



How a Community Benefits from their Per Capita Assessment

What is the District per capita assessment?

It is an annual per-person fee paid to a solid waste district by a member city/town. U.S. Census Department figures, updated by the Vermont Department of Health, are used to determine the population of each city/town each year, to which the per capita rate is applied.

Is a per capita fee required by all districts?

The option to charge a per capita fee is established in the Charter of a solid waste district. Some districts charge per capita fees and others do not, depending upon what services they offer and how they raise revenue. A per capita assessment is an annual obligation for all Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District (CVSWMD) member communities.

What are the state solid waste management requirements?

Municipalities are responsible for managing solid waste according to specific rules and regulations. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources sets minimum standards as well as a goal for diminishing waste (diversion goal) that municipalities are expected to meet. Municipalities may choose the programming that will meet this goal. To do this, municipalities must develop a comprehensive solid waste implementation plan with public input, have it approved by the state, and report on progress over the ten years it is in effect.

When communities join a district to meet these requirements, the obligation for planning and implementation falls to the district. **The collective funding and economies of scale realized in providing multi-town services, plus the benefit of a dedicated professional solid waste staff, allow the district to offer these services to communities at much lower costs than most would typically pay by doing it themselves.**

What does the District per capita fee pay for?

The CVSWMD has generally held that the per capita assessment paid by member communities provides sufficient funding to pay for the minimum requirements set by the state of Vermont for solid waste management. However, the District's per capita rate does not pay for the programming (development and implementation) required to meet the diversion goal set by the state. The per capita does help to cover the public planning process required by the state to develop the programming, but it does not pay for actual program work. Programming is paid for through other revenue sources, ie. grants we apply for and are awarded; surcharge on garbage disposal; interest on cash flow and accrued fund balances; and fees for services, such as the fees charged at our drop-off depots to recycle certain materials (i.e. electronics, metal) and to dispose of trash.

The CVSWMD acknowledges an obligation to meet all requirements under state law for its members. This includes the following:

- Undertake comprehensive research and employ reporting requirements to identify and quantify waste, reuse, recycling, and other types of diversion on a regular basis and report this information to the state as required;
- Undertake a comprehensive solid waste planning process for the region at least once a decade, inclusive of developing a solid waste implementation plan according to state guidelines and with public input and opportunity for comment;
- Hire competent staff and contractors to develop and implement programming, supported by an annual budget, that can achieve the goals set out in the solid waste implementation plan;
- Revise the solid waste implementation plan as necessary to respond to changing technology, market forces, procedures, laws, and other factors;

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- Establish regional solid waste regulations (laws) as may be needed to achieve an environment in which proper solid waste management can be realized;
- Enforce solid waste regulations to ensure that solid waste is managed in an environmentally sound manner that protects human health and the environment;
- Ensure that there are opportunities (facilities, service providers, special events) for residents and businesses to manage their waste according to the state proscribed hierarchy of waste reduction, reuse, recycling, landfilling, and incineration;
- Hold at least two (2) hazardous waste collection events annually for the region;
- Monitor and participate in legislative endeavors that relate to solid waste management at a state level;
- Educate constituents about the hazards and issues pertaining to solid waste and the benefits of specific actions to manage waste more appropriately; and,

- Communicate regularly with constituents and invite participation in governance and decision-making through an open and public process.

What is the CVSWMD per capita rate?

As of July 1, 2006, the per capita (per person) rate is \$3.10. The CVSWMD board of supervisors made a commitment to hold it at that rate for three years.

How often is the rate changed?

The rate increased to \$3.10 on July 1, 2006. The last increase was July 1, 2001, when it was raised to \$2.10 after holding the per capita at \$1.50 for six years.

When the rate was increased to \$2.10 in 2001, the District promised to keep that rate for three years. We were actually able to hold the rate at \$2.10 for *five* years before we needed to increase it effective July 1, 2006.

Why doesn't the District make smaller, annual changes in the per capita rate?

The CVSWMD, at the request of many of its member communities' elected officials, typically sets a rate and agrees to hold it steady for several years. We do this in response to requests from member town selectboards and city councils. We have been told that level funding for a multi-year period is easier for member communities to manage.

Who should I contact if I have additional questions about the CVSWMD per capita rate?

Contact either the Executive Director or Administrative Manager – they are the most knowledgeable members of the CVSWMD staff with regard to the per capita rate, its use, history, and organizational implications. They can be reached at 802-229-9383 or via e-mail at:

- director@cvswwd.org
- adminmanager@cvswwd.org



CENTRAL VERMONT SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Helping our cities and towns work toward Zero Waste

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CVSWMD member communities: Barre City, Barre Town, Berlin, Bradford, Cabot, Calais, Chelsea, East Montpelier, Hardwick, Marshfield, Middlesex, Montpelier, Northfield, Orange, Plainfield, Roxbury, Strafford, Tunbridge, Walden, Washington, Williamstown, Woodbury.