

**WASTE  
REDUCTION  
AND  
RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT**

**Objective:** To recognize the goals set forth by the Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Plan through procedures that reduce the amount of waste produced by county operations and maximize opportunities for reuse and recycling.

**Reference:** Charter and Code of Tompkins County, New York Part II, Chapter 140: Solid Waste New York Codes, Rules and Regulations Part 360 New York State Solid Waste Management Act of 1988 Tompkins County Administrative Policy 01-21 Tompkins County Legislature Resolution #370 of 1993- Adoption of Final Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Plan Tompkins County Legislature Resolution #198 of 2006 In Support of a Sustainability Program for Tompkins County Government

**Legislative Policy Statement:** The Tompkins County Legislature requires that, to the greatest extent possible, County departments will properly manage resources by continually seeking ways to minimize solid waste generation and disposal through environmentally preferable purchasing, reuse, recycling, or composting.

**Policy Number:** 06-15

**Modified Date:** December 18, 2007

**Resolution #:** #07-261

**Department:** Solid Waste Department

**Next Review Date:** December 2008

**Waste Reduction Program:**

Tompkins County shall establish a waste reduction program to assess and manage the waste of all County departments, with guidance provided by the Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division (TCSWMD), the Facilities Division, and other departments as needed. In order to determine areas for improvement, TCSWMD will provide waste assessments in collaboration with departments. The outcome of these assessments will identify practices and procedures to be implemented for waste reduction, reuse, recycling, composting, and environmentally preferable purchasing (EPP) based on the unique circumstances of each department. Waste reduction concepts and policy requirements will be incorporated into established employee training and orientation programs to increase participation and ensure program success. Additional employee education will be provided as the waste reduction program evolves. To the greatest extent possible, County departments will participate in the waste reduction program and incorporate these practices into their standard operations.

**Definitions:**

“Best Value Purchasing” - means taking into consideration the lifecycle cost of a product or service. This cost includes the initial product price, operation, maintenance and disposal costs, and the impact on the environment and public health.

“Composting” - is the managed degradation of organic wastes, such as food scraps and yard debris, in the presence of oxygen, water and other microorganisms to produce a nutrient rich soil amendment while reducing organic matter in the waste stream.

“Disposal” - is defined as the final removal of waste materials, conducted in such a manner that it does not provide any beneficial use. Disposal often refers to the landfilling of waste materials.

“Environmentally Preferable Product” - means a product and/or service that has a reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared to competing products and services that fulfill the same purpose. Considerations for this product comparison may include: raw materials acquisition, production, energy and water consumption, hazardous components, byproducts, packaging, distribution, reuse opportunities, maintenance, or disposal.

“Hazardous waste” - is waste with properties that make it dangerous or potentially harmful to human health or the environment. A hazardous waste typically exhibits one of the following characteristics: ignitability, corrosivity, reactivity, or toxicity.

“Practicable” - means satisfactory and within reason when considering price, performance, availability, compatibility with a specified operation, and public safety.

“Recycling” - is a method of diverting materials from the waste stream by collecting, sorting, and reprocessing them into raw materials that are then made into a new product.

“Reuse” - means to use a product more than once. An item may be reused for its originally intended purpose or creatively reused to fulfill a new function.

“Universal waste” - refers to low risk hazardous waste, which when not properly collected for recycling, treatment, or disposal is considered a hazardous waste. These wastes have three categories: Cathode Ray Tubes (CRT), thermostats, and batteries and lamps.

“Waste reduction” - means minimizing the total amount of materials used for a process, which in turn decreases the total amount of waste generated.

**Procedure:**

**A. Waste Reduction, Reuse, Composting, and Environmentally Preferable Purchasing**

To the greatest extent possible, all county departments will seek to maximize opportunities for and take advantage of waste reduction, reuse, composting and environmentally preferable purchasing (EPP) programs.

County departments will seek to reduce waste by making conscious purchasing decisions, such as eliminating the procurement of disposable items when possible, coordinating with vendors to reduce packaging waste, and minimizing surplus by purchasing only what is needed. To further reduce waste, items will be fully used prior to their ultimate disposal. The Purchasing Division will seek EPP alternatives through procurement where possible and practicable.

All County departments will incorporate paper conservation practices as outlined by TCSWMD. The Information Technology Services Department (ITS) will take into account waste reduction as a criterion when evaluating and recommending new technology, equipment, software, and procedures.

As defined by Tompkins County Administrative Policy 01-21, surplus equipment and surplus computer equipment will be managed for internal and external reuse opportunities as well as recycling before ultimate disposal in a landfill.

To the greatest extent possible and where practicable, based on information gathered in the waste assessments, County departments shall consider establishing a composting program, with assistance from TCSWMD. Opportunities for waste reduction and composting shall also be considered at County events.

All County departments will seek to maximize EPP where practicable, by procuring products and services that have a reduced negative effect on human health and the environment when compared to competing products and services that fulfill the same purpose. The Solid Waste Division will develop and annually update an EPP product guide for departmental use. The Purchasing Division will solicit for and recommend environmentally preferable products and services whenever they are considered

practicable and of best value in order to maximize EPP within the County.

### **B. Recycling**

A County program will be established for collection of all items from departments suitable for recycling, as defined by TCSWMD and consistent with federal, New York State and local laws. As a component of this program, departments will utilize uniform recycling receptacles. TCSWMD will work with each individual department to provide employee education, which will ensure maximum waste diversion.

County departments will explore opportunities for, and where practicable, recycle all unwanted and unusable items prior to disposal, including furniture, chairs, and computers. TCSWMD will provide written guidelines and procedures for the recycling of all acceptable materials.

Prior to recycling, all County departments that possess unwanted, unusable electronic or computer equipment will notify ITS, or their departmental computer support personnel. ITS will provide standards, written instructions, and coordination with all County departments to ensure that all Tompkins County data or software is removed from electronic and computer equipment prior to recycling. No electronic or computer equipment will be recycled prior to the completion of this process.

The Facilities Division will bid recycling services for County facilities based on best management practices as recommended by TCSWMD and in accordance with this policy.

### **C. Disposal**

All departments shall regularly review their waste products to determine if they are properly acquiring, using, and disposing of materials.

All products that cannot be reused or recycled shall be disposed of in an environmentally responsible manner. TCSWMD will assist all County departments in finding the best disposal method for materials that have been deemed no longer usable, including hazardous and universal waste.

County departments will seek to minimize the procurement and generation of hazardous and universal waste. Departments that generate these wastes will be responsible to properly dispose of them through the County's Hazardous Waste collection program or through a permitted hazardous waste contractor.

The Facilities Division will bid solid waste disposal services for County facilities based on best management practices as recommended by TCSWMD, in accordance with this policy.