



of Palm Beach County





REF 2



TRANSFER STATIONS



RECYCLING FACILITY



LANDFILL



# The Solid Waste Authority of Palm Beach County

- The Solid Waste Authority (SWA) was established in 1975 by the Florida State Legislature (The Special Act).
- The SWA is the governmental agency responsible for providing an economical and environmentally conscious Integrated Solid Waste Management System for Palm Beach County, Florida.
- The SWA's system is funded primarily through a system of user fees. The primary funding mechanism is the non-ad valorem special assessment that is included on the annual property tax bill.
- The SWA has been bidding collection services in the unincorporated area since 1993.
- Franchise collection agreements are required to be bid at most every seven years.

# Acreage Collection History

- The Acreage and Jupiter Farms historically together formed one service area due to their unique characteristics.
- This service area had the highest rates in the county.
- There were always fewer bidders than for other service areas.
- In 2013 commercial rates were set and larger service areas were formed.
- In order to lower rates, the Acreage and Jupiter Farms were split and combined with the urban areas to the east. The Acreage is mostly in Service Area 2.
- Rates fell from \$376 in 2013 to \$176 in 2014 due to the significant subsidy provided by the lower generating units to the east.
- There are unique challenges when it comes to providing service in the Acreage.

# The Six (6) Cubic Yard Limit

- In 2008 the haulers publicly stated that they would not bid without a curbside vegetative collection limit.
- The 6 cubic yard limit was established in FY2009.
- The contract specified that piles of any size could be placed at the curb, but only 6 cubic yards would be removed until it was finally collected (i.e. 40 yard pile would sit for 7 weeks at the curb for collection to be completed).
- SWA received constant complaints about the lingering piles, especially during hurricane season.
- In response, for the new contract the SWA implemented a limit of 6 cubic yards, and at the SWA's request the County replaced the existing Ordinance with a new Ordinance reflecting among other things the 6 cubic yard limit at the curb.

# New Service Guidelines Facts

- The level of service has not changed from the 2009 contract. It is still six (6) cubic yards.
- Residents who can work within the program have the opportunity to put out more than 300 cubic yards per year at no additional charge.
- All Single Family Homes in the County are assessed the same amount for vegetation regardless of lot size.
- Logs, stumps, and root balls were not included in the Generation Study, and have never been included in our services.
- Residents with large piles have the ability to pay \$8 per cubic yard for conforming yard waste and the entire pile will be removed.

# New Program Procedures

- Large or otherwise non-conforming piles will be tagged and no portion of the pile will be collected.
- The tag provides the SWA Customer Service telephone number. Residents should call the SWA so we can resolve the issue.
- The tag is followed by a courtesy letter.
- If there is no response they receive a Notice of Violation (NOV).
- Through the first 16 months of the new program, all issues related to non-conforming vegetation piles have been resolved without the need for a hearing.
- The SWA's objective is to resolve the issue; not enforcement.

# Three Basic Reasons for a pile not being collected

1. The pile exceeds six (6) cubic yards of otherwise conforming vegetation.
2. The pile includes non-conforming material, like stumps, root balls or heavy logs.
3. The pile is contaminated with mixed waste, such as trash or fencing.

Increasing the pile size limit will address only one of these reasons.



# Collection Services Summary

- The SWA system is intended to provide a base level of reliable, high quality service at the lowest possible price that is adequate for most residents.
- The system allows those who want a higher level of service to pay for it without affecting what other residents in their service area pay.
- The changes the SWA has made over the years have been done to encourage competition for these contracts and to produce the lowest possible collection rates.

## New Program to Date

- Over 5,400 residents within the unincorporated area have called for a removal estimate.
- Around 1,700 residents in Service Area 2, which includes most of the Acreage, have called.
- No hearings have been necessary within the first 16 months.

# HIGHER LEVEL OF SERVICE

POTENTIAL OPTIONS FOR  
ACREAGE RESIDENTS

# OPTION 1: Provide a Higher Vegetation Limit

- Isolate the Acreage as a stand-alone area by splitting Service Area 2;
- Negotiate a higher level of service with the hauler;
- The franchise rights of the hauler must be preserved;
- The service level changes and the resulting cost impact are subject to negotiation and must be in the form of a contract amendment that is approved by the Board;
- The resulting rates must be sufficient to cover the associated costs of collection in the new service area to be compliant with the Act and the Resolution;
- The Garbage and Yard Waste Collection Ordinance must be amended or repealed; and
- Significantly higher rates are likely.

# OPTION 1: Recent Bid Results

- Loxahatchee Groves issued an RFP for collection services in 2019.
- They solicited proposals at 6 cubic yards and at 12 cubic yards.
- Waste Pro proposed \$37.60 per month (\$12.72 for vegetation) or \$451.20 per year for 6 cubic yards and \$41.95 per month (\$17.07 for vegetation) or \$503.40 per year for 12 cubic yards.
- Coastal proposed \$56.40 per month (\$19.88 for vegetation) or \$676.80 per year for 6 cubic yards and \$62.40 per month (\$25.88 for vegetation) or \$748.80 per year for 12 cubic yards.
- The Town negotiated a rate with Coastal that, including administrative fees, results in the Town's residents currently paying \$37.50 per month, or \$450 per year, with a 6 cubic yard limit.
- The cost of curbside collection service in Service Area 2 is currently \$25.83 per month, or \$310 per year for the same level of service as Loxahatchee Groves.



## OPTION 2 : Conduct a New Generation Study

- The Generation Study that forms the foundation of the Authority's Annual Disposal Special Assessment does not differentiate based on lot size with all single family homeowners assessed the same for not just vegetation, but all materials.
- The SWA could conduct a new study designed to calculate vegetation generation rates differentiated by lot size.
- This would provide lower disposal assessments for smaller lots and higher disposal assessments for larger lots.
- This would also provide for higher limits based on lot size.
- This would also have the effect of providing higher disposal credits to the haulers for large lots and eliminate the need for them to recover the excess disposal costs through their collection rates.

## Option 2: Effects

<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
Provides a mechanism for allowing a higher level of service because those living on larger lots would be assessed more.	Large lot owners outside the Acreage would be similarly affected.
Provides more equity because it would allow lower generators on smaller lots to pay less on their disposal assessment.	Low generators on larger lots would be paying more for a service they don't need.
Eliminates one element of risk for the hauler due to the higher disposal credits for larger lots.	Collection costs in the Acreage will still be high due to the higher volume and the remaining uncertainties.
	Some limit at the curb would be needed.
	There will still be those who exceed the limit and in those cases the pile will be tagged and not collected as it is today.
	This does nothing to address non-conforming material, which will still be tagged and not collected as it is today.
	The study would take several years to fully implement, and would likely cost hundreds of thousands of dollars at a minimum.

## OPTION 3: Track the Volume Placed at the Curb by Each House

It has been suggested that the hauler could keep track of the amount of vegetation placed at the curb by each resident on a cumulative basis, and pick up everything up to 312 cubic yards per year (52 weeks x 6 cubic yards).

## OPTION 3: Review

- As this represents a change in the level of service, the requirements and discussion in relation to Option 1 would still apply.
- This proposal relies on the false presumption that the customer is entitled to 312 cubic yards per year (the customer is only assessed for 6-7 cubic yards).
- The hauler's bid rate is based on an assessment of the set-out rate and volume to be expected, which includes an estimate of how many 6 cubic yard piles they can expect on an average collection day.
- This proposal would essentially allow every homeowner to place the equivalent of 6 cubic yards of vegetation at the curb every week, but with no weekly limit.
- The hauler would have to agree to amend the contract to incorporate this change, which is unlikely absent a significant rate increase.

## OPTION 3: Effects

- The hauler would be back to servicing larger piles and incurring the risk of numerous large piles on the route, effectively putting us back where we were before 2009.
- It would impede the hauler's ability to complete the route and increase the cost of service due to the increased reliance on costly and inefficient clamshell trucks.
- It would require the hauler to take the time to measure and record every pile on the route, reducing route productivity and increasing costs.
- It would require the hauler and the Authority to cut off a customer once they have exceeded the annual allotment, which will not please anyone.
- It would create an incentive for residents to place large piles out for collection during hurricane season.



# FINAL THOUGHTS

- The SWA system provides a level of service that satisfies the needs of the majority of Acreage residents at a reasonable price;
- The SWA system provides a way for those who at times require a higher level of service to receive it at a very competitive price;
- The recent changes have reduced the number of lingering piles and improved the aesthetics of the neighborhood compared to the previous contracts;
- Any change that increases the level of service regardless of its design will result in increased cost to the hauler to provide the service, and result in a rate increase, and likely a substantial one; and,
- The funds used to pay the hauler come from the residents of the Service Area. There is no other source of funding.

# FINAL THOUGHTS

- The SWA is committed to ensuring that you get the service you pay for and that the hauler is contractually obligated to provide.
- The SWA is committed to ensuring that the vegetation collection limit is properly, fairly and equitably administered.
- The SWA is open to suggestions of ways to provide greater assurances that the management of the vegetation limit is reasonable and effective.
- The six (6) yard limit prevents lingering piles which prevents damage to swales and nuisances.
- Residents are encouraged to call Customer Service with any collection related concerns immediately so that we can resolve the issue.

QUESTIONS?

# ***CONTACT US***

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

**561-697-2700**

**contactCIS@swa.org**

## **WEBSITE**

**swa.org**

THANK YOU