Waste

VISION:

Bloomington will be a zero waste community

According to a 2017 report, Monroe County generated nearly 120,000 tons of mixed waste in 2016.[1] Bloomington accounts for more than half (58 percent) of the human population of the county[2] and could reasonably be expected to contribute an associated amount of waste generated within the county (roughly 69,600 tons per year and 4.5 daily pounds per capita).[3] This is slightly greater than the U.S. average of 4.4 daily pounds per capita in 2014.[4]

The City's Sanitation Department provides weekly solid waste collection and single-stream recycling services for single family residences within city limits. Residents can arrange for bulky item pickup for an additional fee or deliver items to one of the Monroe County Solid Waste Management District's (MCSWMD) drop-off locations. The City currently collects recyclable paper, cardboard, plastics #1–7, aluminum, steel, tin cans, and glass containers.[5] It also provides bi-weekly yard waste collection from April through December.

The Sanitation Department has an agreement with Republic Services (Hoosier Disposal) to accept mixed waste and recycling at its local transfer station for a fee of $41.86/ton for mixed waste and no charge for recyclables. Mixed

waste received by the transfer station is then transported to the Sycamore Ridge Landfill in Terre Haute, approximately 60 miles northwest of the transfer station.[6] Recyclables are transported to a Materials Recovery Facility in Indianapolis for further processing, and yard waste is sold to Good Earth LLC for composting. While recyclables have traditionally been accepted by transfer stations for free, recent changes in the international recycling market may result in transfer stations' charging for recyclables in the future.

The City overhauled its waste collection system in October 2017, moving from a pay-as-you-throw sticker program that charged $2 per domestic size trash container to large bins available in three sizes. The recycling program was also updated at that time from a dual-stream system (i.e. separate containers for paper, glass, and plastic) to a single-stream recycling system. In 2016, Sanitation collected 4,933 tons of mixed waste and 2,609 tons of recyclables, achieving a 35 percent recycling rate under the previous pay-as-you-throw waste management system. In 2017, Sanitation collected 5,683 tons of mixed waste and 2,939 tons of recyclables, resulting in a recycling rate of 34 percent. Between January and June 2018, Sanitation collected 3,131 tons of mixed waste and 1,641 tons of recyclables, maintaining the 34 percent recycling rate from the previous year.

While the City provides waste collection services for single family residences, buildings located within city limits containing more than four housing units, residences located above commercial buildings, and commercial buildings must arrange for private waste collection and (optional) recycling services. About 88 percent of all solid waste generated in Monroe County is collected by private haulers.[7] While most of the mixed waste collected by private haulers is delivered to the Hoosier Disposal transfer station, some is sent to out-of-county facilities, including the Medora Landfill (Medora, IN), Ray's transfer station (Indianapolis, IN), and the Indianapolis Resource Recovery Facility (Indianapolis, IN).[8]

MCSWMD partners with Republic Services to offer commercial recycling services through MCSWMD's Green Business Network.[9] In 2018, 57 local businesses are participating in this program, which provides recycling services and waste reduction tips.[10] Two private haulers offer their own recycling programs[11] and the MCSWMD operates four waste collection/recycling centers that accept municipal solid waste, where city and county residents can drop-off a variety of items, including household hazard waste materials (Walnut Street location only), bulky items, scrap metal, and separated recyclables, including plastic CD and DVD cases, Styrofoam packing peanuts, and Styrofoam #6.[12] MCSWMD also offers the Materials for the Arts Center, which provides nonprofits, churches, schools, and artists supplies. Residents can also take or leave items in the Sidewalk Exchange, including shoes, clothing, small appliances, and gardening supplies.

Despite the presence of residential and commercial recycling programs, a 2017 MCSWMD waste audit found that about 31 percent of solid waste in Monroe County consisted of recyclable materials. The audit also found that approximately 39 percent of solid waste materials consisted of potentially compostable materials, such as food waste and compostable paper.[13] Removal of all compostable and recyclable materials would potentially divert more than 70 percent of Monroe County's solid waste stream from the landfill,

Waste

GOAL 5.1: Divert at least 40 percent of the volume of residential waste collected by City Sanitation from being landfilled by 2023[14]			
ACTION	**LEAD PARTNERS**	**TIMEFRAME**	**COST**
5.1.a	Conduct a waste characterization study of sample households in Bloomington, with an associated education and outreach campaign for improved recycling techniques and reduced contamination levels	Public Works, ESD, Volunteers (AmeriCorps), IU	2019	$$$
5.1.b	Provide community support for the annual Hoosier to Hoosier Community Sale	ESD, IU, Nonprofit Organizations	2019	$*
5.1.c	Create a community waste reduction campaign targeted at businesses and citizens[15]	ESD, Center for Sustainable Living, IU, Chamber of Commerce, Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS)	2020	$
5.1.d	Create and implement a sustainable business certification program that includes opportunities to report recycling rates and offers sectoral guidance for sustainable business practices[16]	ESD, BCOS, Chamber of Commerce	2020	$$
5.1.e	Develop a prioritized plan for expanding participation in the Green Business Network, focusing on increased recycling participation by multi-family and commercial participants	MCSWMD, ESD	2021	$
5.1.f	Establish a voluntary program with the construction industry to divert construction waste from the landfill and provide incentives and recognition for participants[17]	MCSWMD, ESD, Building Association of South Central Indiana	2021	$$
5.1.g	Create a composting program for both residential and commercial food waste[18]	Public Works, MCSWMD	2022	$$$$*
5.1.h	Explore the long-term opportunity for a Materials Recovery Facility in Bloomington[19]	MCSWMD	2023	$

provided that alternative pathways were available for all of those compostable and recyclable materials.

With increased efforts to both *minimize* the amount of waste generated and *maximize* material recovery via composting and recycling, Bloomington is well positioned to become a zero waste community. "Zero waste" is more of a philosophy than a hard target, aimed at significantly reducing the amount of materials that are sent to the landfill. In the next five years, the City of Bloomington will continue to focus on waste reduction, reuse, and recycling opportunities for residential and commercial properties, in an effort to decrease operating costs and reduce waste.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

✔ **Reduce!** Carry your own reusable coffee mug and water bottle. Bring a reusable bag for shopping. Develop a zero waste kit with reusable napkins, plates, utensils and more. Say **no** to plastic straws.

✔ **Reuse!** Shop the Hoosier to Hoosier Community Sale and local second-hand stores.

✔ **Recycle!** Choose products packaged in recyclable or reusable containers. Take electronics to proper waste disposal sites like the Monroe County Solid Waste District. Visit the City's website and learn more about recycling.

south walnut recycling center

gogreendistrict.com/walnut

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SUCCESS Stories

HOOSIER TO HOOSIER

Since 2010, the Hoosier to Hoosier (H2H) Community Sale has diverted approximately 600 tons of waste from the landfill and raised over $340,000 for local nonprofits and sustainability programs. H2H is a partnership between the IU Office of Sustainability, the City of Bloomington, and Cutters Soccer to encourage reuse of common household goods. From May through August each year, volunteers visit IU residence halls and off-campus homes and apartments to collect unwanted furniture, electronics, kitchen appliances, clothing, books, and more. Volunteers clean, repair, and sort collected items in preparation for a one-day sale that takes place in mid-August before university classes resume.

In 2018, H2H attracted more than 3,100 shoppers and diverted an estimated 80 tons of waste from the landfill. Hundreds of volunteers worked to collect and prepare donations for the sale and raised over $48,000 to support local non-profits and sustainability programs.

Notes

1. Kessler Consulting, Monroe County Solid Waste Management District Mixed Waste Processing Feasibility Study (January 2018), vii.

2. Bloomington Peak Oil Task Force Report, 53 and Kessler Consulting, Monroe County Solid Waste Management District Mixed Waste Processing Feasibility Study (January 2018), 1.

3. Calculated from Monroe County Solid Waste Management District Mixed Waste Processing Feasibility Study data.

4. U.S. EPA, Advancing Sustainable Materials Management: 2013 Fact Sheet, https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-09/documents/2013_advncng_smm_fs.pdf

5. City of Bloomington Sanitation Department, Recycling Services, https://bloomington.in.gov/sanitation/recycling

6. Kessler Consulting, Monroe County Solid Waste Management District Mixed Waste Processing Feasibility Study (January 2018), 2–4.

7. Kessler Consulting, Monroe County Solid Waste Management District Mixed Waste Processing Feasibility Study (January 2018), vii.

8. Kessler Consulting, Monroe County Solid Waste Management District Mixed Waste Processing Feasibility Study (January 2018), 5.

9. Molly Chao, et. al., Bloomington Recycling: Evaluation of Bloomington's Recycling Program and Expansion Program Recommendations, SPEA Capstone Project (Fall 2015), 4–6.

10. MCSWMD, Green Business Network, http://gogreendistrict.com/greenbiz

11. Molly Chao, et. al., Bloomington Recycling: Evaluation of Bloomington's Recycling Program and Expansion Program Recommendations, SPEA Capstone Project (Fall 2015), 4–6.

12. MCSWD, http://www.gogreendistrict.com

13. Kessler Consulting, Monroe County Solid Waste Management District Mixed Waste Processing Feasibility Study (January 2018), 35.

14. Similar goals recommended by City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan, 47 and Bloomington Peak Oil Task Force Report, iv.

15. Similar action recommended in the Bloomington Peak Oil Task Force Report, 56; similar action discussed in the SAP Environmental Quality and Natural Systems Working Group discussions; similar actions implemented by Iowa City, Iowa; Lakewood, Colorado; and Boulder, Colorado.

16. Similar action recommended in the SAP Environmental Quality and Natural Systems discussions; similar action implemented in Boulder, Colorado.

17. Pertains only to City of Bloomington Sanitation Department trash collection data; similar action recommended in Bloomington Environmental Action Plan, 43; similar action implemented in Boulder, Colorado.

18. Similar action recommended in the Bloomington Environmental Action Plan, 43 and 48, and Bloomington Peak Oil Task Force Report, vi and 57; action also recommended during SAP Environmental Quality and Natural Systems Working Group discussions. Similar actions implemented by Iowa City, Iowa; Ann Arbor, Michigan; and Boulder, Colorado.

19. Similar action recommended in the City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan, 47 and the Peak Oil Task Force Report, 57.