

## Van Buren Township Solid Waste Collection Frequently Asked Questions

Will Township residents have to pay for solid waste collection?

A: Yes, we are expecting the monthly cost of solid waste collection to be under \$15 per month per household for the first year of the contract. The fees for trash will be proposed to be paid on the property tax bills and are proposed to be split between the winter and summer property tax bill. We are currently the only municipality in our area of Wayne County that provides trash collection as a free service. Other communities, including those that own and have landfills within their municipalities, charge residents a fee or tax for solid waste collection. Please see the following for a cost comparison:

<b>Community Cost Comparison</b>				
Community	Fee or Millage	Mills	Costs/Year for a Home Valued at \$250,000	Method of Billing
Romulus	Millage	1.55	\$194	Property Taxes
Ypsilanti Township	Millage	2.3742	****\$297	Property Taxes
Canton Township	Fee		\$165	Property Taxes
Sumpter Township	Fee		*\$108	Water Bill
City of Belleville	Fee		\$248	Water Bill
City of Wayne	Millage	2.829	\$354	Property Taxes
Huron Township	Fee		**\$206	Property Taxes
Superior Township	Fee		**\$207	Direct Bill From Hauler
City of Riverview	Millage	1.74	***218	Property Taxes
<b>Van Buren Township</b>	<b>Fee</b>		<b>Under \$180</b>	<b>Property Taxes</b>
* Does not include recycling or yard waste collection.				
**Weekly trash collection & every other week recycling, yard waste, & bulk item collection				
***Does not include curbside recycling collection				
****Weekly trash and yard waste collection. Recycling collection once every other week				

Why do I have to pay for trash collection?

A: In 2016, Waste Management approached the Township regarding the need to expand the landfill as the approved areas were filling up. The expansion of the landfill would increase the life of the landfill by an additional thirty (30) to forty (40) years. In order to do this the host community agreement would need to be amended.

During the discussions the Township made efforts to ensure that all existing provisions in the current agreement were maintained including free collection, but Waste Management expressed concerns maintaining this. The reasons identified were the unexpected prior growth of the Township where the number of households nearly doubled. They had indicated that it would be difficult to project growth thirty (30) to forty (40) years into the future and this uncertainty was a concern. Other reasons identified were the variable costs associated with fuel, labor, and equipment in providing this service.

This became a focal point in the discussions and ultimately Waste Management agreed to extend the free collection and disposal for an additional five (5) years. After the five (5) year period Waste Management would still allow free disposal of the curbside trash and yard waste at the landfill, but would no longer provide free collection. This free disposal provision applies to trash and yard waste collected curbside and this would apply to any haulers who the Township hire to collect trash and yard waste. By having this provision, the overall costs of curbside service should be lower relative to our peers for the life of the expanded landfill. This free disposal provision is for trash and yard waste collected curbside and is different from the land fill pass program. There will be no changes to the landfill pass program and residents will still be able to obtain a landfill pass and take waste to the landfill up to twenty-four (24) times per year. The value of the landfill pass is approximately \$3,400 per year.

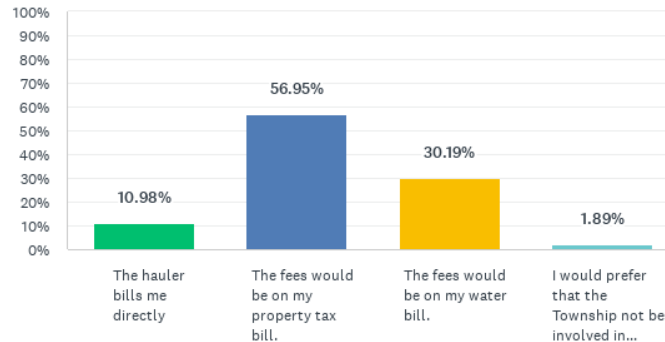
The Township receives other benefits from the landfill including tipping fees on a portion of the refuse that is taken in. These tipping fees have been used since the 1990's to help keep the Township's property taxes lower as compared to other adjacent communities. Currently, of all the municipalities in Wayne County, Van Buren Township has the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest local millage rates. Please see the below chart for comparisons to other Township in the County and adjacent Cities:

2022 Local Operating Millages**						
Community	Operating Millage	Voted in Millages	Special Assessments	Debt Millages	Total Mills + SAD*	Costs/Year for a Home Valued at \$250,000
Sumpter Township	0.7707	3.9859	0	0	4.7566	\$595
Plymouth Township	0.8038	4.3238	0	0	5.1276	\$641
<b>Van Buren Township</b>	<b>0.8935</b>	<b>6.3528</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7.2463</b>	<b>\$906</b>
Northville Township	0.6513	7.31	0	0.35	8.3113	\$1,039
Huron Township	0.7602	7.7968	0	0	8.557	\$1,070
Canton Township	1.476	1.3909	9.424	0	12.2909	\$1,536
Brownstown Township	0.8527	3.1076	10	0	13.9603	\$1,745
Grosse Ile Township	1.2228	9.915	0	4.4	15.5378	\$1,942
City of Romulus	9.4063	6.2925	0	0	15.6988	\$1,962
City of Belleville	15.9353	0	0	0	15.9353	\$1,992
City of Wayne	14.5959	9.7435	0	0	24.3394	\$3,042
Redford Township	4.0124	11.7053	9.4	0	25.1177	\$3,140
* SAD's Assesed to Real Property Only						
**Does not include County, Schoold District, or other Authority Millages						

Why are the fees for our trash collection proposed on the property tax bill?

A: There are two (2) reasons why this method was proposed. First, the Township asked in our online survey which method was preferred by Township residents. In the survey the majority of respondents indicated that their preference was to have fees assessed on their property taxes.

Q9 Which of the following scenarios do you MOST support regarding the billing of curbside pickup of trash, recycling, and yard waste?



The second reason was when we looked at other communities in our surrounding area (please see spreadsheet on page 2) this was the most common method of assessing these fees. We are proposing to split the payment between the summer and winter property tax bills in order to limit the impact of a large one (1) time payment.

Township officials discussed the option of having the collection hauler send a separate bill to households, but ultimately did not decide to move forward with this as it would increase costs.

I thought trash was already covered in my property taxes?

A: There are currently no fees assessed to our residents for this service. The Township’s trash service was negotiated for free in 1990 as part of our host community agreement with the Woodland Meadows landfill. Since 1990 Township households have had solid waste collection at no costs to the Township or its residents.

I do not put out as much trash as my neighbor why am I being charged the same rate?

A: The Township’s host community agreement with Waste Management includes the free disposal of trash and yard waste collected by a hauler at the curbside and disposed of at Woodland Meadows landfill. The majority of the costs related to these services are primarily for the collection and transportation of the waste to the landfill which is generally consistent regardless of an individual household volume. The pricing of solid waste collection service is based on a household rate which we have requested to make sure the fees are equitable between households in the Township.

### What is changing regarding the trash service?

A: The main changes to our solid waste program are as follows:

Township residents will be receiving a 96 or 65 gallon recycling cart sometime in 2023 to replace bins. Households will be required to use these carts from now on and we will provide more information as we get closer to distribution.

Yard waste season will be extended from November 30 to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> full week in December.

The Township's new program will allow one (1) bulk item collected curbside per week.

### Why is the current system changing?

A: In short, the current system is changing due to the expiration of the Township's free solid waste collection under the host community agreement with the landfill. This has required us to procure a solid waste collection service and evaluate our level of service. After this evaluation and a survey of our residents the Township's goals in procuring a solid waste collection hauler are as follows:

1. To make sure residents were informed, involved in the process, and had the opportunity to provide feedback.
2. To maintain or improve the current level of service
3. To get competitive pricing to ensure we are getting the best prices for our residents.

The changes to the level of service will be fairly minimal with the most significant change being the transition to a cart-based recycling program. The feedback that we have received from our residents have allowed us to request in our solicitation for services the request for recycling carts and the extension of yard waste collection season.

### Can I opt out of solid waste collection?

A: We have no plans to allow households to opt out of the solid waste program. There are several benefits to a municipal wide solid waste program. First the costs are generally lower on a per household basis due to economy of scale. It is cheaper on a per household basis for the hauler to go down a street collecting every house then only collecting a few. The other advantage is that it limits the number of collection trucks going down your street during the week. Collection vehicles are large and heavy vehicles which creates additional wear and tear on the road. Having several per week come down your street to provide the same service can create additional damage to residential streets. Lastly, allowing residents to opt out of this fee would create uncertainty regarding the number of participating households in the program and could cause the overall fee to increase for everyone.

### Will the Township provide full details of what is being paid for in our fees?

A: Yes, we will provide that information when we finalize an agreement with a collection hauler.

How does the Township's pricing compare to other communities pricing?

A: We have provided an example of other communities pricing on page one (1) of this document.

How does the agreement with the landfill benefit the community?

A: The benefit to the community from the landfill has primarily been the tipping fees which the landfill pays to the Township which helps keep the Township's property taxes low. Township residents also receive free disposal at the landfill due to the landfill pass program and the trash and yard waste collected curbside is also disposed of at no cost. In addition to these tipping fees the Township receives grants for our environmental, seniors, and public safety programs.

Will we still be able to use our landfill pass?

A: Yes, there will be no changes to the Township's landfill pass program.

Will we continue to have curbside recycling, yard waste, and trash?

A: Yes, curbside trash, recycling, and yard waste will continue under this agreement.

What are the rules for bulk pick-up?

A: In our proposal we have requested one (1) bulk item per week to be picked up curbside. The Township will publish rules regarding how this is collected on the Township website when we have these details worked out with the newly selected hauler. Township residents may use their landfill pass to dispose of any additional items at the landfill free of charge.

Do we have to use a 96-gallon cart for trash and recycling?

A: The current size of carts for trash are 96-gallon carts. Under the RFP the Township has requested that the hauler provide 96-gallon recycling carts, but we have requested a provision which allows residents to request 65-gallon carts for recycling or trash if that is their preference.

What is the Township doing to ensure more people recycle?

A: As a way to improve our programs we have requested that recycling carts be provided as a part of the new solid waste collection contract. Studies have shown that communities that transition to a cart-based recycling program show a large increase in the tonnage of recyclables collected. In addition to

this we are planning on utilizing the communication information we receive to provide more recommendations on recycling via social media and in other Township communications.

Does our recycling actually get recycled? Where does it go?

A: The recycling collected by the hauler gets taken to a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) for processing. That material is sorted and eventually sold to a vendor that has a contract with the MRF to use the recycled products for some purpose. Our current hauler Waste Management takes all the recyclables collected to the GFL MRF located on S. Huron Road in New Boston, MI where it is sorted. The Township is also in the process of updating our ordinance to ensure collected recyclables are handled properly by the hauler.

Does the Township plan to keep recycling services?

A: Yes, we do plan to keep curbside recycling.

Will Yard Waste Season be extended?

A: Yes, we have requested pricing from vendors to have yard waste collection from the first week in April to the end of the second week in December. Under our current rules our yard waste collection ends on November 30 each year.

How will the Township improve communication about solid waste programs?

A: In the survey we conducted in December 2022 we asked how Van Buren Township residents would prefer to be notified of solid waste information. We will use that information in addition to the email list that we have received to help get information out. If anyone has any other ideas we are always looking for new and better ways to reach Township residents. Please reach out via email at [rakers@vanburen-mi.org](mailto:rakers@vanburen-mi.org).

Who do I contact if I have a trash, recycling, or yard waste collection issue?

A: You may contact the Township at 734-699-8926 Monday – Thursday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to address any collection issue.

Can the Township notify us of schedule changes during holidays?

A: Yes we can, if you would like to be added to our email list please send a request to [jprice@vanburen-mi.org](mailto:jprice@vanburen-mi.org) to be added to the list.