

UPPER DUBLIN TOWNSHIP TRASH AUTOMATION FACT SHEET

Recognizing that the Earned Income Tax (EIT) from Non-Residents working in Upper Dublin would decrease as other taxing authorities enacted an EIT, in 1998 the Commissioners and Staff developed the Solid Waste Automation Plan as one method to reduce expenses. The final phase of that plan is being implemented on April 5, 2004.

- Number of homes serviced: more than 7700
- Trash toter size: 95 gallon – equivalent of 3 standard trash cans.
A 65 gallon toter is available and a 35 gallon toter may be offered if enough requests are received
- Number of trucks needed: prior to automation – 4, after automation -3
- Number of employees needed: prior to automation – 12, after automation – 3
- Houses serviced per day capability: prior to automation – 500, after automation – over 700
- Average labor cost of each full-time employee including salary and all benefits: \$50,000
- Township average residential assessment: \$180,000
- Cost for trash/recycling/yard waste per home (equipment, labor, disposal etc) with automation: \$280
- Disposal cost of trash at Plymouth Trash To Energy Facility (mandated by County): \$83/ton including all County fees (part of the \$280 above)
- Area private trash collection costs: \$320-360/year plus \$100 for County Waste Authority
- Two collections per week are provided: one for trash/recycling and one for yard waste
- Township recycles newspaper, mail, magazines, cardboard such as cereal boxes, cans, bottles and plastics

At its peak, non-resident EIT amounted to \$3 million but in 2004 this number is reduced to \$1.2 million as other municipalities have enacted it. Since Upper Dublin enacted the EIT in the late 1980's over **\$28 million has been received from non-residents**. The EIT from residents and non-residents makes up **35% of the revenues** for the General Fund received by Upper Dublin (2004 estimate) compared to **45% in 2002**. The Real Estate Tax (RET) rate was reduced when the EIT was enacted by the Board of Commissioners under Act 511 but has had to rise to cover the difference and other increased expenses. The **Township RET makes up 15%** of the total RET paid by the community. The rest is to the School District and County.

In 1998 the Board of Commissioners directed the staff to develop methods to reduce expenses. The resultant Solid Waste Automation Plan was developed after reviews of operations in other communities. Successive Boards of Commissioners have endorsed the plan to reduce expenses. Commissioners and staff members have observed similar automation efforts in Brick Township, NJ. All Commissioner committee, budget and full Board meetings have been televised on cable channel 16 (and now 22) and the meetings themselves are open to the public.

During the transition to fully automated trash collection, “chase trucks” were operated in those areas where toters were placed and serviced by a fully automated truck. It was estimated that to

continue this method, the cost would be over **\$320,000 per year and would have to be made up in RET**. By observation of the staff, a small portion of homes routinely have trash in excess of a single toter. The City of Nashua NH has determined that a single toter can support 5.7-6.3 people per home if they recycle. The City of Asheville NC has almost 22,000 collection points but only 800 have a second toter. Asheville charges \$2.50 per month for the additional toter but their disposal cost is \$33/ton. Based upon current rates for disposal an Upper Dublin equivalent would be about \$80/year for disposal plus the cost of the toter (\$50 plus maintenance).

The successful yard waste program is partially funded by the State through the use of grants for equipment. During summer months, **40% of the waste stream by weight is yard waste**. This reduces the cost of disposal which is currently \$83 per ton at the County facility. A large percentage of the community uses this service. Collection is provided one day a week. Yard waste is composted at a central Township site.

Current RET includes the cost of residential trash collection (\$280 per home). The RET is also collected from business properties and residential properties not receiving municipal trash collection. In Ward One alone, almost **15% of the homes do not receive municipal trash collection** yet they too pay the same pro rata portion of trash collection in their taxes as the rest of Upper Dublin.

The US Census has determined that the average **number of people per residential unit is 2.8** in Upper Dublin. Over 16% of the population is 62 years of age and older. Based on the number of people and extra trash outside of the standard 95 gallon toter, the Township is completing implementation of the Solid Waste Automation Plan beginning April 5, 2004. The following will comprise the plan:

- All trash must be in a toter
- Additional 95 gallon toters are available from the Township at a cost of \$150 plus a deposit of \$100 (for a total of \$250) with a reduced charge for smaller toters. Therefore, in about 2 years, the cost to dispose of trash from a second toter will be fully paid for out of the RET.
- A one-time pickup of a toter on Wednesday is available for a fee of \$15 if scheduled by noon on Tuesday in non-holiday weeks.
- During the winter holiday season, chase trucks will be utilized to collect additional trash outside of a toter. This is during the period when yard waste is not being collected and trucks are available.

For more information, contact Township Manager Paul Leonard at:

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