

West Boylston Solid Waste Advisory Team (SWAT) Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2013

The start of FY 2013 began the fourth year of West Boylston's Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) trash program and the third year of "single stream" recycling. Our trash tonnage decreased slightly in FY13, going down from 1,429.4 tons in FY12 to 1,419.6 tons in FY13, a good trend if we want to hold down costs. The town's trash goes to Casella's landfill in Southbridge, where its disposal costs \$64.76/ton. But, our FY13 recycling rate (30.9 %) declined slightly from FY12, when it was 31.2%, and from FY11, when it was 32 %. Although "single stream" recycling makes it easier for residents to recycle, unfortunately, it has not upped our recycling rate.

The best news is that the town's total trash costs in FY13 declined from FY12, when the total cost was \$358,684. In FY13, the total trash cost was down to \$351,007. (Collection - \$230,161 + Disposal - \$91,933 + Bag cost - \$28,913 = \$351,007). With bag fee revenue of \$138,600, the net cost of the trash program amounted to \$212,407, slightly less than the prior year, when the net cost totaled \$213,284. The PAYT program continued to be a huge improvement over FY09, the year before PAYT started, when the town's net trash costs totaled \$395,492.

To ensure that the town and SWAT have an accurate picture of how its trash and recycling program is faring, SWAT developed a Trash/Recycling Spreadsheet in FY12. It tracks our recycling rate, our trash and recyclable tonnages, bag costs and revenues, and gross and net costs of the program. In September 2012, then DPW Director Silvio Baruzzi filled in this Spreadsheet for FY12, allowing the committee to analyze the town's trash/recycling program for that year. Its analysis and the FY12 Spreadsheet figures were then sent by the Chairman to the Selectmen, Finance Committee, and Board of Health. In October, 2013, at the DPW's request, the committee simplified this Spreadsheet so that only yearly figures were needed, rather than monthly. The committee, however, was unsuccessful in getting the DPW to fill out the FY13 Spreadsheet at that time, resulting in some inaccurate interpretations of the FY13 trash/recycling results at the October 2013 Town Meeting. (The FY13 Spreadsheet was completed later and is attached.)

One new outlet for the town's Pay-As-You-Throw bags occurred in FY13 when Central Street Market started carrying them.

Concerned that "bulk items" (items that do not fit in a PAYT bag or that exceed 40 pounds) are sometimes picked up by our collector, SWAT asked that the incorrect wording re bulk items on the instruction sheet that comes with the PAYT bags be corrected, which was done in FY13.

SWAT worked on publicizing alternatives for the disposal of bulk, banned or "difficult" trash items in FY13. When it edited the DPW's annual Trash Calendar, it emphasized the many disposal options offered by the Wachusett Watershed Regional Recycling Center in West Boylston. Handouts, which listed the many "banned" trash items that this Recycling Center will take, were handed out at the October Town Meeting.

Two SWAT meetings were held during FY13 and two committee members met with the Town Administrator re town sustainability efforts and business recycling. Reports were given at both the October 2012 and May 2013 Town Meetings. Committee members Judy Doherty and Mary Ambrose resigned in FY13. Norma Chanis, a former member of the town's Sustainability Committee, (which no longer exists) was appointed to the committee.

Julianne DeRivera, Chairman
Elise Wellington, Secretary
Norma Chanis