

**SOLID WASTE AND RESOURCE RECOVERY ELEMENT  
MAJOR FINDINGS**

1. Resource recovery and recycling are the primary modes of solid waste disposal in Pinellas County and will continue to be in the future. The Pinellas County Refuse-to-Energy Plant is operating at optimum levels, and the overall adjusted recycling rate in the County is at 45 percent.
2. The County operates the only permitted Class I landfill in Pinellas County. It is the goal of this plan to extend the life of this landfill as long as possible.
3. By the year 2015, Pinellas County is projected to dispose of 1,114,640 tons of solid waste a year. (This projection has no allowances for per capita increases or reductions by recycling.) This will be an increase of 5.84 percent from 2000 when 1,048,899 tons are projected. The Pinellas County Refuse-to-Energy facility will continue the recovery of energy and metals from solid waste.
4. The greatest increase in population, and therefore waste generation, is projected to occur in the northern sectors of the County.
5. The 25 governments of Pinellas County have three types of collection arrangements; 7 municipalities have municipal collection systems; 17 others have franchise contracts with private collectors; and the unincorporated area operates under private enterprise systems of collection which do not have franchise contracts with the Board of County Commissioners.
6. Several of the County's major roads are hampered with high traffic volumes; however, solid waste transport adds proportionately very little to the overall traffic volume.
7. Levels of service and capacity measures for the solid waste facilities are adequate and will continue to keep up with growth.
8. Recycling programs are an important part of integrated solid waste management.
9. Hazardous waste management programs are being considered by the state. Pinellas County will continue its own program for County facilities, the Household Chemical Collection Center (HC<sub>3</sub>), the Pollution Prevention (P2) Program and associated education and outreach programs for households and small generators of hazardous waste.
10. Capital improvement projects through 2003 are listed in the element. The total anticipated cost through 2003 is \$69,850,000. The largest expenditure will be the Resource Recovery Facility Retrofit which is estimated to cost \$62,950,000.

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**SOLID WASTE AND RESOURCE RECOVERY ELEMENT  
GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

1. GOAL: COLLECT AND DISPOSE OF SOLID WASTE IN THE MOST ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE, EFFICIENT, AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SAFE MANNER, IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY, ENHANCE THE ENVIRONMENT, AND RECOVER RESOURCES WHICH HAVE THE POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER USEFULNESS.
  - 1.1. Objective: The County shall evaluate the solid waste generated within Pinellas County to minimize present and future disposal needs and to monitor sources of waste generation.
    - 1.1.1. Policy: The County shall continue its program to educate the public on the need to reduce the amount of solid waste being generated.
    - 1.1.2. Policy: Pinellas County shall continue to respond to, and investigate, illegal dumping and prosecute illegal excavation activities.
    - 1.1.3. Policy: The County shall continue to cite violators who dump along the road or who abandon vehicles or appliances in an unsafe or unsanitary manner, as defined by County ordinance.
    - 1.1.4. Policy: The County shall support and encourage efforts at the local, state and national level to reduce the amount of solid waste being produced, for example, promoting less packaging and source reduction.
  - 1.2. Objective: The County shall ensure that all solid waste within the unincorporated area is being collected in a cost-effective, efficient and environmentally sound manner.
    - 1.2.1. Policy: The collection of solid waste in the unincorporated areas shall be by private collection companies operating under a free enterprise environment for both residential and commercial collection.
    - 1.2.2. Policy: The County shall continue to require an occupational license for garbage collection which must be renewed annually.
  - 1.3. Objective: The County shall continue to cooperate with each municipality to ensure that all solid waste within the incorporated area is being collected in the most efficient and environmentally sound manner feasible.
    - 1.3.1. Policy: The level of service standard for collection of residential and commercial solid waste in municipalities shall be the standard designated by each municipality in its comprehensive plan.

- 1.3.2. Policy: The collection of solid waste generated within each municipality shall be the responsibility of that municipality. Each municipality shall make its own determination as to the method of collection of residential and commercial waste within its own city limits.
- 1.3.3. Policy: Approved charitable organizations may pick up material within all of Pinellas County.
- 1.4. Objective: The County shall continue a solid waste reduction and recycling program, in compliance with state goals, to minimize solid waste disposal needs and maximize existing facilities.
  - 1.4.1. Policy: The County shall continue its recycling program for the unincorporated areas through a multi-faceted approach coupled with public education.
  - 1.4.2. Policy: The County shall continue to encourage private and non-profit recycling firms to operate within the County.
  - 1.4.3. Policy: The County shall exempt from disposal charges certain approved charitable organizations that operate successful recycling programs. The County shall encourage all non-profit organizations to recycle.
  - 1.4.4. Policy: The County shall continue an artificial reef program which recycles clean construction debris.
  - 1.4.5. Policy: The County shall continue a materials recovery program where ferrous and non-ferrous metals are recycled from the residue of solid waste from the combustion process.
  - 1.4.6. Policy: The County shall continue the office paper recycling program for all major county buildings.
  - 1.4.7. Policy: The County shall continue the purchase of products and supplies that are made from recycled materials, pursuant to the revised procurement procedures of the County.
  - 1.4.8. Policy: The County shall continue to produce videos and brochures that address the “hows” and “whys” of recycling, arrange tours of the County resource recovery facility, maintain a library with resources on recycling, and provide speakers to discuss the issues of solid waste management and recycling.
- 1.5. Objective: The County shall require that hazardous wastes and materials are handled, collected, transported, stored, disposed, and recycled in a manner adequate to protect human health, safety, and the environment.

- 1.5.1. Policy: The County shall support and follow existing federal and state regulations regarding large quantity generators of hazardous waste.
- 1.5.2. Policy: The County shall continue offering technical assistance to the users of hazardous materials and the generators of hazardous wastes. This approach shall illustrate to private industries an economically feasible avenue to minimize hazardous waste pollution and maximize the safety of their respective operations by using new technologies, practicing conservation and recycling.
- 1.5.3. Policy: The County shall continue operating its Household Chemical Collection Center and its associated outreach programs to allow for a disposal alternative for household chemical waste and promote an economical option for conditionally exempt small quantity generators (CESQG) of hazardous waste.
- 1.5.4. Policy: The County shall encourage and support state efforts to develop a stronger statewide hazardous waste management program.
- 1.5.5. Policy: Pinellas County shall support the efforts of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) as the repository for the District VIII SARA Title III information.
- 1.5.6. Policy: The County shall continue to implement its hazardous waste management program for all county government departments and operations.
- 1.5.7. Policy: The County shall support the siting of permitted hazardous waste transfer facilities within reasonable travel distance to industrial parks and other businesses.
- 1.5.8. Policy: The County shall continue to provide countywide emergency response for hazardous waste accidents or spills through its HazMat Response Team.
- 1.5.9. Policy: The County shall disseminate educational material to the public, particularly homeowners, emphasizing pollution prevention by using alternatives to hazardous materials, and by emphasizing the reduction and safe storage, treatment, handling, transporting and disposal of hazardous waste.
- 1.5.10. Policy: Pursuant to the Florida Solid Waste Management Act, the County shall continue to carry out waste management programs for specific special solid wastes such as used oil, batteries, white goods and yard trash, and

shall continue to educate the public about the proper way to dispose of, or recycle, these special wastes.

1.5.11. Policy: Pinellas County, in coordination with the Metropolitan Planning Organization, shall assess the adequacy of its current regulations concerning the transport of hazardous materials in the County, and if necessary shall amend these regulations to reduce environmental and public health risks.

2. GOAL: REGULATE IN THE MOST ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE, COST-EFFECTIVE, AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SAFE MANNER, THE PROCESSING, SOURCE REDUCTION, RECYCLING AND DISPOSAL OF SOLID WASTE IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY, ENHANCE THE ENVIRONMENT, AND RECOVER RESOURCES WHICH HAVE THE POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER USEFULNESS.

2.1. Objective: In order to preserve landfill space, protect the aquifer, and operate an effective recycling program, the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners shall have sole responsibility for the disposal of solid waste within Pinellas County, and shall provide integrated solid waste management.

2.1.1. Policy: The County shall manage solid waste in accordance with the provisions of the Pinellas County Solid Waste Disposal and Resource Recovery Act.

2.1.2. Policy: The County shall continue to operate a resource recovery system.

2.1.3. Policy: The County shall continue to operate a permitted Class I landfill in Pinellas County.

2.1.4. Policy: The County shall permit solid waste management facilities operated by entities other than the County, that have received approval by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Pinellas County.

2.1.5. Policy: The County shall continue to support the separation and removal of recyclable metals from the solid waste stream prior to disposal.

2.1.6. Policy: The County shall continue its recycling program for the unincorporated area.

- 2.2. Objective: The County shall establish a level of service standard for disposal of refuse countywide.
- 2.2.1. Policy: The level of service standard shall be to dispose of 1.30 tons per person per year.
- 2.3. Objective: Pinellas County shall recycle or dispose of 80 percent by weight of the countywide waste stream by means other than landfilling when taking the entire amount of solid waste into account.
- 2.3.1. Policy: The County shall evaluate and identify various recycling and alternative disposal methods for the following items: glass, aluminum, steel and bimetallic material, office paper, yard trash, newspaper, corrugated cardboard, and plastic bottles.
- 2.4. Objective: The County shall dispose of solid waste in a manner that ensures the protection of natural resources.
- 2.4.1. Policy: The County shall continue to monitor and evaluate permanent leachate control methods at the landfill to protect groundwater.
- 2.4.2. Policy: The County shall manage stormwater runoff at the landfill in accordance with Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regulations and utilize it for the resource recovery process.
- 2.4.3. Policy: The County shall operate the refuse-to-energy plant so as to minimize emissions for the protection of the air quality in Pinellas County.
- 2.4.4. Policy: Pinellas County shall continue its ambient air quality monitoring program with regard to the resource recovery plant.
- 2.4.5. Policy: The County shall analyze its current ash utilization practices at the Bridgeway Acres Landfill and shall evaluate current and potential methods to reuse and recycle ash materials.
- 2.5. Objective: The County shall continue to develop educational programs for the general public and solid waste professionals to encourage waste reduction practices and proper disposal, and to promote recycling.
- 2.5.1. Policy: The County shall continue to develop educational programs to encompass as many groups in the community as possible, including, but not limited to, government employees, non-profit organizations and students. The County shall coordinate with the Pinellas County School Board and other agencies to develop these programs.

2.5.2. Policy: The County shall ensure that all operators of county-owned solid waste management facilities will have completed a DEP approved training course.

3. GOAL: THE COUNTY SHALL ENSURE THAT ALL SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS ARE FISCALLY SOUND.

3.1. Objective: The County shall utilize appropriate revenue sources, except ad valorem taxes, for the operation of its solid waste facilities.

3.1.1. Policy: The tipping fee or disposal fee charged at a County solid waste management facility shall be based on weight and shall be charged equally to all users of the facility, unless specifically exempted by the Board of County Commissioners.

3.1.2. Policy: The County may utilize at least the following sources of revenue to fund the operations of any solid waste facility: tipping or disposal fees, franchise and licensing fees, sale of electricity, sale of recyclable materials, grant funds, and interest earnings.

3.1.3. Policy: The fiscal operations of the County's solid waste system shall operate in accordance with the Trust Indenture.

4. GOAL: THE SOLID WASTE AND RESOURCE RECOVERY ELEMENT SHALL REMAIN CONSISTENT WITH THE OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE PINELLAS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

4.1. Objective: The Solid Waste and Resource Recovery Element shall coordinate with the Future Land Use Element.

4.1.1. Policy: The two elements shall be consistent with regard to siting of landfills, resource recovery facilities and other facilities used for collection, processing or disposal of solid waste.

4.2. Objective: The Solid Waste and Resource Recovery Element shall coordinate with the Water Supply, Surface Water Management, and Sanitary Sewer Elements.

4.2.1. Policy: Solid waste collection and disposal shall operate under pertinent regulations relating to potable water systems, aquifers and groundwater recharge areas, and stormwater drainage systems.

4.3. Objective: The Solid Waste and Resource Recovery Element shall coordinate with the Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources Element.

- 4.3.1. Policy: Solid Waste collection and disposal shall be operated in such a manner as to protect air quality.
- 4.3.2. Policy: Solid Waste collection and disposal shall be operated in such a manner as to protect the quality and quantity of current and projected water sources.
- 4.4 Objective: The Solid Waste and Resource Recovery Element shall coordinate with the Coastal Management Element.
- 4.4.1. Policy: The County shall limit waste disposal sites in areas where such activities would destroy coastal areas.
- 4.4.2. Policy: Debris removal and disposal procedures after a natural disaster shall be contained in the Pinellas County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. [99-24]
- 4.5. Objective: The Solid Waste and Resource Recovery Element shall coordinate with the Intergovernmental Coordination Element.
- 4.5.1. Policy: Pinellas County shall utilize its Technical Management Committee as a joint planning and work group for solid waste issues to further intergovernmental coordinating with all the municipalities within the County.
- 4.5.2. Policy: Pinellas County shall coordinate solid waste issues as needed with the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, Southwest Florida Water Management District, Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Florida Department of Community Affairs.
- 4.6. Objective: The Solid Waste and Resource Recovery Element shall coordinate with the Capital Improvements Element.
- 4.6.1. Policy: The improvements to solid waste management facilities shall maintain the adopted standard for level of service concurrent with the impacts of development.
- 4.6.2. Policy: The County shall regularly evaluate solid waste generation rates and trends to determine the need for additional improvements and for additional disposal capacity. If any capital improvements are identified through the evaluation process, the Capital Improvements Element shall be amended to incorporate these improvements.

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4.6.3. Policy: The capital projects listed in this Element shall be financially feasible as demonstrated in the Capital Improvements Element.