

Zero Waste Meeting

11/10/ 20

Attendance: Alison Kettering, Barb Zimmer, Barbara Ochota, Carolyn Galvin, Regina Spoor, Dawn Snider, Dean Rowe, Lisa Martin, Jane Martin, Jeannette Franks, Jennie Hoffman, Kitt Laws, Leslie Marshall, Maggie Kizer, Marci Burkel, Natalia Harm, Stefani Galaday, Susan Knell, Diane Landry, Jen Herrmann, Deb Rudnick, Becky Poppleton, Catilin Newman, Chris Piercy

Guest speakers: Pat Kaufman, Seattle Public Utility commercial recycling and compost program manager
Becca Fong, Seattle Public Utility residential recycling outreach educator

Becca and Pat have a weekly 20-minute Instagram Live show about waste reduction, recycling and composting. A lot of the topics are based on questions that come into their office from the public. Past episodes can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zna8JBRcyr8&list=PLO5EstoEwik3DzBGnTffCvdxBjLrqoh5L&index=8> .

Tonight they gave a slide presentation and took questions. Occasionally, Caitlin and Chris of Kitsap Solid Waste chimed in with comparative information for Kitsap County. Below are the highlights

Seattle Public Utilities oversees solid waste management of four sectors: residential (167,000 households), multifamily (8000 buildings with ~300,000 units), businesses (9,000) and self-haul to two transfer stations.

Recology and Waste Management are contracted to collect and haul all residential discards.

Republic is the MRF (materials recovery facility) that handles the recyclables sortation, baling and commodities' sales.

Lenz and Cedar Grove are the contracted compost facilities.

Over the years, Seattle has passed ordinances to reduce or divert waste headed to the landfill. Starting more than twenty years ago, they include, a cardboard and paper landfill ban, cans & bottles landfill ban, yard waste landfill ban, Styrofoam food container packaging ban, retail plastic bag ban, food waste landfill ban, compostable bag tinting, and food service plastic straw and utensil bans.

In 2018, the composition of Seattle's municipal solid waste (residential + commercial) broke down as follows:

23% to compost facilities, 33% to the MRF (recycling), and 44% to the landfill. Thirty percent of the garbage could have gone to compost or recycling. About 75% of SPU customers are good about separating correctly.

SPU's objectives are 1) to increase landfill diversion while keeping contamination low, 2) to increase compliance, and 3) to increase service equity. Recycling and composting are mandatory. Billing is done in a "Pay as you throw" structure: Customers can order different-sized carts depending on the volume they generate. The monthly fee varies depending on size. Recycling and garbage are one charge, organics another. For the maximum size (96 gallon) recycling and garbage cart, customers pay \$130/month. Chris said that is 8x what Kitsap customers pay!

Seattle's rates allow SPU to hire consulting agencies to perform studies and to hire ethnically diverse personnel for education outreach.

In an average recycling cart*, paper makes up the biggest percentage by weight, followed by glass, cardboard, plastic, metal and contamination. Cardboard and plastic account for the most by volume.

** Kitsap County has a grant to determine the composition of recycling at the county transfer stations. Bainbridge Disposal's transfer station will be included, and we will be asking our Zero Waste members if they want to participate in a waste audit of the transfer station's recyclables.*

The glass and metal is recycled in Seattle. (Note: Zero Waste toured the Nucor steel recycling plant a couple years back and hopes to set up a trip to the glass recycling plant.) The plastic heads to British Columbia. Some paper and cardboard goes to southeast Asia; the rest is sold to mills in the U.S.