



Whatcom County Solid Waste Executive Committee

OCTOBER 21, 2025 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

LYNDEN CITY HALL

300 4TH ST, LYNDEN, WA 98264

- A G E N D A -

Meeting Topics			Outcomes
1.	Call to Order	11:00	Action
2.	Introductions, Determination of Quorum, Approval of previous meeting minutes	11:00 – 11:05	Action
3.	Solid Waste Programs Update	11:05 – 11:25	Information
4.	2025-2026 Budget Review	11:25 – 11:50	Information
5.	Other Business, Open Session, Announcements	11:50 – 12:00	Discussion
6.	Adjournment	12:00	Action



SOLID WASTE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Discussion Form

October 21, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 2: *Approval of December 17, 2024 SWEC Meeting Minutes*

PRESENTER: *Jennifer Hayden, Environmental Health Supervisor*

BOARD ACTION: Action Item Discussion Information

SIGNIFICANT POINTS OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The December 17, 2024 SWEC meeting was held to present and receive approval for the amended Comprehensive Solid and Hazardous Waste Management Plan.

COMMITTEE ROLE / ACTION REQUESTED

Motion to Approve Minutes

ATTACHMENT(S)

- Draft December 17, 2024 meeting minutes

Whatcom County Solid Waste Executive Committee

DECEMBER 17, 2024

Committee Members Present:

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive Whatcom County
 Scott Korthuis, Mayor, City of Lynden
 Greg Hansen, Mayor, City of Ferndale
 Mary Lou Steward, Mayor, City of Blaine
 John Perry, Mayor, City of Everson
 Bruce Bosch, Mayor, City of Sumas
 Kevin Hester, Mayor, City of Nooksack

Not Present:

Kim Lund, Mayor, City of Bellingham

Topic	Discussion/Outcome
Call to Order	The meeting of the Solid Waste Executive Committee was called to order by Satpal Sidhu, County Executive Whatcom County, on Tuesday, December 17, 2024 at 10:30 am at Lynden City Hall
Intro's, Determination of Quorum, Approval of Minutes	Satpal noted quorum is present. The minutes from August 20, 2024 were moved for approval, motion seconded. Minutes approved.
Comprehensive Solid and Hazardous Waste Management Plan Amendment	<p>Jennifer Hayden presented a petition to amend the Solid Waste Plan regarding the switch to single-stream recycling by Sanitary Service Company (SSC). The Department of Ecology required the amendment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jennifer worked with the Department of Ecology on the amendment to the plan • The changes to the plan are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adding an amendment process to the plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The amendment is approved by SWAC, SWEC, County Council and then sent to the Department of Ecology ○ Incorporating single-stream recycling while maintaining the three-bin system elsewhere in the county. ○ Updates to the Contamination Reduction Outreach Plan (CROP) to address increased contamination. ○ Revising the UTC cost assessment. • Jennifer also explained the compliance with the Organic Management Law in relation to changes in the Solid Waste Plan • Curbside organic service will be mandatory in Bellingham and its Urban Growth Area by 2027 • By 2030 it will be required by state law

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Earth Technology has the space to expand operations if needed, but there is concern about lack of infrastructure in the county to manage the required 34,000-ton reduction in organic waste by 2030 • Priority sites for new composting areas were identified while avoiding disadvantaged communities and flood zones. <p>Concerns were raised over contamination in recycling streams and lack of public awareness about acceptable materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jennifer explained that education efforts will be launched to help residents identify proper disposal methods. <p>Satpal called for a motion to approve the plan amendment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott made a motion and the plan amendment was unanimously approved.
<p>Other Business, Open Session, Announcements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jennifer provided an update on the Disposal of Toxic Facility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Current operator contract extended through June 30, 2024. ○ Whatcom County will take over operations starting July 1, 2024. ○ Budget and equipment purchases have been approved.
<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>Meeting adjourned at 10:52 am</p>

SOLID WASTE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Discussion October 21, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 3: *Solid Waste Programs Update*

PRESENTER: *Jennifer Hayden, Environmental Health Supervisor*

BOARD ACTION: **Action Item** **Discussion** **Information**

SIGNIFICANT POINTS OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Health and Community Services Solid Waste Program conducts solid waste planning activities, regulates over 45 permitted and exempt county solid waste handling facilities and five biosolids facilities, implements the county Disposal of Toxics Program, monitors and maintains closed county landfills, investigates illegal dumping complaints, manages waste reduction and recycling community outreach and education programs, provides pollution prevention technical assistance, responds to public waste management inquiries, manages the litter cleanup and Adopt-A-Road programs, provides solid waste collection and July 4th cleanup in Birch Bay, and supports the Solid Waste Advisory Committee.

Solid Waste Sites Update

Cedarville Landfill and Y Road I and II Landfills monitoring and maintenance activities continue routinely, as per the approved closure plans and water quality permitting. Regular, required sampling at the Cedarville landfill has shown that turbidity levels have exceeded the permit benchmark value at two separate sample points for three sampling events in a row, triggering level three corrective action at the facility. These include a review of site conditions and implementation of operational and structural source control best management practices (BMPs), and additional BMPs as necessary to achieve the benchmark value. WCHCS has been in consultation with our engineering consultant to address these exceedances, and are currently working through the conditional use permit requirements to install a small stormwater basin, and to pave the drive lane and access ramp to the facility drop boxes.

The Point Roberts drop box facility scale house was successfully re[placed after a multi-year process including multiple contractors, a required septic system repair, and obtaining a Conditional Use Permit. The old scale house, a mobile home constructed in the 1950's, was deteriorated and becoming a liability. The current scale house has been built to code and has been a welcome fixture by the drop box facility staff.

Disposal of Toxics Update

In early 2024, as a response to concerns about increasing costs, invoicing issues, and recruitment and retention of facility staff, HCS performed a study assessing the feasibility of assuming operational and administrative control of the Disposal of Toxics facility. The current contract with the provider expires at the end of 2024, so this was a good opportunity to perform this assessment. The study reviewed many aspects of facility operations and administration, including financial and administrative costs, and quality control. The decision was made to fold the Disposal of Toxics program into county operations. On July 1, 2025, Whatcom County assumed operational control of the Disposal of Toxics facility. The three staff who were previously employed at the facility were hired as County employees, and we are continuing to contract with Clean Earth for transport and disposal of hazardous waste. The transition has been relatively smooth, with some processes that are still being refined, such as business invoicing.

In 2024 the Disposal of Toxics program, which includes the operation of three satellite oil and antifreeze collection stations and one annual off-site collection event in Point Roberts, processed a total of 634,996 pounds of waste chemicals that were collected and reused, recycled, or properly disposed from 11,690 residential and commercial customers. The Paint Care product stewardship program, which provides free disposal for residents and small businesses for oil-based and latex paint, collected 122,840 pounds of paint in 2024.

Enforcement Summary

Staff responded to and investigated 195 new solid waste complaints in 2024. Staff inspected 45 solid waste handling facilities throughout the county

Education and Outreach Activities – Litter Prevention

With the addition of our Public Health Educator in 2023, we have been able to expand our education and outreach efforts. In 2024 we held six Secure-Your-Load events, funded by our Community Litter Clean Up grant through the Department of Ecology, where we handed out over 450 cargo nets and reusable car trash cans to folks visiting our local transfer stations. In 2025 we held eight events, and also partnered with the Department of Ecology on their statewide litter prevention campaign, handing out 500 cargo nuts and ratchet straps to folks visiting our transfer stations.

In 2024 the Adopt-A-Road program resulted in the cleanup of 39,465 pounds of litter and solid waste and 310 pounds of recyclables from 403 miles of roadside and 29 illegal dump sites. The Birch Bay July 4th cleanup efforts continue as per routine, collecting 5.99 tons of firework debris and garbage in 2025.

Education and Outreach – Waste Reduction

With budget approval by SWAC, SWEC and County Council, the Solid Waste program put out an RFP for local organizations to propose innovative waste reduction pilot projects. The Solid Waste program offered \$150,000 for these projects, and awarded three organizations with funding to execute these projects.

- Sustainable Connections was awarded \$54,747 to pilot a waste reduction program for large scale events, laying the foundation for a comprehensive, scalable solution to eliminate single-use waste at large events in Whatcom County. They chose to pilot this project at the recent SeaFeast event.
- RE Sources' Manufacturing Waste Diversion Program through its Circular Economy Accelerator Pilot Program was awarded \$92,059 to target outreach to the Whatcom manufacturing and business communities and upgrading campus infrastructure and equipment to safely and efficiently store and process diverted waste material. These activities will improve and expand the commercial recycling infrastructure in Whatcom County, allowing for more capacity to store, process, and resell manufacturing waste material and increase commercial sector knowledge and engagement in manufacturing waste reduction methods.
- Ragfinery was awarded \$3,754 to promote sustainability and creative reuse of textiles in an effort to drive lasting environmental and social impacts, building a more informed and resourceful community. They will conduct no-cost, monthly mending events, and work to support underserved populations at events and locations such as drop in programs, community meals hosted by partners, low income housing facilities, and local resource events.

Solid Waste program staff hosted a booth at the 2025 Sea Feast festival promoting food waste reduction to over 10,000 attendees.

Waste reduction and recycling community education and outreach programs continue on track for the youth (RE Sources Sustainable Schools program), adult (WSU Master Composter/ Master Recycler program) and commercial (Sustainable Connections Toward Zero Waste program and Food Recovery program) target populations.

Sustainable Connections – Commercial Waste Reduction & Recycling Education and Technical Assistance Programs Report – 2024-2025 contract period

Contract Purpose

This contract supports commercial waste reduction and recycling technical assistance and education to Whatcom County businesses in targeted commercial sectors in order to increase countywide waste reduction rates by providing commercial waste audits and detailed technical waste assessments, action plans and performance evaluations for companies operating in targeted commercial industries.

- The Contractor will conduct commercial waste assessments to provide waste reduction and recycling technical assistance services to Whatcom County businesses and provide support services for existing Toward Zero Waste (TZW) businesses in all sectors, with emphasis in the food service, construction and demolition, and hospitality and events sectors.
- The Contractor will divert surplus food from landfill by collecting edible food from food producers, colleges, restaurants, caterers, and public schools for redistribution to community members experiencing hunger insecurity. Efforts will be made to divert foods not fit for human consumption to animal feed.

Contract Deliverable Summary

- 12 waste assessments performed
- Seven event consultations performed
- 137 Toward Zero Waste social media posts
- 123 Food Recovery Program social media posts
- 47 newsletters promoting waste reduction practices created
- 258,446 pounds of surplus food diverted from landfill and distributed to community members

RE Sources — Waste Reduction & Recycling Education Services Report – 2024-2025 contract period

Contract Purpose

Implement a countywide waste reduction and recycling education program for school districts and local organizations. The focus of the program is on waste prevention, recycling, composting, household hazardous waste and proper waste disposal. Participants will gain an understanding of the impact of their personal choices on the waste stream and have an opportunity to apply that to their classroom, school, home, and community settings.

- Develop materials and perform recruitment outreach geared towards administration staff at each Whatcom County school district. Materials and recruitment will address all that the program offers; custodial and food service support, curriculum for teachers and accompanying professional development instruction, and additional professional development training related to waste management along with technical support.
- Develop promotion and support materials to be distributed via social media and direct email outreach that are geared towards students and teachers throughout Whatcom County.
- Develop materials and perform outreach and education to local community partner organizations who may be seeking assistance in understanding the waste stream and sorting in Whatcom County and/ or collaborating in order to further the mission to reduce waste.

- Train custodial and food service staff on the importance of waste reduction and best management practices.
- Make professional development courses available for classroom teachers (with clock hours) to learn how to use the subject of waste to meet Next Generation Science Standards. This may include sample lessons to incorporate sustainability into their classroom curriculum through professional development focused on implementation. Lessons will include curriculum that supports behavior change.
- Provide training and education sessions for school staff, and students about understanding the waste stream, how to reduce waste in their schools, homes and communities and how reduction in waste can benefit the climate.
- Provide support to teachers in implementing the Food Waste Unit Framework for classrooms in grades four through six.
- Provide lesson kits with classroom - ready curriculum aligned with state standards to classroom teachers in grades Kindergarten through 8th.
- Promote the Green Team Network (GTN) Program and provide technical assistance for waste reduction projects for grades K- 12.

Contract Deliverable Summary

- 23 meetings with school district leaders and community partners
- Implementation of an online custodial training for waste sorting and reduction
- In-person training with over 50 custodial staff
- Facilitated four waste reduction action trainings for high school students
- 14 waste assessments performed
- Five waste management toolkits created and distributed

Master Composter Recycler Program Report – 2024 contract period

Contract Purpose

The Master Composter Recycler training course aims to reduce organic waste, improve nutrient cycling and usage of compost at residential gardens, reduce the importation of organic amendments from non-local sources, and promote recycling.

Contract Deliverable Summary

- Facilitated the Master Composter program for 18 trainees
- Hosted four compost workshops
- Outreach at Bellingham Farmer's Market, NW WA Fair, Whatcom Farm Tour, Small Farm Expo, etc.
- Youth vocational gardening education

Education and Outreach – Hazardous Waste Management

With Puget Sound Partnership funding, as implemented by Ecology, 91 commercial solid and hazardous waste technical assistance site visits were conducted in 2024 through the Pollution Prevention Assistance Program, providing guidance about management of commercial solid and hazardous waste.

We have partnered with GreenSheen to support two free paint recycling events in Bellingham and Ferndale in 2025.

Comprehensive Plan Update

The Comprehensive Solid and Hazardous Waste Management Plan amendment was approved by County Council in May 2025. This amendment addressed the addition of single-stream recycling to our solid waste system. Currently, Bellingham and Ferndale have switched over to single-stream, and the rest of SSC's service area in the unincorporated county will transfer to that system in the future.

Future Work

- Install infrastructure upgrades to the Cedarville Landfill facility to improve water quality and satisfy stormwater permit requirements
- Continue waste reduction contracts aimed at businesses, school-aged children and the general community
- Continue and expand in-house outreach events aimed at litter prevention, waste reduction, and recycling and composting
- Develop an implementation plan to improve a rural county-owned property to be used as a temporary debris management site
- Assess the Disposal of Toxics facility infrastructure and operations for possible future expansion

SOLID WASTE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Discussion Form

October 21, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 4: *2025 – 2026 Budget Review*

PRESENTER: *Jennifer Hayden, Environmental Health Supervisor*
Greg Iturria, Financial Services Manager

BOARD ACTION: Action Item Discussion Information

SIGNIFICANT POINTS OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Jennifer Hayden and Greg Iturria will present on the 2025 and 2026 budget

COMMITTEE ROLE / ACTION REQUESTED

Motion to approve 2026 budget

ATTACHMENT(S)

- To be provided