

Recycling deadline bumped up

Citing private alternatives, DSWA to stop curbside pickups April 1

By JEFF MONTGOMERY
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The Delaware Solid Waste Authority plans to end its statewide curbside recycling service April 1, nearly six months ahead of its deadline, citing growing availability of private hauler alternatives.

DSWA Chief Operating Officer Pasquale S. Canzano said his agency also plans to end curbside yard waste pickups in New Castle County on Dec. 31.

Both developments are milestones in an ongoing, statewide overhaul of recycling and landfill management programs, required under legislation approved this year. The same measure ordered

the elimination of Delaware's 5-cents-per-bottle deposit law on Nov. 30 and the imposition of a temporary 4-cent fee earmarked to subsidize recycling programs.

"A lot of haulers are saying they're ready to go," Canzano said Friday. "Some of them said that they'd be just as happy for us to get out by the end of December."

Canzano said the agency wants to assure smaller companies have enough time to develop recycling pickup capabilities. Under the law signed in June, DSWA must exit the curbside recycling business entirely by Sept. 15.

Friday, the authority listed 17 haulers in New Castle County already offering curbside pickup of

glass and plastic bottles, cans, paper and cardboard.

Eleven businesses provide the service in Sussex and four in Kent County, although Kent provides for curbside service to 11,000 households through a county-level trash franchise district contract.

The state's largest municipalities, including Wilmington, Newark, Dover and Rehoboth Beach, likewise already offer residents curbside pickups.

Marjorie Crofts, director of solid and hazardous waste programs for Delaware's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, said separate public meetings are under way to brief Kent and Sussex residents on options for yard waste disposal.

DNREC will ban yard waste from DSWA's Sandtown Landfill in Kent County and its Jones Crossroads Landfill near Georgetown after Jan. 1. Agency officials

Agency will end yard waste pickups for NCCo on Dec. 31.

said the ban was added to new operating permits for the landfills to save space and postpone the need for new waste disposal sites in both counties.

A similar ban already in effect in New Castle County diverts about 50,000 tons of waste yearly from Cherry Island Landfill in east Wilmington. About 30,000 tons per year will be kept out of landfills in Kent and Sussex combined, or nearly 10 percent of the current waste total.

DNREC manages two sites in New Castle County where residents can drop off yard waste. Contractors grind the materials into mulch for state or public use.

Many waste haulers that offer curbside recycling pickups will also take yard waste, and several other businesses also accept drop-offs of the material for a fee.

Crofts said DNREC is setting up grant and loan applications for recycling equipment and programs.

Lawmakers capped the amount of money the state can collect from bottle fees at \$22 million, with the fee to be lifted by December 2014. All retailers who sell carbonated beverages in bottles smaller than two liters must register with the state and turn in collected fees monthly.

The recycling bill calls for 50 percent of all municipal waste, including residential household waste, to be recycled by 2015, with the share rising to 60 percent by 2020.

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