

**PASCO COUNTY
RECYCLING AND
EDUCATION**

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Put-Or-Pay is a term frequently used by the energy industry, from coal plants to advanced Waste-to-Energy facilities. A put-or-pay clause means that a certain amount of raw material will be supplied or the shortfall paid for at a set price. In the case of Pasco's Waste-to-Energy, the raw material is the trash we throw away every day.



Workshop

On May 17th, the Board of County Commissioners met for a workshop on the draft Solid Waste Master Plan. This plan will serve as a guideline for Solid Waste projects and goals until 2030. Here are some of the things that were discussed.

The Waste-to-Energy plant currently has three burners that incinerate about 340,000 tons of garbage per year and produce electricity. But by 2030 our population will produce approximately 510,000 tons of garbage. The necessary expansion of the WTE was a key point of discussion at the workshop. This

Recycling Update

JULY 2016

Recyclonomics Part 2

Pasco County's Waste-to-Energy plant (WTE) has been turning trash into electricity since 1991. Garbage is picked up by a trash hauler and taken to a tipping floor where tons of trash are scooped up by a crane and dropped into chutes and onto stoker grates, where they are combusted.

The heat generated is used to boil water into steam, which powers a huge turbine that converts energy into electricity.

At the heart of the WTE sit three burners. Just one burner can

process over 14½ tons of trash an hour, or 350 tons in a single day. The burners stay lit 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Currently, the contract for the electricity created by the WTE is put-or-pay, but there's little danger of paying out; Pasco provides the WTE with plenty of fuel. At current projections, the county's population will grow from 479,340 in 2014 to 641,900 in the year



2030. This means 162,560 more sources of refuse.

Despite the appetite of the burners, their working capacity is not endless. It is estimated that an additional fourth burner to the WTE will need to begin in 2028 and will cost Pasco 190 million dollars. Until then, any waste in excess of what the WTE can handle is sent out of county to be landfilled.

Though the expansion of the WTE is inevitable as Pasco's population grows, the timeline for its implementation can flex some. It comes down to this:

the more waste we can recycle, the longer a new burner can be delayed, giving budgets and a growing tax base more time to accumulate money.

The best way to divert tons from the solid waste stream? Reduce, reuse, recycle. Fully 30% of the current waste stream could be recycled, but isn't. Recycling isn't just a way to help the environment. It makes great sense and saves cents.

expansion can't be done right away; it's necessary to have 80-85% of the garbage already coming to the county to make expansion economically viable. So, the County is looking for ways to reduce the tons of garbage coming our way in order to gain more time before expansion.

Recycling was a big part of the discussion because every ton recycling takes out of the WTE helps with tonnage reduction. Methods to encourage recycling were debated, including increasing residential recycling collection to once per week and adding paper and cardboard to curbside.

The East Pasco Transfer Station

located in Dade City would be enlarged on the commercial side to accommodate more garbage and a second truck tunnel for outbound tonnage will be added. Additional citizen drop offs were proposed for underserved areas of the county.

This was a workshop. The Solid Waste master plan will be finalized based on the workshop and the County commissioners will vote on its passage at a public hearing. If you're interested in watching the workshop, you can find it on Pacocountyfl.net; click on agendas, then workshops.

Coastal Cleanup

The time for our annual Coastal Cleanup is coming! Save the date of Saturday September 17th to join hundreds of other Pasco residents in a quest for cleaner waterways and streets. For more information call Kristen King at 727-856-7252.

Wishcycling



Some of the problems in our recycling stream are not caused by ignorance or apathy, but instead, by too much enthusiasm. Some people wish they could recycle more. They look at the restrictions on our program and believe that if they could just sneak that plastic toy, patio chair, or bicycle wheel into the recycling stream, it would have to be recycled.



Nothing could be further from the truth. The hope to recycle a non-recyclable item is known as wishcycling, but in this case, not all wishes should come true.

Putting forbidden items into your local recycling stream does nothing to

increase recycling. In fact, those #6 plastic cups, aluminum foil, and grocery bags only become contamination in the recycling stream and can even keep other materials from being recycled properly.



If a load of recycling is too contaminated, it is simply rejected by processor. Be smart and recycle right! Keep plastic film and bags out of your recycling, take toys to a thrift store, don't put aluminum foil or pans in your recycling, and no more wire hangers, ever!

Want a handy guide? Call us and we'll send you a brochure detailing Pasco's program and a reflective recycling sticker to get you started.

Junking the Junk

Buy Now! Limited Time Offer! Sale Ends Soon! Low Low Prices! These are common sights in your junk mail, which counts for hundreds of pounds of your waste each year.

Paper products comprise almost 20% of our solid waste stream, or nearly 68,000 tons. Paper and cardboard can be recycled at any one of our Green Fiber drop-off locations, found at most libraries, schools, fire stations, parks, and many government buildings.

The three R's (reduce, reuse, recycle) list reduce as first, and for good reason.

Reduction is vitally important to the solid waste stream and the environment. After all, a product never made uses no natural resources. To reduce your junk mail, opt out at:

<https://www.catalogchoice.org/>

<https://www.optoutprescreen.com/>

<https://www.dmachoice.org/>

Over the next few months, Pasco County residents will see new recycling decals on county utility vehicles. They will remind residents to recycle!



New Renewables

There is a difference between a discovery in a laboratory and a product that is ready to be offered to consumers and industry. Even so, the occasional discovery bears mentioning.

It may come as a surprise to some that plastic is made from oil. Until now, the transformation has been strictly one



way; oil to bag. No one expects to be returning plastic bags back into their gas tank anytime soon.

A team of researchers at the University of Illinois may someday change that. They have found a way to convert plastic bags into an alternative diesel fuel, as well as a range of other oil-based products, including natural gas, engine oil, and gasoline¹.

The second recent development finds its source in your morning cup of java. Used coffee grounds can now be turned into carbon-neutral biomass pellets that burn cleanly and store more energy than wood. It's already happening in the UK. A company called bio-bean has the capability to process 55,100 tons of coffee grounds per year².



- <http://www.treehugger.com/clean-technology/used-plastic-shopping-bags-can-be-converted-diesel-fuel.html>
- <http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2015-10/16/arthur-kay-bio-bean-coffee-fuel-wired-2015>