLING RATE

CT MSW Reported Recycled



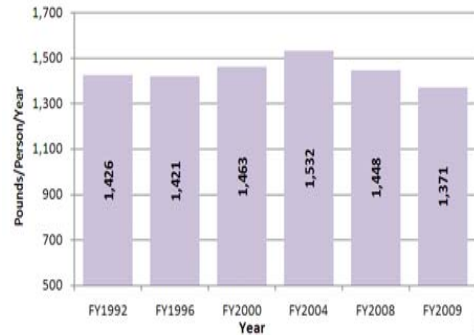
Story behind the baseline:

Municipal Solid Waste (“MSW”) recycled stalled at 25% due to relative increase in waste generation. FY 2009 data reflects economic downturn affecting rates of material consumption. Since amount disposed and recycled both dropped, the FY2009 percent recycled remained stagnant. Notable decrease in newsprint recycled attributed to drop in newspaper circulation. FY 2009 data pre-dates improvements expected through passage of Public Act 10-87.

Proposed actions to turn the curve: DEP will focus on implementation of Public Act 10-87 which removes obstacles to increasing recycling by ensuring partners’ actions conform to state solid waste management plan. DEP updating facility permits to clarify existing obligations to improve.

Performance Measure 2: PER CAPITA DISPOSAL RATE

CT MSW Reported Disposed (Pounds/Person/Year)



Story behind the baseline: Data in chart includes residential and commercial waste. A 2009 CT MSW waste disposal characterization study indicated that CT designated (mandatory) recyclables still accounts for 22.5% of the weight of CT MSW disposed, while food waste accounted for another 13.5%. The lack of a direct market signal to individuals on disposal costs results in a failure to properly value recycling. If all municipalities reached the statutory goal of 40% recycling, the cost savings statewide would be about \$35 million dollars in avoided disposal fees.

Proposed actions to turn the curve:

Focus continues on improving permitting process and data quality. DEP will educate municipalities about steps to reduce disposal costs such as unit-based pricing. In 2010 DEP posted data on website and improved data reporting quality.

Performance Measure 3: CLOSING THE GAPS IN INFRASTRUCTURE PERMITTED CAPACITY

Recycling Infrastructure

Waste type	Permitted facilities (#)	Capacity meeting current need (%)
Bottles, cans, paper	6+	100%
Food Waste	1	10%
Electronics	6 + 7	Improving
Soil	0	marginal

Story behind the baseline: Current infrastructure has sufficient capacity to process current tonnages of commodity recyclables [paper, bottles, cans]. Infrastructure is lacking for processing certain significant sectors such as, food waste, other organics, and soil] and for marketing and using processed recyclables. CT food waste is 13.5% of all waste disposed or 331,468 tons annually. Infrastructure for collection and recycling of electronics progressed in 2010, as e-waste recycling regulations were issued and municipal collection system funded by manufacturers begins October 2010. .

Proposed actions to turn the curve: Prioritize permit applications that close the capacity gap in specific sectors. Revise regulations to clarify reuse of soils and construction materials. Encourage partners to invest in making home composting units widely available. Ensure partners assist in development of industries, technologies, and commercial enterprises within the state that are based upon recycling, reuse, treatment, or processing of solid waste.

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