

# CHATHAM BOROUGH GARBAGE PROGRAM: POTENTIAL CHANGES

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Chatham Borough Council Meeting

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CFO Karen Fornaro

# Current Program

- Residents must use special “green bags” for solid waste
- Green bag cost includes **tipping fees** for trash
  - *Tipping fee = cost charged by the dump to accept the waste*
- Chatham contract with vendor includes:
  - pickup cost for green bags and bulk waste, tipping fees for bulk waste (set price in contract)
- Technically, there are limits on bulk but limits are not consistently enforced

# Benefits

- “Pay as you throw” for green bags – while everyone pays the same for collection, the amount they pay for disposal depends on how much they throw out
- Many Borough residents don’t bother with garbage bins – simply place bags outside
- Familiar to residents
- Borough has a strong recycling rate
- Twice-weekly collection is convenient

# Issues / Challenges

- Collection and tipping fees increasing significantly every year
  - 70 % increase in collection fees; 10 % increase in green bag fees between 2021 and 2023
- Green bags = plastic inside of plastic
- Labor shortage driving some costs – very hard to find employees
- Safety issues with manual collection of garbage
  - 43 sanitation workers in NJ killed; many more injured 1992-2012
  - High workers compensation costs
- Difficulty with reliability of supply/quality of green bags
- Risk of animals getting into bags if not secured in cans
- If cans are used – a hodgepodge of different sizes / quality



# Alternative Program

- Residents are assigned a standardized garbage bin (paid for by the Borough)
  - Bin is weather and rodent proof and bear resistant and marked with Borough logo/RFID tag
  - Can select size based on size of household
- Available bin sizes: 35 gal, 65 gal, 95 gal
- Automated truck comes 1/week to collect from the bin
- Any type of bag can be used
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LV37Ww\\_oH\\_o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LV37Ww_oH_o)



# Decisions and timeline

- August 2022: Completed RFP requesting pricing on multiple options
  - Received one response to RFP (unfortunately the norm in New Jersey)
- August 2022-now: Detailed research / discussion on feasibility, costs for automated garbage program
- Discussion with vendor: no change until 2024 to allow for transition (if any)
- Tonight: award bid and select overall approach (no change vs. automated)
- If automated is selected, the following will be addressed in 2023:
  - Exact pricing for residents based on bin size
  - Bin procurement
  - Bulk waste program changes, if any
- **Implementation in 2024**

# Pros and Cons

	PROS	CONS
Green Bags	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Familiar to residents</li><li>• No implementation required</li><li>• “Pay as you throw” – popular with sustainable jersey and many residents</li><li>• Leads to high recycling rates</li><li>• Flexible – can put out any number of green bags</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More expensive</li><li>• Labor intensive (almost 4x labor required)</li><li>• Less safe for workers</li><li>• Loose bags can attract pests</li><li>• Residents use bulk for what is really rubbish/ municipal trash</li></ul>
Containers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Requires less labor</li><li>• Safer for truck operators</li><li>• No loose bags out on the street</li><li>• Garbage stays dry and pets stay out</li><li>• Residents don’t need to purchase green bags</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Workload to implement</li><li>• Requires purchase and distribution of cans</li><li>• Need plan you have excess trash</li><li>• Less relationship between volume and price</li><li>• Challenging with narrow driveways / snow</li><li>• Only 1 collection / week</li><li>• Uncertainty about waste volumes – may go up and cost the Borough more</li></ul>

# Top resident questions to date

- SNOW:
  - If snow is heavy, collection will be rescheduled (as it is now)
  - Residents will need to clear a space or place bin at end of cleared driveway
  - If you use a contractor, have them include this in their scope of work
- BIN OWNERSHIP:
  - Borough owns bins
  - Bins would be distributed to each address
  - Bins are all RFID tagged
  - Damaged bins will be replaced at no cost
  - Residents can exchange bins for a different size





# Education on bin placement

## A few placement tips to follow...

to ensure the collection of your garbage, recyclables or yard waste

**1** There should be 3 feet between carts, yard waste bags and structures such as mail boxes, cars and lamp posts

**2** Cart should be within 18 inches of the curb

**3** Face the short metal bar toward the street

**4** Position the cart on as level a surface possible, away from overhanging tree branches

**5** Make sure lid is closed

**Place your bin carefully & leave space on all sides!**



### Why does it matter?

Most collection trucks are automated with an electronic arm that grabs and empties the bin. This efficient process streamlines collection and prevents work-related injuries.

# Translating “green bags” into bin sizes

*Some also offer an insert to make this only 20 gallons*



**HOLDS 2–3 TALL  
GARBAGE BAGS**

*38" tall, 23" wide,  
22" deep*



**HOLDS 4–5 TALL  
GARBAGE BAGS**

*42" tall, 24" wide,  
28" deep*



**HOLDS 7–8 TALL  
GARBAGE BAGS**

*43" tall, 28" wide,  
32" deep*

# Bid Results and Cost Calculations

TOTAL MUNICIPAL WASTE COSTS (EXCLUDES RECYCLING ETC.)			
	Current Contract	Current Approach - Green Bags, Unlimited Bulk 2x/week	Automated Approach - Purchase Automated bins, unlimited bulk, borough pays tipping fees, 1x/week
Solid Waste Contract Amount	\$ 528,000	\$ 592,000	\$ 422,000
Amortization of Garbage Bins	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 28,166
S&W Maintenance			\$ 20,000
Tipping Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 315,620
Green Bag Costs (paid by residents)	\$ 307,640	\$ 307,640	\$ -
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 835,640</b>	<b>\$ 899,640</b>	<b>\$ 785,786</b>

# Average Cost per Household

COST PER HOUSEHOLD			
	Current Contract	Current Approach - Green Bags, Unlimited Bulk 2x/week	Automated Approach - Purchase Automated bins, unlimited bulk, borough pays tipping fees, 1x/week
Garbage portion of solid waste bill	\$ 195	\$ 218	\$ 263
Green Bag Costs (average per household)	\$ 114	\$ 114	\$ -
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 309</b>	<b>\$ 332</b>	<b>\$ 263</b>
% change from Current Contract		+7.05%	-17.28%

# Trash receptacle cost

Trash Bins - Quote:			
	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Unit Price</u>	<u>Extended Price</u>
65 Gallon Bins:	3000	\$63.22	\$189,660.00
RFID Tags	3000	\$1.00	\$3,000.00
Assembly & Distribution	2700	\$5.00	\$13,500.00
Freight	1	\$10,500.00	\$10,500.00
First Year Cost:			\$216,660.00
Amoritized 10 years			
Principal	\$21,666.00		
Interest 3%	\$6,499.80		
Total Debt	\$28,165.80		

# Answers on green bags

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I like the green bags program and think it should be continued even if it costs more	23.35%	202
I would continue the green bags program only if there is no cost difference	32.02%	277
I do not like the green bags program and would not advocate continuing it	38.84%	336
Other (please specify)	5.78%	50
TOTAL		865

**70 % of those who responded said that we should not continue the green bag program if it costs more, or should not continue it at all.**

# Answers on pickup frequency

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ I would be willing to pay more for twice weekly collection	17.44%	151
▼ I like twice weekly trash collection but would not pay more for it	47.92%	415
▼ Once per week trash collection is adequate for my family	32.91%	285
▼ Other (please specify)	Responses 1.73%	15
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>866</b>

**Respondents were equally divided differential pricing for cans ... however pay as you throw is an important environmental standard for the Borough.**

# Bulk pick-up

- Bulk program is much more lenient than other municipalities in the county or state
- Costs are born evenly by all tax payers no matter how much they use it
- Wet bulk waste means we pay \$100+ a ton for water
- **No decision on bulk program until next year; nothing implemented until 2024**

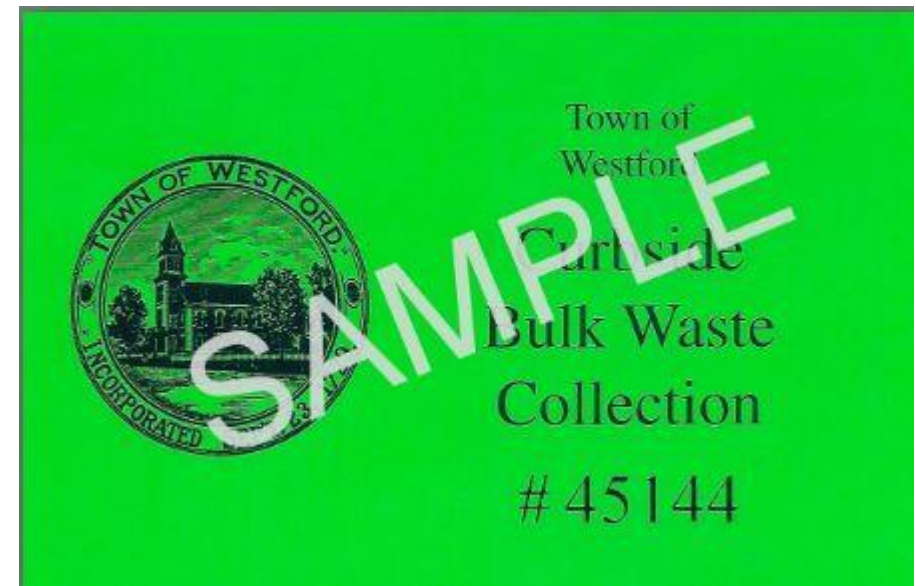


# Bulk program is extremely popular

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I would support continuing our current bulk program even if it costs more.	64.29% 549
I would support a "sticker" program where residents are given an allowance (for example, one can plus two pieces of furniture) and then pay a set amount for additional bulk items.	35.71% 305
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>854</b>

# Bulk pickup – alternatives for 2024 +

- Continue unlimited bulk
- Continue unlimited bulk but don't allow "rubbish" if bins are provided
- Restrict bulk to 4 items/month (anything above that left at the curb)
- Charge for "stickers" for each bulk item (revenue to come to the Borough)
- Charge for "stickers" for each bulk item over 4 (revenue comes to the Borough)



# BULK TRASH ITEMS STICKER PROGRAM GUIDELINES

*Stickers may be purchased at the Pennington Borough Hall and placed on items - each sticker covers around 40 lbs. After stickers are affixed on bulk items they're cleared to be picked up with regular trash on your scheduled day. See below for some examples.*



**Extra Trash Can**  
1 Sticker



**Tire**  
1 Sticker



**Computer**  
3 Stickers



**Television**  
36" or less - 3 Stickers  
36"-50" - 4 Stickers  
50" or larger - 5 stickers



**Washer**  
5 Stickers  
**Dryer**  
4 Stickers

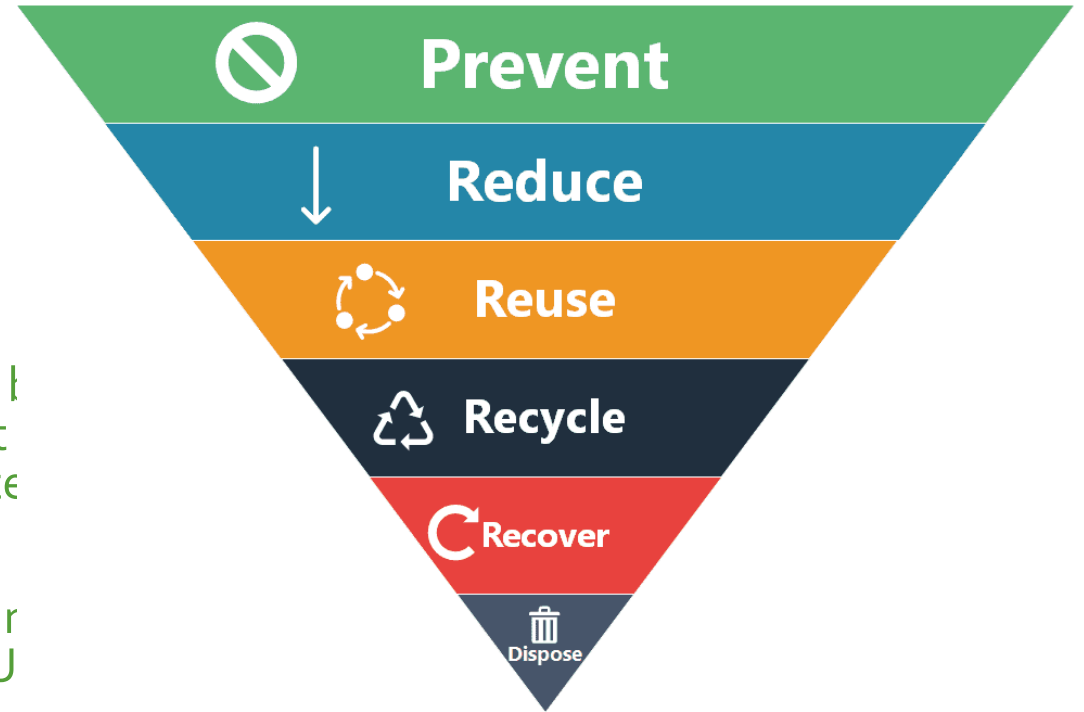


**Refrigerator,**  
**Freezer, Dehumidifier,**  
**Air Conditioner**  
8 Stickers

ITEM	Number of Stickers	ITEM	Number of Stickers
Appliances-Small	3	Kitchen Table (disassembled)	5
Bath Tub (fiberglass)	6	Lamp Table	2
Bath Tub (porcelain)	8	Love Seat	4
Bicycle	3	Mattress (T-5, F/Q/K-6)	5/6
Box Spring (T-4, F/Q/K-5)	4/5	Pallet - wooden (cut in half)	2
Carpet (10' x 12' section)	5	Recliner	5
Chair - Folding	2	Sink (porcelain)	5
Chair - Upholstered	5	Sink (Stainless)	3
Dishwasher	5	Sofa	6
Dresser	6	Sofa Bed	8
Dryer - Clothes	6	Stove	6
Exercise Equipment	4	Table - End, Coffee, Folding	3
Fence - Stockade 3'x4'	1	Toilet	3
File Cabinet	4	Wall or Floor Unit	7
Gas Grill (no tank)	4	Washer - Clothes	7
Hot Water Heater	7	Misc Item - Maximum 25 LBS	3

# Other issues

- Compost – too expensive for Borough to implement, but can reduce their waste significantly by composting at **Java's compost**, backyard composting, or new countertop composting machines
- Recycling – ideally, would move to automated recycling well, but depends on cost and interest level of the MU
- Pricing by can
  - Different approaches to consider – “cover charge” approach versus proportional approach
  - Allow residents to change size of cans on a biannual or quarterly basis?
- Overflow quantities
  - Provide options for residents who have occasional overages – e.g., drop off extra trash at the recycling center for a fee (\$2-\$3 per bag)



# Next steps

- Award garbage contract and select approach for 2024 and beyond
- If automated is selected
  - Develop more detailed pricing scheme based on bin size
  - Select vendor to provide garbage bins
  - Hold numerous workshops to educate residents on options
  - Distribute bins to households
- In either case
  - Continue to assess / obtain input on bulk waste program
  - Explore and educate residents about composting

# Questions

