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Chapter

5

Fairfax County Solid Waste Management System Overview

Overview of Fairfax County's Current Solid Waste Management System

This chapter presents an overview of Fairfax County's current solid waste management (SWM) system, including organization structure, SWM system flow, and funding strategies.

Fairfax County Solid Waste Management System Organization

Fairfax County's DSWCR and DSWDRR are responsible for recycling, collection, transfer and disposal of solid waste in the county.

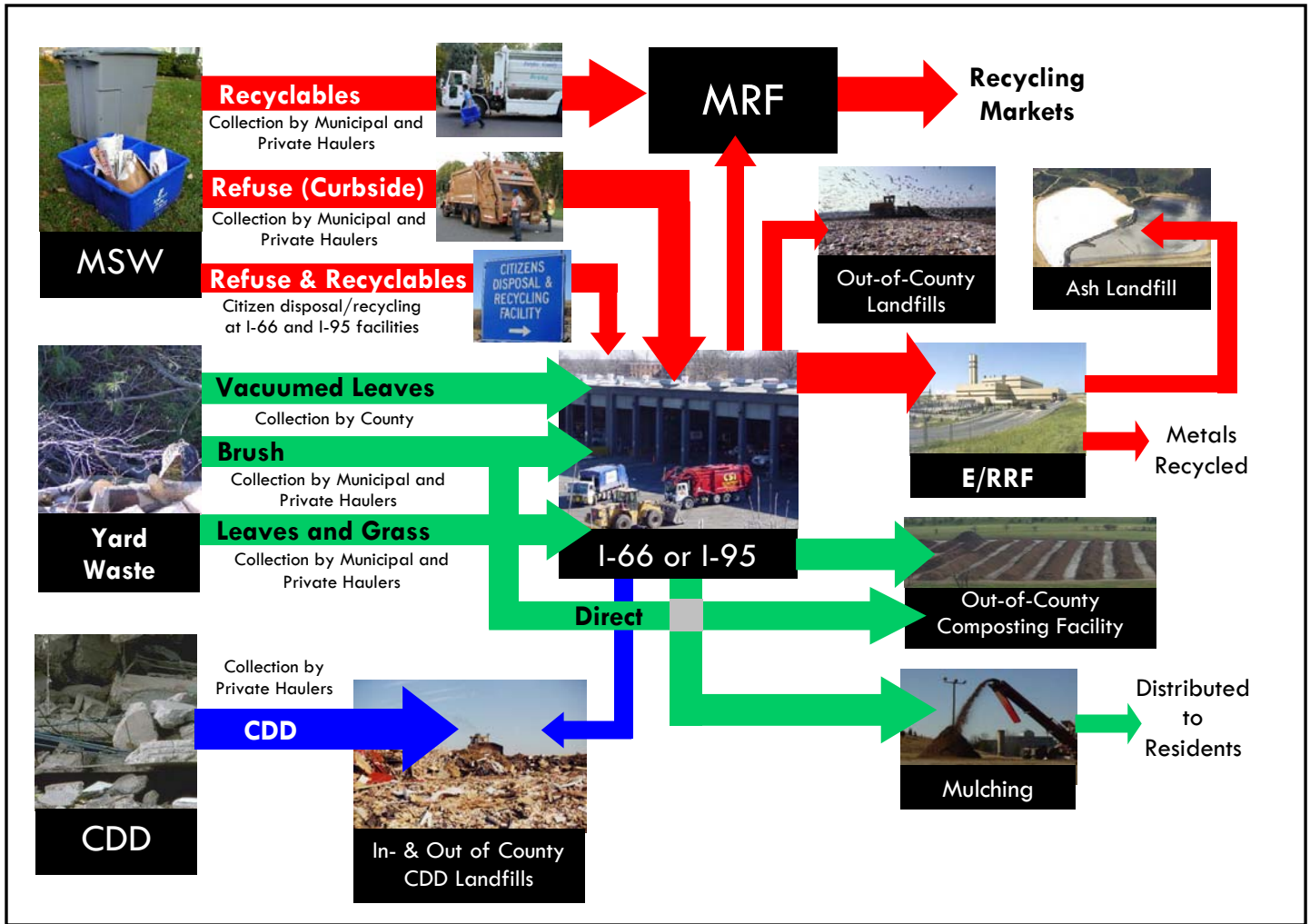
Fairfax County's SWM Program is responsible for the recycling, collection, transfer and disposal of solid waste in the county. Administration of waste programs is currently achieved through two divisions, the Division of Solid Waste Collection and Recycling (DSWCR) and Division of Solid Waste Disposal and Resource Recovery (DSWDRR). The two divisions are responsible for program administration, operations, fiscal management, and enforcement of county code related to waste management.

The SWM Program is responsible for directing facilities used to manage county-generated solid waste. Currently, these facilities include a county-owned and -operated refuse transfer station, a privately-owned and -operated waste-to-energy facility, a regional municipal ash landfill operated by the county, two citizens disposal facilities, dispatch offices for county collection vehicles, and eight drop-off sites for recyclable materials. Other capital assets include equipment, rolling stock, and facilities for refuse collection, disposal, and recycling operations.

Fairfax County SWM System Flow

Figure 5-1 diagrams the flow of MSW, CDD and yard waste generated in Fairfax County. Management of these wastes, as well as special wastes, is described in detail in Chapters 6 through 9 of this SWMP.

Figure 5-1. Flow of Solid Waste Generated in Fairfax County



Current SWM Program Funding

The two operational divisions oversee the financial management of all SWM programs. Revenues and expenditures are allocated between five special revenue funds; the county's General Fund supports some SWM programs.

The county uses five revenue funds to manage its solid waste management programs.

To separate revenues and expenses associated with programs serving different groups of customers, the county uses five special revenue funds related to solid waste. The five funds are as follows:

- Fund 108 - Leaf Collection
- Fund 109 - Refuse Collection and Recycling Operations
- Fund 110 - Refuse Disposal

- Fund 112 - Energy/Resource Recovery Facility
- Fund 114 - I-95 Refuse Disposal

The General Fund programs consist of community cleanup, court/board directed cleanups, evictions, and health department referral operations.

DSWCR and DSWDRR manage the annual budget for these funds and propose recommendations for expenditures and fee structures. The Fairfax County Department of Management and Budget oversees this effort and assists the County Executive in preparing the budget; the annual budget is presented to the County Board of Supervisors for advertisement, public hearing, and adoption.

All revenues are retained within the separate funds, with reserves established as necessary in anticipation of equipment replacement, capital projects, environmental contingencies, operating contingencies, and in the case of the landfill - post closure care. The Department of Finance arranges for an independent audit of the funds; the solid waste funds are included in the county's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

The county evaluates capital projects necessary to support the solid waste management program on an annual basis. Even though funded through program revenues, these capital projects are included in the county's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The CIP presents the annual capital needs for the previous five years, and projects the capital needs for the next five-year period. The SWM Program uses the projections to assist with forecasting the reserve requirements for each fund.

General Fund Programs

Fairfax County DSWCR currently operates four programs on behalf of the General Fund. These programs provide for the collection of refuse that presents a hazard to the health, safety, and welfare of county citizens. The four programs are the Health Department Referral Program, Community Cleanup Program, Court/Board Directed Cleanup Program, and Evictions Program. These programs are described in more detail in the "Collection" section of Chapter 6.

The county sometimes collects revenues from these programs and uses the revenues to offset the overall cost to the General Fund. The Health Department Referral Program and the Court/Board Directed Cleanup Program may recover cleanup fees from property owners.

Fund 108, Leaf Collection



The county uses Fund 108, Leaf Collection, to manage the vacuum collection of leaves within Fairfax County's leaf collection districts. Revenue is derived from a levy charged to homeowners within leaf collection districts, and is based on the assessed real estate value.

Fund 109, Refuse Collection and Recycling Operations

The county uses Fund 109, Refuse Collection and Recycling Operations, to manage the collection of refuse and recyclable materials from household units within the county's approved sanitary districts, the collection of refuse from county agencies, and the coordination of the county's waste reduction and recycling program.



County-Provided Residential Collection

The county collects revenue for county-provided residential collection using a refuse collection fee, an annual fee that appears as a separate item on the real estate tax bill. Approximately 41,000 household units currently (2004) receive county collection services within 69 sanitary districts.

County Agency Routes

County Agency Routes (CAR) are responsible for the collection of refuse from county agencies and a small number of organizations associated with county agencies. Revenue for the CAR program is derived from billings to county agencies based on the cubic yard capacity of the containers assigned to individual agencies. The cost per cubic yard is formula-driven, and is based on fiscal year operating requirements.

County Waste Reduction and Recycling Program

Recycling Operations is responsible for providing the overall management of the county's waste reduction and recycling programs. Recycling Operations conducts waste reduction and recycling outreach programs, plans for and implements recycling and waste reduction efforts, and enforces the county code requirements associated with recycling. Revenue is generated from the sale of recyclable materials (aluminum cans, newspaper, cardboard, glass, and scrap metal), which serves to partially offset expenditure requirements. In addition, program support is received from solid waste disposal fees and/or the General Fund (if necessary).

Fund 110, Refuse Disposal



Fairfax County uses Fund 110, Refuse Disposal, for transfer station operations and channeling refuse collected throughout Fairfax County to either the Energy/Resource Recovery Facility (E/RRF) or an appropriate landfill, as well as channeling yard debris to composting facilities. Revenue to support refuse disposal operations is derived from fees

collected from users of the county's disposal facilities. The disposal charge is set on a per ton basis, and is market driven. Charges generally will cover the cost to transfer and dispose of the waste. When possible, the fee also includes full or partial support of public benefit programs, including the county's Recycling Program, the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Program, and the Code Enforcement Program. These programs generate insufficient, if any, revenue. General Fund support supplements disposal fees as needed.

Fund 112, Energy/Resource Recovery Facility (E/RRF)



The county uses Fund 112 to manage the contract for the E/RRF, which is owned and operated by Covanta Fairfax, Inc. (CFI). Revenue bonds and owner equity were used to construct the facility. The county entered into an operating agreement with formula driven payment terms that include debt repayment and operating

costs, and allows for the county and CFI to share in facility revenues. The county is charged a tonnage-based disposal fee for waste disposed of at the E/RRF.

Fund 114, I-95 Refuse Disposal

Fairfax County uses Fund 114, I-95 Refuse Disposal, for operating the I-95 Landfill, which is a multi-jurisdictional refuse disposal site. This sanitary landfill was previously the county's primary disposal facility, but is currently dedicated to the disposal of ash generated by the E/RRF, the



Alexandria/Arlington waste-to-energy facility, and sludge incineration ash from the Noman M. Cole wastewater treatment facility. Revenue is primarily derived from a tonnage-based tip fee paid by the E/RRF and participating jurisdictions.