

Recommendations for the  
Clearfield Borough  
Curbside Recycling Program  
and  
County Tracking Efforts

**Clearfield County**



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## **Background**

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP), the Governor's Center for Local Government Services, the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS) and the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) formed a training partnership for Pennsylvania local governments interested in achieving higher recycling rates. Through this partnership, Clearfield County was awarded a \$5,000 grant to receive recycling technical assistance for Clearfield Borough from Gannett Fleming, Inc.

## **Introduction**

In accordance with Act 101, Clearfield Borough established a source separation and collection program for recyclable materials in 1992 through a Borough ordinance. The ordinance requires source separation for clear glass, colored glass, and aluminum cans. For the 6,550 residents of the Borough, a curbside collection program was provided as a public service. The ordinance also requires commercial establishments to separate corrugated cardboard from their wastestream, and contract privately for hauling.

The Clearfield fire department has taken responsibility for the curbside recycling program. In return for this service, the fire department keeps all proceeds from recycling. Additionally, the Borough subsidizes the recycling effort with a monthly payment to the fire department. The fire department uses a dedicated recycling truck with a partitioned haul for collection, and is scheduled to complete its recycling rounds once a month.

To implement a collection schedule for the curbside program, collection zones were established, which correspond with the four wards in the Borough. Recyclable materials are collected in two of the four wards every two weeks. In effect, the fire department collects materials every other week; each household places its recyclables on the curbside once a month. In 1999, the recycling program collected 1.2 tons of aluminum and a combined total of 16.3 tons of clear and colored glass. Relative to the total waste generated in the Borough, the amount recycled per person is less than 10%.

Each commercial establishment in Clearfield Borough is responsible for their own source separation program. As a result, several private haulers have been contracted for the collection of recyclables. It was initially anticipated that Central Pennsylvania Recycling and Superior Inc. were the two most prevalent buyers of recyclables for commercial establishments in the Borough. As part of the technical assistance requested, a survey of commercial establishments in the Borough was completed to determine types of materials recycled, and to generate a list of recycling haulers and end-users for County tracking purposes.

### **Purpose**

The Borough has requested technical assistance through the Clearfield County SWA to improve recycling rates. The County has requested assistance for improving the methods used to account for recycling tonnage.

### **Scope of Work**

- Task 1:** Determine the current status of the recycling program from the perspective of the County Recycling Coordinator, the Borough Manager, and the volunteer fire department.
  
- Task 2:** Consider past public education efforts to determine improved methods of informing residents of the Borough's recycling efforts.
  
- Task 3:** Locate regional buyers for newspaper, and determine the feasibility of adding newspaper to the recycling program either through a drop-off location or as part of the curbside program.
  
- Task 4:** Offer suggestions on the best available methods for gathering tonnage reports on the basis of the approaches used in other Pennsylvania Counties and the DEP.

## **Task 1: Determine the Current Status of the Clearfield Borough Recycling Program**

The 1999 tracking report that the County uses to request Section 904 performance grant money from the DEP on an annual basis shows a listing for residential, commercial, and industrial sources. For residential sources, the tracking report credits Clearfield Borough with a combined total of 17.5 tons. Commercial establishments in the Borough are credited with 118 tons of cardboard recycled. Since Central Pennsylvania Recycling handles a majority of the cardboard recycling in the County but does not categorize its weight slips by source, it is expected that a large portion of the 3,000 tons cardboard recycled with Central PA Recycling originates from Borough commercial establishments. The County receives tonnage reports from several industries each year. JG Warehouse, The Progress, and Thompson & Buck, Inc. are three that were recognized as part of Clearfield Borough.

From the tracking report, it is difficult to quantify the amount of recycling that is occurring inside the Borough boundaries accurately. A telephone survey of approximately 80 commercial and industrial establishments in the Borough revealed that 85% of the establishments are recycling corrugated cardboard, as mandated. Establishments do not, however, receive weight slips from the contracted hauler. Even without an accurate estimate from weight slips, we know that the commercial recycling program can improve with only 85% currently in compliance.

The recycling rate for Borough residents is less than 10%, and is therefore in greater need of improvement than the commercial recycling program. On November 2, 2000, Jodi McCluskey, the County Recycling Coordinator, Gregory Lingle, the Borough Manager, Robert Ogden, the Street Commissioner, and Ray Regan of Gannett Fleming met to discuss current status of the curbside recycling program and methods to improve a 10% recycling rate. Ms. McCluskey reported on the County's progress toward obtaining a drop-off bin for newspaper in the Borough. After a brief discussion of the challenges of maintaining the curbside program, the group decided that a meeting with the volunteer fire department was necessary. In the meantime, Mr. Lingle commented that he would prepare some articles on recycling for publication in the Borough newsletter and local newspapers.

On November 8, 2000, Gregory Lingle, Ray Regan, and Delford and Gary Wigfield of the Clearfield Fire Department met to discuss the curbside recycling program. The fire department has maintained the curbside program since 1992, and has completed the recycling rounds every other week as scheduled. According to Gary Wigfield, the exceptions have been limited to a few fire calls and one or two weekends of extremely bad weather. The main problem has been a lack of advertising and announcements made regarding the program. Due to the frequent turnover of Borough personnel in the last few years, recycling was lost as a Borough priority. If the Borough were to remind Borough residents of the collection dates on a continual basis, the firemen felt that recycling rates would improve dramatically. In addition to newspaper articles and postings in the Borough newsletter, Mr. Lingle's plans to post the collection dates in monthly calendar that is published by The Progress, contact the local radio stations for announcements, and contact WTAJ-TV for bulletin postings.

**Task 2: Consider Past and Present Public Education Efforts and Offer Suggestions for Additional Efforts**

To revitalize the curbside program, Borough residents will need to be aware that the Borough is committed to maintaining the recycling program. In the past, both the County and the Borough have used several methods to inform and educate Borough residents of recycling efforts. These informational approaches have included:

- ✓ Notices in the Borough monthly newsletter
- ✓ Newspaper articles
- ✓ Postings on local television
- ✓ Announcements on local radio
- ✓ Distribution of goody bags that consist of recycling pamphlets and contact information
- ✓ A listing of drop-off locations on the front pages of the Clearfield Bell Atlantic phonebook

With the frequent turnover of Borough personnel in the last few years, some of these efforts did not receive due attention. Mr. Lingle, the current Borough Manager, would like to see the

curbside program revitalized, and has committed his time to schedule announcements with local media. Ray Regan will assist Mr. Lingle with his efforts by providing suggestions for articles and being available for questions.

In addition to these efforts, the County might consider sponsoring a poster competition among local schools. Even though a previous poster competition did not produce many entries, Michael Spencer, the principal of the Clearfield Area Elementary School, and Larry Steiner, the school recycling coordinator, thought that a second attempt would be effective. Mr. Spencer suggested that the contest be administered through the elementary school art teacher. Since the art teacher meets with all of the elementary school students, Mr. Spencer thought that administration through one person would increase participation rate. With County approval, Ray Regan will continue to coordinate these efforts.

**Task 3:       Locate regional buyers for newspaper, and determine the feasibility of adding newspaper to the recycling program**

From a phone survey, Borough residents consider newspaper to be the most important material to add to the current recycling program. A drop-off bin for the Borough was considered, but the purchase was delayed when Central Pennsylvania Recycling stopped accepting newspaper. Earlier this year, Central PA Recycling disbanded the newspaper program due to a slow accumulation rate. Since the accumulation rate was slow, baling was infrequent and loose newspaper was drifting off the property. Central PA Recycling feared a complaint from Lawrence Township. If the Borough implements a drop-off program for newspaper, then they will consider accepting newspaper again. Local businesses that have contracted Central PA Recycling for cardboard pick-up can also recycle office paper. Office paper must be bagged for pick-up; it cannot be mixed in with the cardboard. The contact person at Central PA Recycling is Dan Russell, and the company phone number is 765-3733.

Superior Incorporated of Brockway also accepts newspaper and office paper. Rick Stewart, the recycling contact for Superior, also suggested that office paper could also be placed in Superior cardboard bins so long as it is bagged. Currently, Superior is not accepting newspaper in this

fashion. For the commercial establishments that contract Superior, however, the addition of office paper to the current recycling program can be done with little effort and without an additional cost. There would be a hauling cost for a newspaper centrally located drop-off bin of approximately \$100 per haul.

Since both Central PA Recycling and Superior already service Clearfield, the addition of newspaper to the recycling program through a drop-off location is feasible. The addition of newspaper to the curbside program, however, may not be feasible at this time. Although Gary Wigfield is willing to add newspaper to collection program, he commented that there isn't enough space on the recycling truck for it.

**Task 4: Offer suggestions on the best available methods for gathering tonnage reports**

As we recognize, a greater amount of recycling occurs within the Borough than is accounted for with the current tracking method. With accurate estimates, the amount of 904-performance grant money received from the DEP on an annual basis is likely to increase. The current method involves collecting weight slips from local buyers of recyclables, and requesting weight estimates and receipts from non-residential establishments. The weight slips from Central PA Recycling account for residential recycling efforts in the Borough. For non-residential establishments, tracking is complicated by a number of factors, including a vast range of buyers and end-users both within and outside the County. Farmers are a typical example of an end-user within the County. Several area farmers accept newspaper, and use it for animal bedding.

The best method for tracking Borough non-residential recycling efforts was to survey those considered to have significant waste streams. The County Chamber of Commerce provided a list of 37 industries in Clearfield. Of these, 16 were recognized as industries within the Borough. Commercial and other non-residential establishments were also added to the survey list by type. Category types included: apartments, automobile services, banks, convenience stores, electronic equipment stores, grocers, public service offices, restaurants, retail department stores, and sporting good stores. A list of the 82 non-residential establishments in Clearfield Borough is

provided in Appendix A. Some of the establishments that were not surveyed were accountants, attorneys, beauty salons, physicians, plumbers, and other similar establishments with small waste streams.

A complete listing of phone survey results is presented in Appendix B. Interviewees listed the number of employees at the establishment, the refuse hauler, the recycling hauler, and the types of materials recycled. Since it was a phone survey, interviewees had the opportunity to comment and provide additional information on recycling for their company. Some of these notes are extremely helpful for tracking recycling efforts in the Borough, and are presented in Appendix C.

Table 1 lists the refuse haulers that serve Clearfield Borough. Although a list of refuse haulers is not directly relevant to tracking recycling efforts, it provides background information that may be helpful to the Solid Waste Authority. From Table 1, it appears that Superior Waste Services is the most prevalent waste hauler in the Borough, serving 70% of the non-residential establishments.

**Table 1: List of Refuse Haulers Serving Clearfield Borough**

<b>Refuse Hauler</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Antonuk’s Sanitation	Woodland	857-7017	8	16%
D&G Sanitation	Woodland	857-7998	3	6%
Hugill Sanitation	Mahaffey	277-6050	2	4%
John Glenn Sanitation	Philipsburg	800-498-7274	2	4%
Superior Waste Services	Brockway	800-338-8971	35	70%

Table 2 lists the local buyers of typical recycling products for non-residential establishments in Clearfield Borough. Typical recycling products are corrugated cardboard, office paper, newspaper, aluminum cans, and glass bottles. As expected, Central PA Recycling services a majority of local businesses for typical recycling materials. Superior Inc. also serves a third of the local businesses.

**Table 2: List of Local Buyers for Recyclable Products Serving Clearfield Borough**

<b>Buyer</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Central Pennsylvania Recycling	Clearfield	765-3733	20	65%
John Glenn Sanitation	Philipsburg	800-498-7274	1	3%
Superior, Inc.	Brockway	800-338-8971	10	32%

For typical recycling products, 98% of Borough recycling is accounted for through weight slips from Central PA Recycling and Superior, Inc. Central PA Recycling provides an itemized weight slip by product type. Alternatively, Superior provides a tonnage report for co-mingled product. Since Superior serves a third of the commercial establishments in the Borough, the tonnage provided by Superior appears to be low relative to the Central PA Recycling report. The commercial tonnage reported by Central PA Recycling in 1999 for cardboard, office paper, aluminum, and glass was 3,585 tons. Superior reported 610 tons of co-mingled material for commercial establishments in 1999, which is 15% of tonnage rather than the expected 32%. We speculate that better tracking methods at Superior may be necessary in order for the Borough to receive full credit for recycling.

Most of the recycling that the County has not accounted for consists of recyclable products that are not typical to every business. The number of buyers and end-users of these products are many, and therefore difficult to track for annual reporting. From a phone survey of businesses considered to have significant waste streams, post-consumer scrap metals, batteries, tires, and industrial plastics were all found to be recycled. Additionally, it was found that local farmers use a large quantity of newspaper for animal bedding.

To account for this recycling, we recommend that the County add select industries to the current list for annual reporting. Table 3 presents a list of establishments in Clearfield Borough that should be added. A majority of companies on this list are industries, automobile services, and construction and mining contractors.

**Table 3: List of Additional Establishments to Contact for Annual Reports on Recycling**

Company	Contact	Phone	Materials
Agway	Greg Patton	765-9044	Newspaper
Baker Auto Parts	Don Lumadue	765-9692	Auto supplies
Benedek Body Shop	Joe Benedek	765-5587	Scrap metals
Bob Boob Auto	Larry Peacock	765-5822	Auto supplies
Dotts Motor Co.	Bob Dotts	765-9681	Auto supplies
FCI Electronics	Elcie Harchak	765-2431	Industrial plastics, scrap metals
Irwin Citgo	Perry Irwin	765-1257	Auto supplies
Johnson Machine Co.	Scott Davis	765-9648	Scrap metals
NAPA Auto Parts	Dave Edmiston	342-5070	Auto supplies
Reed Brothers	Don Reed	765-7866	Scrap metals
Regis Group	Greg B.	765-8002	Scrap metals
Robbins Motors	Lisa Robbins	765-4502	Auto supplies
Tool Shed	Lynette Brooks	765-8622	Scrap metals
Waroquir Coal Co.	Joe Waroquir	765-3492	Copper, ferrous, scrap metals
Woods Auto Parts	Bob Johns	765-2332	Auto supplies

The companies listed below are the same types as those listed in Table 3, and are therefore expected to have recyclable products. At the time of the survey, a contact person could not be reached to verify recycling efforts. The County may want to add these companies to the contact list for annual reporting regardless:

- ✓ Cline Contracting; 765-4789
- ✓ Fulesday Machine Co.; 765-6414
- ✓ Moshannon Falls Mining Co.; 765-5518
- ✓ Ross Quality Cars; 765-5555
- ✓ Swatsworth Brothers; 765-3765

For the companies contacted, all have recycling programs and are willing to present receipts and weight slips upon request. Contact with these companies could boost Borough recycling rates significantly. For example, FCI Electronics sends 15,000 pounds of processed plastic to Mid-Atlantic in York, PA for recycling every couple of weeks. Scrap metal is sold to a company in Altoona, and paper products are recycled with the River Valley Paper Company in Ohio. With a conservative estimate, FCI Electronics recycles more than 75 tons of materials a year. Other companies in Table 3 recycle between 2 and 40 tons of material a year. If all Borough industries, automobile service stations, and construction and mining contractors report the quantity of

materials recycled annually, the recycling rate is expected to increase, which should increase the amount of performance grant money received from the DEP. As the County is aware, some of industrial recycling efforts, such as pre-consumer waste, will not count toward 904-performance grant monies.

## **Conclusion**

The recycling rate in Clearfield Borough has the potential to exceed the Commonwealth's goal of 35% by 2003. From a phone survey of commercial establishments in the Borough, most people recognize the need for recycling, and have source separation for corrugated cardboard at a minimum. The volunteer fire department is willing to continue the curbside program, and stick to the bi-weekly collection schedule. With postings and advertisements in the local media regarding the collection schedule, the curbside program in 2001 is expected rebound. The key parameters for reaching the Commonwealth's recycling goal are the following:

- ✓ Revitalize the curbside recycling program through advertisements and postings with local media.
- ✓ Add newspaper to the recycling program with the drop-off bin, as planned.
- ✓ Inform local business who recycle with Superior and Central PA Recycling that office paper can be placed in the cardboard recycling bins so long as it is bagged.
- ✓ Contact the commercial establishments that are not in compliance with the recycling ordinance and encourage them to establish a source separation program for cardboard.
- ✓ Discuss tracking methods with Superior since 1999 tonnage reports do not appear to give the Borough full credit for recycling efforts.
- ✓ Survey the industries, automobile services, and construction and mining contractors within the Borough to account for the most significant recycling efforts.

In the future, the County might consider sponsoring a poster contest at the local schools, and renting billboard space in the Borough to publicize recycling efforts. As part of this community, Gannett Fleming will be glad to further assist the County and the Borough with any recycling initiatives.