



**Goodhue
County**
MINNESOTA

Goodhue County Recycling & Solid Waste

Agenda

- 1. Minnesota State Statutes Governing Solid Waste, Recycling, & HHW
- 2. Goodhue County Recycling Center Operations
- 3. City of Red Wing Recycling Operations
- 4. Goodhue County Solid Waste & Recycling Budget
- 5. Board Discussion, Questions, and Next Steps

1. Minnesota State Statutes Governing Solid Waste, Recycling, & HHW

- Minnesota Statutes Chapter 115A – The Waste Management Act
- Chapter 400 – Solid Waste Management

A. Program Structure, Planning, and Recycling Mandates

- Minnesota law shifts the primary logistical burden of waste tracking and diversion onto county governments through mandatory state-approved planning and strict recycling target baselines.
 - **Comprehensive Planning** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.46*)
 - Goodhue County Solid Waste Management Plan
 - **The Waste Hierarchy** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.02*)
 - County programs must be structured to match the state's environmental hierarchy:
 - Source reduction & reuse
 - Waste recycling
 - Composting of organic materials
 - Waste energy recovery (incineration)
 - Land disposal (as a last resort)

A. Continued

- **The 35% Recycling Mandate** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.551, Subd. 2a*): As a county outside the Twin Cities metro area, Goodhue County must achieve a statutory goal to recycle at least 35 percent by weight of its total solid waste generation by December 31, 2030. The MPCA is legally required to audit this data and actively monitor progress.
- **Non-Delegation Clause** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.46, Subd. 5*): Goodhue County is ultimately accountable for its waste and recycling streams. It cannot delegate its management responsibilities to another government body or private entity unless a concrete funding mechanism is established to guarantee the job is adequately completed.

B. Structural Requirements for Public Access & Mixed Municipal Waste (MSW)

- The state dictates exactly how localized waste and recycling infrastructure must be deployed so that collection access is universal.
 - **Opportunity to Recycle** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.552*): Goodhue County is statutorily required to ensure that every resident has an "opportunity to recycle." For a Greater Minnesota county, this must include at least one curbside collection system or a centralized network of easily accessible recycling centers and localized drop-boxes strategically scattered throughout the county.
 - **Targeted Broad Material Classes** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.552, Subd. 2*): Public recycling programs must offer collection mechanisms for at least four broad types of clean material (typically paper, glass, plastic, and metal), paired with mandatory public education campaigns outlining how and where to drop them off.

B. Continued

- **County Waste Authority** (*Minn. Stat. § 400.04*): Grants Goodhue County the blanket operational authority to acquire, construct, and operate solid waste facilities, as well as dictate how waste is collected and transported.
- **Waste Designation** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.80 to § 115A.893*): This tool allows counties to legally require all garbage generated within its borders to be delivered to a specific facility. Goodhue County leverages this law via its Solid Waste Designation Ordinance, requiring licensed commercial haulers to route mixed municipal waste directly to the City of Red Wing's Resource Recovery Facility.
- **Required Collection & Licensing** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.93 & § 115A.941*): The county must ensure that all residents have a mechanism for waste collection. Under state rules, the county enforces an annual Solid Waste Transporter License system for commercial haulers.
- **Volume-Based Pricing** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.93, Subd. 2*): The county's licensing structure must legally compel waste haulers to charge residents based on the volume or weight of their garbage (e.g., pay-as-you-throw pricing) to incentivize recycling. Haulers are strictly prohibited from charging residents more for recycling than for trash.

C. Separation Mandates & Protection Laws

- State law prevents the county and its local facilities from ruining clean recycling collections via mixed contamination or arbitrary incineration.
 - **The Anti-Incineration/Landfill Protection Rule** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.95*): To protect consumer recycling efforts, processing or resource recovery facilities (such as Red Wing's facility) are completely prohibited from accepting source-separated recyclable materials for burning or disposal. Recyclables must stay separated.
 - **Commercial and Government Mandates** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.151*): Goodhue County must ensure that local public entities, commercial building owners, and large sports facilities collect at least three recyclable materials (such as paper, glass, plastic, or metal) and transfer them directly to a verified recycler.

C. Continued

- **Market Deliveries Requirement** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.553*): The county must structurally ensure that materials separated for recycling are actually delivered to end-markets for sale or routed directly to legitimate processing centers. They cannot sit in long-term storage or sneak into general waste streams.
- **Yard Waste Prohibition** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.931*): It is illegal to place yard waste (leaves, grass clippings, garden residue) into standard mixed municipal solid waste. The county must structure alternative composting programs or designated drop spots to keep organic components separate.

D. Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) & Problem Materials

- Because hazardous items cannot legally enter standard landfills, the state mandates explicit localized segregation programs.
- **HHW Management Framework** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.96*): Mandates that the MPCA establish a statewide HHW network but authorizes coordination with local counties to set up localized designated "Collection Sites." Goodhue County satisfies this by accepting HHW at the Recycling Center in Red Wing and participating in a cooperative that includes Wabasha, Olmsted, and Goodhue Counties whereby collection events are scheduled in each County and staff & equipment are provided by each agency at the events.

D. Continued

- **Land Disposal Prohibitions:** A dense cluster of statutes prohibits specific toxic items from general garbage infrastructure, forcing the county to build distinct processing options into its HHW acceptance programs:
 - **Major Appliances:** § 115A.9561 (Banned from landfills; requires separate recycling).
 - **Lead-Acid & Dry Cell Batteries:** § 115A.915 & § 115A.9155 (Automotive and consumer mercury/rechargeable batteries are completely banned from landfill disposal).
 - **Motor Vehicle Fluids & Filters:** § 115A.916 (Bans the disposal of used oil, brake fluids, and oil filters in municipal trash).
 - **Cathode-Ray Tubes / Electronics:** § 115A.9565 (Prohibits television and computer monitors from being mixed with standard municipal solid waste).

E. Funding Mechanisms and Fee Structures

- To sustain these state-mandated programs, Minnesota gives counties distinct taxing, fee, and state subsidy leverage.
 - **The SCORE Funding Allocation** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.557*): Goodhue County receives annual state funding derived from the Select Committee on Recycling and the Environment (SCORE).
 - **Strict Funding Limitations** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.557, Subd. 2*): To keep receiving this money, Goodhue County must prove that 100% of these distributed state funds are used exclusively for eligible waste reduction and recycling programs, such as paying for public drop-box haul routes or operating the Recycling Center.

E. Continued

- **County Fee Authority** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.919*): Goodhue County has the explicit statutory power to levy fees on solid waste facility operators or directly on waste generated or collected within the county.
- **Statutory Fund Dedication** (*Minn. Stat. § 115A.923*): Revenues collected from local solid waste fees cannot just go anywhere; they are strictly earmarked by state law to fund landfill abatement, recycling education, closure/post-closure costs of local dumps, or HHW collection costs.

2. Goodhue County Recycling Center Operations

- Locations
 - Goodhue County Recycling Center
 - 3745 US 61, Red Wing, MN 55066
 - Out-County Recycling Boxes
 - 11 locations distributed throughout Goodhue County
- Staffing
 - 1 x Solid Waste Manager
 - 5 x Recycling Equipment Operator

2. Continued

- Operations consist of recycling collection, the HHW program, and management of solid waste.
 - **Recycling:** Collection consists of but is not limited to the following:
 - Cardboard, office paper, newspaper, magazines, books, glass, tin, aluminum, motor oil, oil filters, batteries, fluorescent bulbs, pallets, and plastic products
 - Source separated collection
 - Recycling Center Recycling Shed open 24/7 – 365 for most recyclable products.
 - All available items are marketed and sold

2. Continued

- HHW: Collection consists of several scheduled collection events as well as weekday drop-off availability at the Recycling Center.
 - Goodhue County also participates in a collective with Wabasha & Olmsted Counties as previously mentioned
 - All events and materials processing is handled by Recycling Center staff
 - Events scheduled at several locations in Goodhue County.
 - PaintCare program – weekday drop-off available at the Recycling Center



3. City of Red Wing Recycling Operations

- City organized recycling – residential blue bin container utilizing single sort collection
 - Curbside collection
 - Once collected, material is brought to the Red Wing Solid Waste Campus where it is loaded into trailers and hauled by a private hauler. Red Wing contracts for services with a private hauler to bring mixed municipal solid waste to the City and then 'back hauls' recyclables to their facility for further processing
 - Limited on volume availability
 - Customer drop-off is limited to operating hours and materials accepted
 - Large volume drop-off is available at a cost

3. Continued

- Red Wing accepts several types of solid waste and recycling:
 - Composting material, wood, and wood products
 - Demolition debris
 - Metals
 - Furniture
 - Appliances
 - Mixed Municipal Solid Waste
- The City utilizes a program called Waste Wizard that identifies how and where items can be disposed of and is available on their website.



4. Goodhue County Solid Waste & Recycling Annual Financial Results

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 *	2023	2024	2025	2026**
Levy	\$460,489	\$337,573	\$366,990	\$389,755	\$459,331	\$551,301	\$615,174	\$570,994	\$604,142	\$549,483	\$721,196
% Change		-26.69%	8.71%	6.20%	17.85%	20.02%	11.59%	-7.18%	5.81%	-9.05%	
Revenue	\$1,270,996	\$736,985	\$787,409	\$705,545	\$831,222	\$994,777	\$3,162,524	\$915,610	\$944,991	\$875,923	\$1,260,643
Expenses	\$743,486	\$680,041	\$721,761	\$770,937	\$807,338	\$920,833	\$3,023,039	\$831,545	\$766,757	\$836,426	\$1,260,643
Capital Exp.	\$62,002	\$60,139	\$89,490	\$19,446	\$98,273	\$47,149	\$376,443	\$207,537	\$499,118	\$243,345	\$266,364

* Bench Street Landfill Closure

** Budget Figures. Includes a Use of Fund Balance: \$265,090

- 2016: 36.23% Levy Share of Total Revenue 63.77% Operational Self-Sufficiency
- 2025: 62.73% Levy Share of Total Revenue 37.27% Operational Self-Sufficiency
 - This directly demonstrates a reduction in SCORE dollars, poor commodity pricing, and increased volumes
- Levy trendline growth rate: \$27,001 annually – Calculated using Linear Regression
- Compound annual growth rate (CAGR): 1.98%

5. Board Discussion, Questions, and Next Steps

- Question: What options are available to meet the minimum legal requirements in the most cost-effective way?
 - To change the current way Goodhue County manages recycling, HHW, and solid waste an in-depth study would be needed.
 - Some options that the County could consider include:
 - 1. Shift to Hauler-Provided Recycling Mandates
 - Most haulers already have curbside recycling pickup.
 - 2. Consolidate and Secure Drop-Off Locations
 - 3. Implement Solid Waste Service Charges (*Minn. Stat. § 400.08*)
 - Counties have the authority to levy service charges directly onto property tax rolls to fund waste management

5. Continued

- Question: How would the Board like to proceed?
 - Hire a consultant to perform a study
 - Maintain the status quo
- Next Steps?