



City of Yakima

# **News Release**

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**Subject: Pilot Curbside Recycling Project**

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## **Pilot Program Shows Strong Interest in Curbside Recycling**

Even though the data that has been compiled during a four-month pilot curbside recycling program that the City of Yakima's Refuse & Recycling Division conducted is still being tabulated and analyzed, all indications are that the experiment was a success.

From early May through August 29<sup>th</sup>, about 540 homeowners in neighborhoods east and north of Kissel Park (3000 West Mead Avenue) were asked to participate in the free pilot project. Each of the houses in the pilot project area was provided with a 32-gallon garbage cart, a 96-gallon yard waste cart, and a 96-gallon recycling cart. Homeowners were encouraged to put grass clippings, tree branches, garden rubbish, etc. in the yard waste cart, plastic drink containers, cardboard, paper, metal cans, etc. in the recycling cart, and non-recyclables like glass containers, food residue, toy packaging, etc. in the garbage cart.

"The neighborhood really got on board with recycling," said Refuse & Recycling Manager Loretta Zammarchi. "We had about 400 homes in the pilot project area participate on a regular basis. That means that an average of about 73% of the homes in the pilot project set carts out every other week," said Zammarchi. "That is a high level of participation for sure."

Over the course of the pilot project, more than 22 tons of household recyclables and nearly 60 tons of yard waste were collected. Consequently, the amount of garbage normally collected in the neighborhood and hauled to the Terrace Heights Landfill decreased significantly.

"Current estimates are that the Terrace Heights Landfill will be full in about 11 years," said Zammarchi. "When that facility closes, the City will have to haul garbage much further and at a greater cost to the Cheyne Landfill in the Lower Valley. We need to figure out now how we can decrease the amount of garbage that goes to the landfill so we can be as responsible as possible not only because of the costs involved but also from an environmental standpoint," said Zammarchi. "Recycling may be one way to get there."

Zammarchi and her staff are now in the process of finding out from the homeowners in the pilot project area what they did and did not like about curbside recycling. Homeowners are being asked to fill out a survey, either in a hard copy form delivered to their homes or online on the City's website, by September 8<sup>th</sup> and a focus group discussion that will take place in the next few weeks will give the City an even clearer picture of how people who participated in the pilot project felt about it.

Once all the data has been collected and evaluated, a report will be presented to the Yakima City Council. It will then be up to the Council to decide what, if any, steps would be taken to implement a curbside recycling program in Yakima.