

Village of South Nyack Recycling Report Discussion

The attached report on the Village of South Nyack residential recycling program was presented at the February 10th 2015 Board of Trustees meeting. The following aspects of the village programs for recycling and trash collection were discussed by members of the Board:

- **Out-of-synchronisation contracts:** The current recycling contract expires May 31st 2015. The current trash contract expires one year later.
- **Contract alignment:** For future flexibility, we should aim to synchronise the recycling and trash contracts so that they begin and end at the same time. So, for renewal of the recycling contract, we should solicit bids for a one-year contract only, to run from June 1st 2015 – May 31st 2016.
- **Collection frequency cost:** To determine the cost of moving to a weekly recycling pick up, the bids for the new one-year recycling contract should provide a cost breakdown for both every-second-week collection (the current frequency) and for weekly collection (the desired frequency). That will allow us to better gauge the cost of a weekly recycling pick-up.
- **Single vendor:** Currently, the village engages different contractors for recycling and refuse collections. Contract negotiations and administration would be simpler if the village adopts just one vendor for both services.

Village of South Nyack Recycling Analysis and Recommendations



On a typical recycling day, the bins overflow. Above: Six bins just for containers. Left: Five bins & cardboard for a small family.

Recycling

According to the National Recycling Coalition and the EPA, recycling is a \$236 billion per year industry, employing more than 1.1 million workers across the country. Recycling slows the expansion of landfills, reduces energy and raw material needed to create goods from scratch, lowers the amount of pollution, and helps to sustain our natural environment for future generations.

For the average US household, the amount of recyclables placed in the trash is estimated at 50 – 90 %.

Purpose of this report

To analyse the usage and cost of the current South Nyack curbside recycling program with a view to making informed decisions on how the program may be modified to better serve village residents. The current contract expires in May 2015. Tonnage numbers, presented below, show that demand for recycling in our village has increased, with a notable rise in 2014.

County-wide comparison

According to the Rockland County Solid Waste Authority, South Nyack is the only municipality in the county that fails to offer weekly recycling to its residents.

Anecdotal evidence for the need to improve the current recycling program

- With four trash collections for every one recycling pick-up, residents perceive that the village does not fully support recycling
- Some families do not have space to store the current 2 weeks' worth of recycling
- Recycling overflow often ends up in the trash, to get it out of the way
- During gift-giving holidays, trash bins are typically filled with recyclables because the next recycling collection could be almost two weeks away.

Analysis – Recycling contract and tonnage data

Contract duration, renewal: Three-year contract, annually-renewable: June 1, 2012 – May 31, 2015.

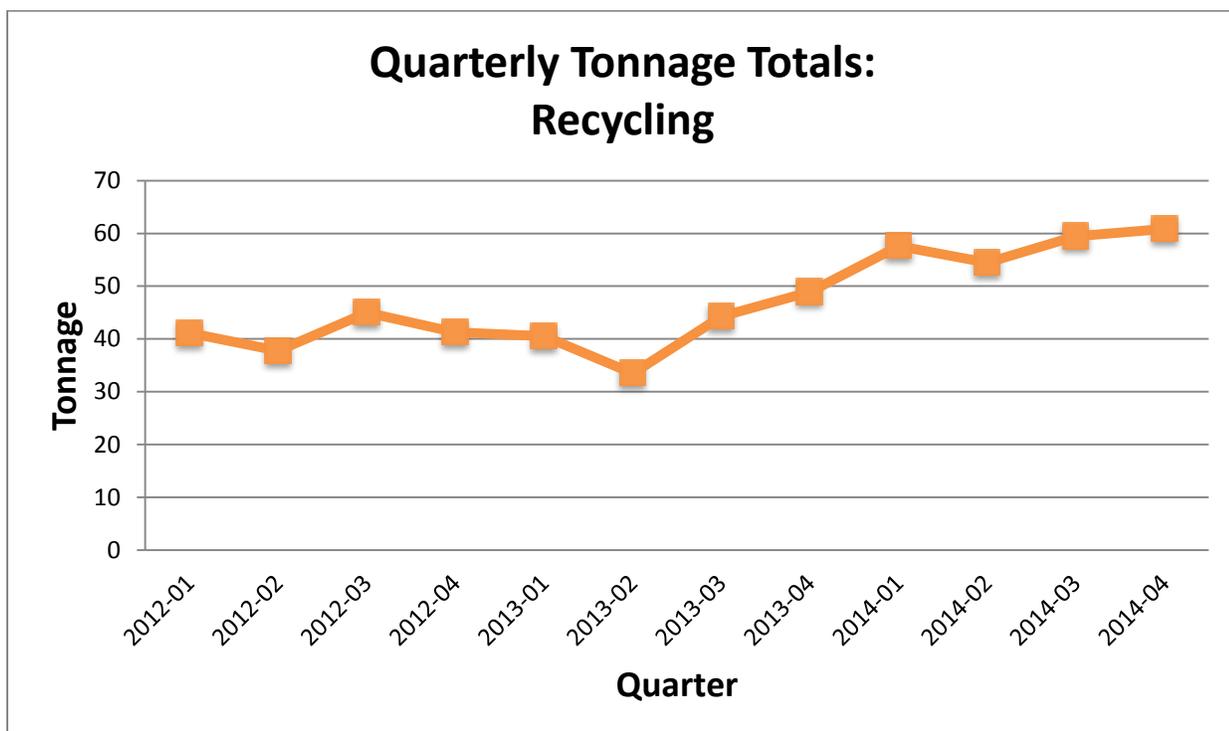
Contract cost: \$32,457.60 per year.

Contract is for 26 curbside recycling collections per year.

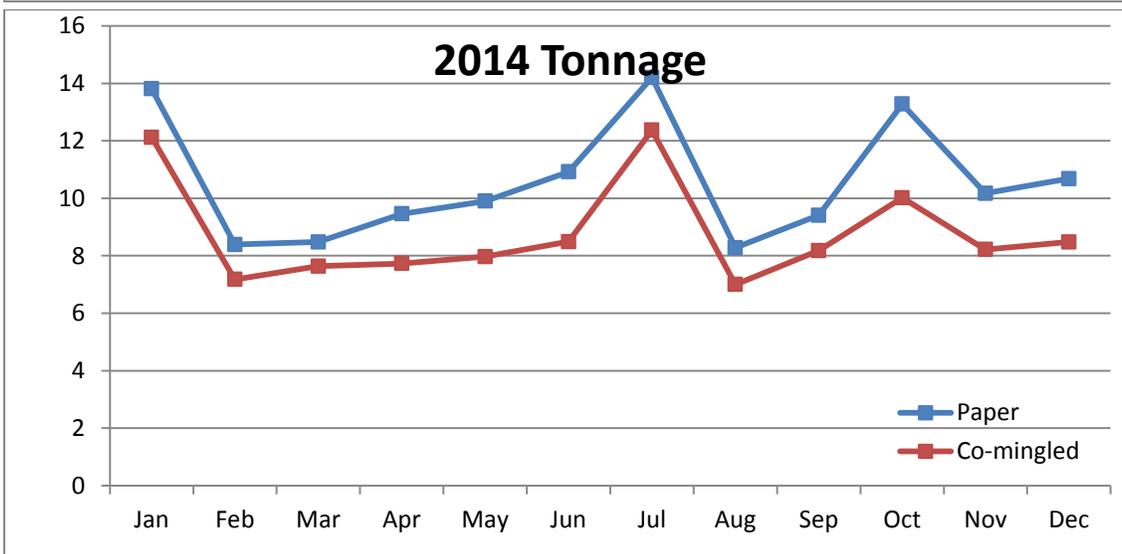
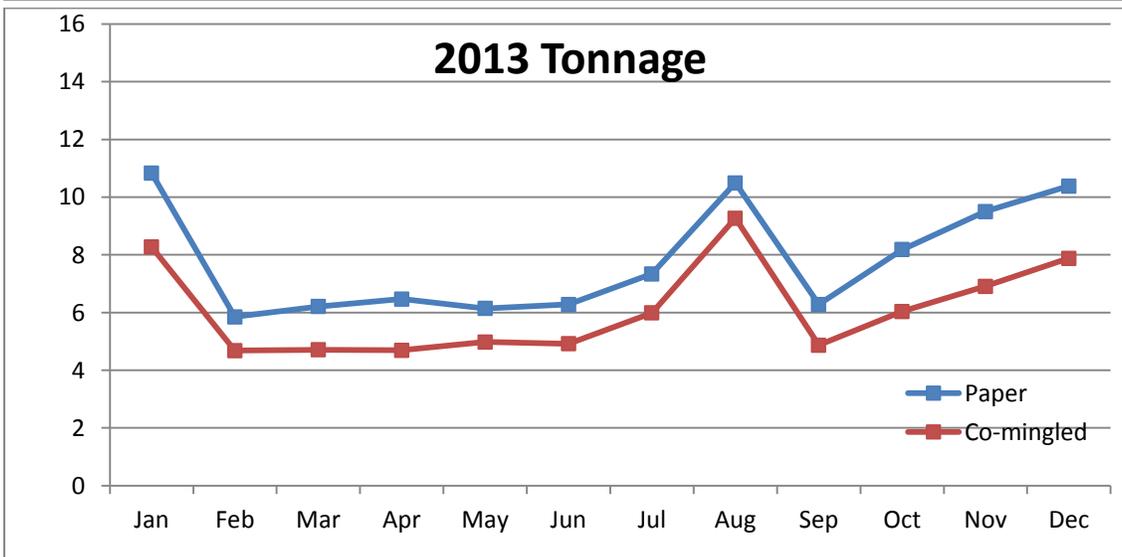
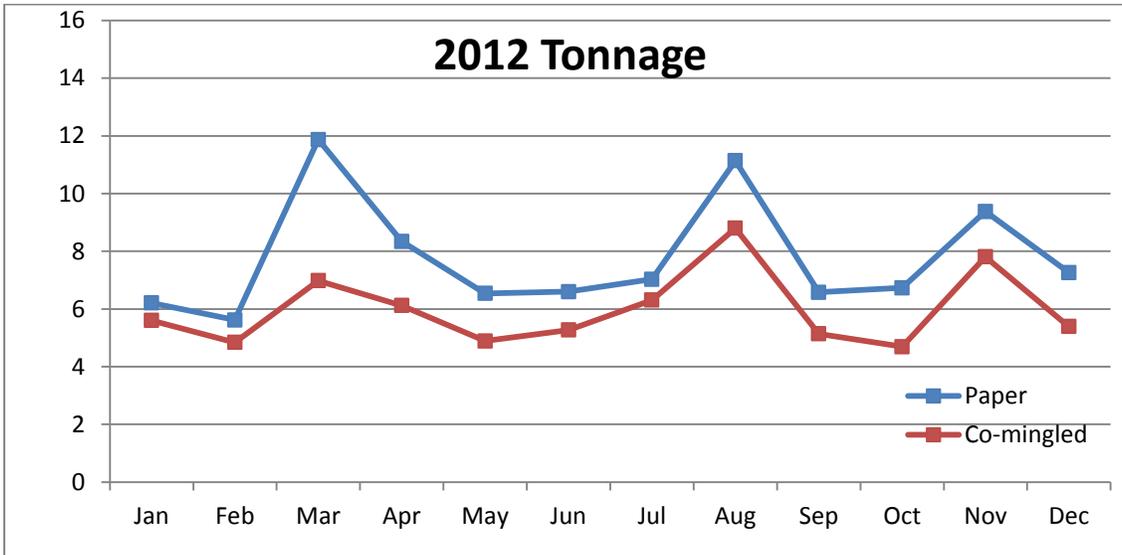
Recycling provides a rebate at \$35/ton. In 2014, the rebate was \$8,130.15.

Total collection cost per year = contract cost – rebate = 32,457.60 – 8,130.15 = \$24,327.45

Cost per collection = total cost / number of collections = \$24,327.45 / 26 = \$935.67



Year-by-year breakdown of South Nyack paper and co-mingled collection weights:



Paper always exceeds co-mingled tonnage. Long-term trends show an increase in tonnage.

In comparison, here are South Nyack trash contract details and costs:

Trash contract period is three-year, fixed-term: June 1, 2013 – May 31, 2016.

Contract cost: \$211,500.00 per year.

Contract is for 104 curbside trash collections per year.

Garbage collection also incurs annual dumping fees. In 2014, the fee was about \$3,300.00.

Total collection cost per year = contract cost + dumping fees = 211,500.00 + 3,300.00 = \$214,800.00

Cost per collection = total cost / number of collections = 214,800.00 / 104 = \$2,065.38

Each garbage collection is \$2,065.38/935.67 = 2.2 times more expensive than a recycling collection.

Could we move to a weekly recycling collection to better serve residents? Implications, if yes:

Burden:

- Doubling the frequency of recycling collections potentially incurs an additional charge of ~ \$33,000 per year to the village budget, based upon simply doubling the current cost.

Benefits:

- Helps rebalance the perception that the village is only half-heartedly committed to recycling.
- Weekly recycling requires less storage space, encourages residents to recycle more of their household waste stream, and could reduce the amount of village trash dumped in landfills.
- A framework that encourages recycling could increase the quarterly rebate which, in turn, reduces the overall cost of the recycling collection contract. Any increase in the amount of recycling tonnage provides a corresponding increase in the rebate received by the village.
- Weekly recycling would allow the village to engage in a “reasons to recycle” educational push.
- More frequent recycling collections could reduce demand for trash pick-ups. A reduction in trash collections to one per week could free up tens of thousands of dollars – enough to cover the entire cost of additional recycling pick-ups. The trash contract expires in May 2016.
- Due to the one-year offset in the contract periods for trash and recycling, residents would have a whole year to plan for once-per-week garbage collections.

Recommendation: The recycling tonnage data and cost breakdowns presented in this analysis support the implementation of a weekly recycling curbside collection service starting with the next recycling contract in June 2016. Weekly collections would better serve the recycling demands of South Nyack residents, could save the village money through reducing the number of trash pick-ups, and could decrease the environmental impact of dumping our village trash burden in the landfill.