



## KITSAP COUNTY SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Kitsap County Public Works Annex  
8600 SW Imperial WAY, Bremerton, WA  
Also, Virtually Via Zoom

Wednesday, January 7, 2026 - 4:00 PM

### AGENDA

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

CORRESPONDENCE

ELECTIONS

#### KCPW

- Officer Elections
- Review Chapter 3 - Waste Reduction and Chapter 7 – Collection, of the Solid and Hazardous Waste Management Plan

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

PUBLIC COMMENTS

## Chapter 3

# Waste reduction



# Waste reduction

## 3.0 Introduction

Waste reduction means taking steps to create less waste in the first place. This can be as simple as using a reusable coffee mug instead of a disposable cup. It can also occur on a larger scale, such as when companies choose simpler packaging that creates less waste.

In the waste management hierarchy used by Washington and the U.S., waste reduction is the most preferred option for managing waste. This is because it has fewer environmental, social, and economic impacts and costs than recycling, composting, or disposal. Even though waste reduction has many benefits, it can be difficult to put into practice.

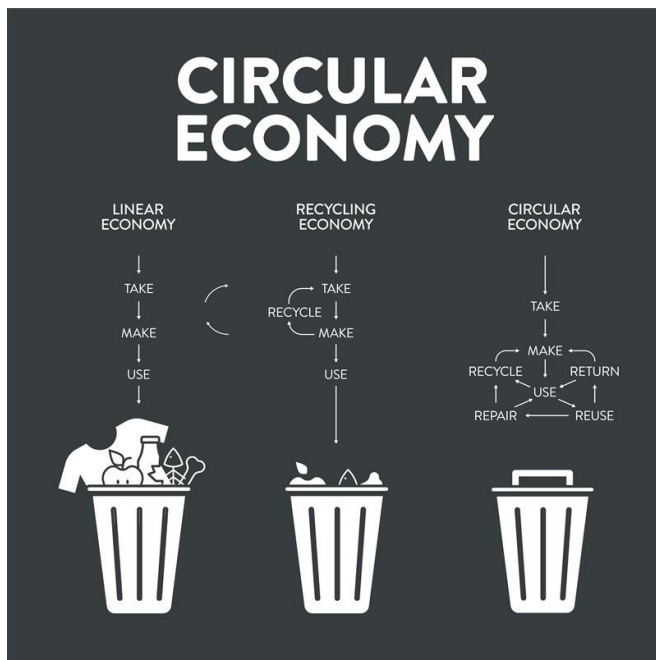
Figure 3-1 | U.S. waste management hierarchy



Today, society mostly follows a linear economy. In this system, natural resources are taken from the Earth, turned into products, used, and then thrown away or recycled — often after just one use. Businesses typically make money by selling more products, not by making products last longer. This encourages over-consumption, pollution, and waste. It's also costly. According to the United Nation's [Global Waste Management Outlook 2024](#), the global cost of managing municipal waste could grow from \$252 billion in 2020 to \$640.3 billion by 2050.

To address this problem, there is an urgent need to move toward a circular economy. In a circular economy, products and materials are kept in use for as long as possible through better design, maintenance, reuse, repair, refurbishment, remanufacturing, recycling, and composting. These circular actions reduce waste, pollution, health risks, and long-term costs while also creating economic benefits.

Figure 3-2 | Circular economy compared to linear and recycling economies



While local governments like Kitsap County cannot change the global economy on their own, they can support local waste-reduction efforts and circular economy practices. They can also advocate for state-level policies that require manufacturers to take responsibility for the waste their products create, which can lead to better product design and less waste overall.

## 3.1 Understanding the impact of waste

To better protect the environment, public health, and future resources, it is important to look at how materials are made and used—not just how they are disposed.

Every product has a life cycle. A typical product lifecycle includes raw material extraction, manufacturing, transportation, use, and finally disposal or recycling. Each step creates environmental and social impacts, including greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, toxic chemicals, public health impacts, waste, and economic costs.

These impacts can be measured using a [Life Cycle Assessment](#), which looks at the total effects of a product or material over its entire life.

Many Life Cycle Assessments show that most environmental and climate impacts happen before a product becomes waste. For example, the [Oregon Department of Environmental Quality](#) found that nearly half of the state's greenhouse gas emissions come from the consumption of materials and products. Of those emissions, only 1% comes from waste disposal, while 99% comes from manufacturing and supply chains.

Because of this, the most effective way to reduce environmental and climate impacts is to consume fewer materials and products. However, many products are necessary for daily life and cannot be eliminated entirely. This leads to an important question: how can we reduce harm while still meeting people's needs?

One solution is [sustainable materials management](#). This approach, supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Washington Department of Ecology, focuses on using materials more wisely throughout their entire life cycle. It helps governments, planners, and businesses:

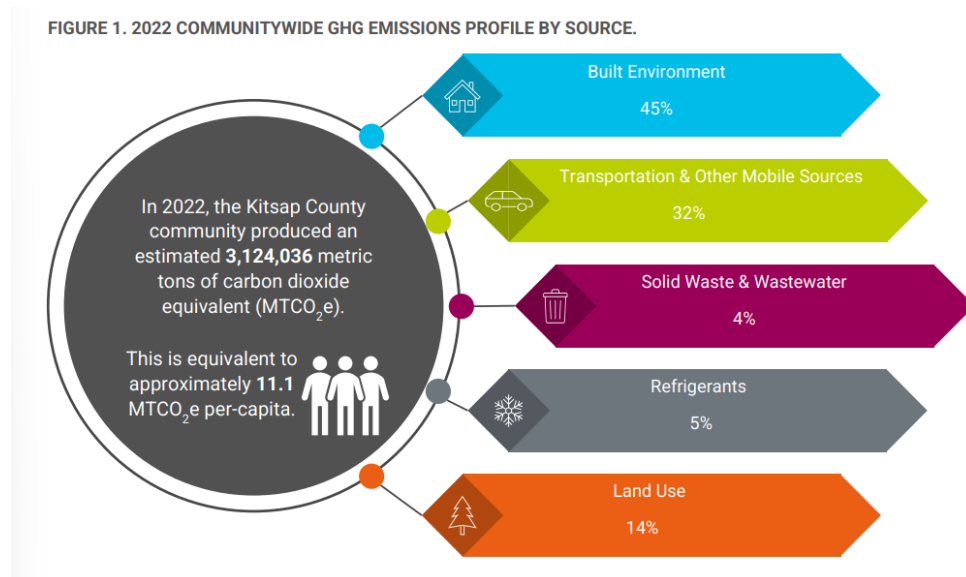
- Use materials more efficiently, with a focus on using less.
- Reduce toxic chemicals and environmental impacts at every lifecycle stage.
- Ensure resources are available for current and future generations.

### 3.1.1 Local impact of waste

Even though most environmental and climate impacts from materials and products occur before they become waste, it's still important to examine the impacts of managing waste.

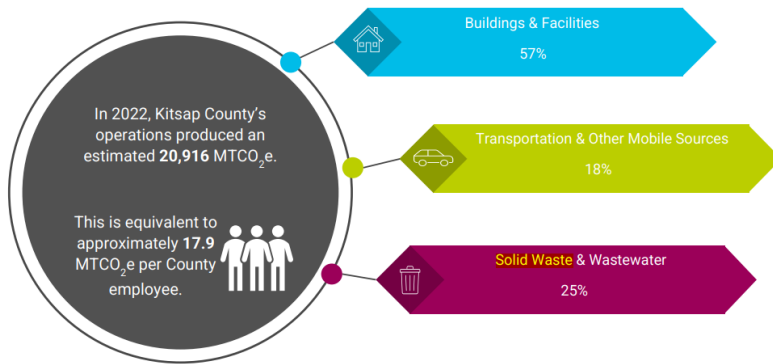
In Washington State, local governments are responsible for managing the waste generated in their communities. This gives counties and cities more control over waste collection, processing, and disposal than over earlier lifecycle stages such as product design or manufacturing.

Kitsap County's [2022 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis](#) shows that waste and wastewater management makes up a relatively small share of total communitywide emissions – around 4%. Most emissions come from buildings, transportation, refrigerants, and land use. However, waste plays a much larger role in emissions from county operations, which are activities the county directly controls.



The analysis found that 25% of Kitsap County's operational greenhouse gas emissions come from waste generated in county buildings, closed landfills within the county, wastewater treatment processes, and the energy used to operate wastewater treatment facilities.

FIGURE 2. 2022 COUNTY OPERATIONS GHG EMISSIONS PROFILE BY SOURCE.



Because of these findings, the Kitsap County Department of Community Development developed new solid waste-related policies and strategies as part of the [2024 Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan](#). These actions focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions both across the community and within county operations.

### Comprehensive Plan Policies

- **Policy 18.1:** Encourage reduction as a first step in reducing waste and associated emissions.
- **Policy 18.2:** Ensure that community reuse, recycling, and composting facilities are easily accessible.
- **Policy 18.3:** Consider methods to manage solid waste locally, thereby reducing emissions associated with transportation to out-of-state landfill facilities.

### Comprehensive Plan Strategies

- **Strategy 18.a:** Engage in environmentally-preferable purchasing practices and support use of products with minimal impacts on the environment, health, and safety.
- **Strategy 18.b:** Encourage local development of recovery facilities for recyclable materials.
- **Strategy 18.c:** Evaluate scenarios of operating a local landfill with methane capture, waste to energy plant, or other methods of keeping solid waste disposal local.
- **Strategy 18.d:** Evaluate expansion of yard waste collection services to minimize emissions from burning yard waste debris.

For more details on these climate-related policies and strategies, see Appendix X, Summary of Recommended Actions.

## 4.0 Existing programs

There are many waste reduction efforts happening in Kitsap County. Some are required by Washington law or local regulation, while others are offered voluntarily by local governments, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and community groups. This section provides an overview of current programs and policies that help reduce waste and support a circular economy.

### 4.1.1 Product stewardship and extended producer responsibility

Product stewardship is the act of managing a specific product and its packaging throughout its entire lifecycle to minimize its health, safety, environmental, and social impacts. Under product stewardship, everyone involved in the life of a particular product – including designers, manufacturers, brands, retailers, consumers, and waste managers – works toward this goal. Typically, those with the greatest influence (designers, manufacturers, and brands) take the most responsibility to make a positive change.

Product stewardship programs can be voluntary or required by law. One example of a voluntary effort is the [U.S. Plastics Pact](#), in which brands and manufacturers commit to reducing single-use plastic packaging in the United States.

A more formal approach is extended producer responsibility (EPR), which is required by law. EPR programs require producers (brands and manufacturers) to pay for and manage the collection, recycling, or disposal of their product or packaging after consumers are done using them. By shifting the cost of waste from consumers and local governments to producers, EPR incentivizes producers to reduce waste, design products that are easier to recycle, and use fewer toxic materials.

In Washington, the Legislature has passed EPR laws that cover several types of waste, including:

- Architectural paints and stains
- Batteries
- Electronics
- Mercury lights
- Household paper and packaging
- Solar panels



These programs help ensure that difficult-to-manage or harmful materials are handled safely and responsibly. For more details on Washington's EPR programs, see Chapters 4 and 9.

Kitsap County is a member for the [Northwest Product Stewardship Council](#), a coalition of government agencies in Washington and Oregon that promotes product stewardship and EPR as tools to improve waste management and reduce environmental harm.

### 4.1.2 Product bans and restrictions

Another way to reduce waste and limit exposure to toxic chemicals is by banning or restricting certain products and types of packaging. In recent years, the Washington Legislature has adopted several statewide bans and restrictions, including:

- A ban on [single-use plastic bags](#).
- A ban on the sale of some [expanded polystyrene foam products](#).
- Restrictions on [single-use serveware at food establishments](#).
- A ban on certain [mercury-containing lights](#).
- Restrictions on [mini toiletries in lodgings](#).
- Restrictions on [foam docks and blocks](#).
- A ban on [food packaging that contains PFAS chemicals](#).

Washington law also requires manufacturers to include [recycled content](#) in some products and packaging, which helps create demand for recycled materials and support recycling markets.

In addition to state laws, the City of Bainbridge Island has adopted local regulations that often go beyond state requirements. These include bans or restrictions on:

- Expanded polystyrene food packaging (1989)
- Plastic bags (2012)
- Single-use food packaging and plastics (2021)
- Balloon releases into the environment (2012)

Kitsap County and local cities support these efforts by educating businesses and residents about product bans and restrictions through in-person outreach, newsletters, social media, and websites.

### 4.1.3 Reuse and repair

Reuse and repair help reduce waste by extending the life of products and reducing the need to make new items. Reuse means using an item multiple times for its original purpose, such as using a reusable coffee mug instead of disposable cups. Repair focuses on fixing broken or damaged items rather than throwing them away and replacing them.

Kitsap County encourages repair by hosting [Fix-it Fairs](#), which are free community events where residents can have their broken items repaired or mended by skilled volunteers. Since 2019, the Kitsap County Solid Waste Division has hosted 10 Fix-it Fairs. At these events, the County weighs repaired items to track how much waste is diverted from disposal. To date, these events have diverted 2,703 pounds of goods from the landfill or recycling, and around 69% of items brought to the events are successfully repaired.

Many local organizations and community groups also offer repair and mending workshops, meetups, and events. For example, [Sustainable Bainbridge](#) hosts Fix-it Fairs, clothing swaps, and mending events on Bainbridge Island.

Residents can find repair services and events through [Recycle.Kitsap.Gov](#) and through the statewide repair directory at [RepairEconomyWA.org](#).

To facilitate reuse, local governments and organizations support several programs and initiatives, including:

- The Reuse Shop at Kitsap County Household Hazardous Waste Facilities, where residents can pick up reusable paint and other products at no cost.
- The [Bring Your Own Cup campaign](#), which encourages replacing disposable coffee cups with reusable alternatives.
- The County's [What Do I Do With It? database](#), which lists locations where residents can donate quality secondhand goods.
- [Discounted disposal rates](#) at Olympic View Transfer Station for qualifying local charities that resell donated goods to support human services programs.
- A 2022 City of Bainbridge Island grant to Sustainable Bainbridge for the ReFashion Bainbridge program, which works to improve the sustainability of the clothing industry.
- A tableware lending library operated by Sustainable Bainbridge since 2010, which helps residents on Bainbridge Island avoid single-use tableware during events.

#### 4.1.4 Food waste prevention and rescue

Preventing food waste and rescuing edible food are key parts of Washington's organics management hierarchy, which is detailed in Chapter 5. These strategies play an important role in reducing the environmental, economic, and social impacts of wasted food.

Food waste prevention focuses on keeping food from becoming waste in the first place. Food rescue ensures that safe, edible surplus food is redirected to [hunger relief organizations](#) instead of being sent to landfills or composting facilities.

Kitsap County supports food waste prevention through multiple initiatives, including:

- Funding the Washington State University (WSU) Kitsap Extension [Food Safety and Preservation Program](#), which teaches residents safe food storage and preservation techniques to help reduce household waste.
- Sharing food-saving tips and tools from [UseFoodWell.org](#) through newsletters and social media.
- Participating in [Food Waste Prevention Week](#) to raise awareness and encourage action.

In addition to prevention efforts, Kitsap County provides financial support to local food rescue programs, including:

- [Kitsap Harvest](#), a nonprofit organization that collects surplus produce from farms and gardens and donates it to hunger relief organizations.
- Kitsap Community Resources- [Food to Freezer program](#), which turns surplus food into soups, sauces, and salsa for distribution to local food banks.

Grocery stores, farms, wholesalers, restaurants, businesses, organizations, and individuals can donate food. Federal and state [Good Samaritan Food Donation](#) laws protect donors from liability when they donate safe, edible food to nonprofit hunger relief organizations

A 2023 survey by WSU Kitsap Extension found that local hunger relief organizations currently receive donations from grocery stores, farms, and individuals, ranging from a few hundred pounds to over 500,000 pounds per year. However, these organizations do not currently receive donations from restaurants or similar businesses, indicating an opportunity to expand local food rescue efforts.

To help increase food donation statewide, Washington's [Center for Sustainable Food Management](#) offers tools like the [Food Rescue Map](#), which helps food businesses find nearby organizations that accept food donations.

Businesses that donate food may benefit from lower disposal costs and possible tax incentives. They are encouraged to review the Washington Department of Health's [Food Rescue Donation Guide for Businesses](#). Businesses can also reduce waste by selling surplus food at a discounted price through popular mobile apps like [Too Good to Go](#).

#### **Is it food waste or wasted food?**

Washington defines **food waste** as the *waste from fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy products, fish, shellfish, nuts, seeds, grains, and similar materials that result from the storage, preparation, cooking, handling, selling, or serving of food for human consumption. Food waste includes excess, spoiled, or unusable food and includes inedible parts commonly associated with food preparation such as pits, shells, bones, and peels.*

**Wasted food** is the *edible portion of food waste.*

## **4.2 Planning considerations**

### **4.2.1 How else could Kitsap County support waste reduction?**

In addition to existing programs, there are other ways Kitsap County and local cities could support waste reduction.

Some local governments in Western Washington offer mini-grant programs to individuals, businesses, community groups, churches, and schools for projects that reduce waste. These projects can include installing water bottle filling stations, creating reuse programs, or purchasing reusable items. Kitsap County and local cities could explore creating similar programs to support community-led waste reduction initiatives.

Kitsap County and local cities could also promote or financially support business material exchange programs such as the [Industrial Materials Exchange](#) and [WA Reuses](#). These programs help businesses and organizations find new uses or buyers for surplus materials that might otherwise be thrown away. Supporting material exchanges can reduce waste, lower disposal costs, and strengthen local reuse and recycling markets.

## 4.3 Recommended actions

Number	Recommendation	Responsible party
Rec. X	Explore creating a mini-grant program to support local waste reduction projects.	Kitsap County
Rec. X	Explore participation in <a href="#">WA Reuses</a> , a new statewide materials marketplace currently in development.	Kitsap County
Rec. X	Develop a business hub to help businesses connect with waste reduction strategies.	Kitsap County

# Chapter 7

# Collection





# Collection

## 7.0 Introduction

There are four main types of waste collection services offered in Kitsap County:

- **Curbside collection:** The regular pickup of garbage, recyclables, and organic materials by permitted haulers from homes, businesses, and institutions.
- **Special collection:** Waste collection events, bulky waste pickup, junk removal services, and similar services.
- **Cleanup programs:** The removal of litter and other illegally dumped waste from public lands and roads.
- **Self-hauling:** When residents, businesses, or institutions transport their own waste to a permitted disposal or recycling facility.

This chapter explains each collection service, including applicable regulations, planning considerations, and recommendations for improvement. It also describes efforts to educate the public about these services.

## 7.1 Existing programs

### 7.1.1 Residential curbside collection service

Curbside garbage and recycling collection is available countywide to single and multifamily homes, in both rural and urban areas. Garbage and recycling is bundled as a single service throughout the county, which encourages recycling, improves collection efficiency, and keeps costs lower by spreading them across more people. County and city ordinances require residents to pay for recycling even if they choose not to use their recycling container.

Effective January 1, 2026, all residential properties in the county also have access to optional collection services for organics materials (food and yard waste).

Below are descriptions of residential collection services available within each area of the county.

Table 7-1 | Summary of single-family collection services, Kitsap County (2025)

Service overview					Standard cart size (gallons)			Collection frequency		
Jurisdiction	Service provider	Regulatory authority	Mandatory collection	Service level ordinance	Garbage	Recycle	Organics	Garbage	Recycle	Organics
Unincorporated Kitsap County	WM	WUTC		<a href="#">Kitsap Code 9.48</a>	64	96	96	W, EOW, M, ON-CALL	EOW	EOW
Bainbridge Island	Bainbridge Disposal	WUTC		<a href="#">Bainbridge Island Code 13.28</a>	64	96	96	W, M	EOW	EOW
Bremerton	WM	City contract	X	<a href="#">Bremerton Code 6.04</a>	64	96	96	W	EOW	EOW
Port Orchard	WM	WUTC	X	<a href="#">Port Orchard Code 6.04</a>	64	96	96	W	EOW	EOW
Poulsbo	?	City contract	X	<a href="#">Poulsbo Code 8.16</a>	64	96	96	W	EOW	EOW
W= Weekly, EOW = Every other week, M = Monthly										



## **Unincorporated Kitsap County**

Curbside collection is voluntary. The [Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission](#) (WUTC) regulates residential garbage, recycling, and organics collection services provided by WM in unincorporated Kitsap County under Certificate G000237.

This certificate grants WM the exclusive right to operate in unincorporated Kitsap County without competition ([RCW 81.77](#)). Certificates are perpetual unless the hauler fails to provide adequate collection services, stops operating in the territory, or sells all or part of the territory to another hauler. The state's certificate system has been in place since 1961.

In exchange for this protected territory, the WUTC regulates and oversees WM's rates, services, safety, billing practices, and more.

Although the County does not regulate collection services, it:

- Establishes minimum residential recycling collection standards in [Kitsap County Code Chapter 9.48](#).
- Submits feedback to the WUTC about the quality of service provided by the certificated hauler ([RCW 81.77.120](#)).
- Submits a Cost Assessment Questionnaire (Appendix X) to the WUTC to help them set rates.

State law [RCW 36.58.040](#) gives counties the authority to contract for and regulate residential recycling and organics collection services instead of delegating this responsibility to the WUTC. The County may choose this option in the future.

## **Bainbridge Island**

Curbside collection is voluntary. The WUTC regulates residential garbage, recycling, and organics collection services provided by Bainbridge Disposal on Bainbridge Island under Certificate G000143.

This certificate grants Bainbridge Disposal the exclusive right to operate without competition ([RCW 81.77](#)). Certificates are perpetual unless the hauler fails to provide adequate collection services, stops operating in the territory, or sells all or part of the territory to another hauler. The state's certificate system has been in place since 1961.

In exchange for this protected territory, the WUTC regulates and oversees Bainbridge Disposal's rates, services, safety, billing practices, and more.

Although the City of Bainbridge Island does not regulate collection, it establishes minimum collection standards in [Bainbridge Island Municipal Code Chapter 13.28](#).

State law [RCW 35.21.120](#) gives cities the authority to contract for and regulate waste collection services. If the City of Bainbridge Island decides to switch to contracted hauling, [RCW 35.02.160](#) will guide the transition.

## **Bremerton**

Curbside collection is mandatory. The City of Bremerton, under the authority of [RCW 35.21.120](#), contracts with WM for residential garbage, recycling, and organics collection services and sets service rates through this contract. The City further regulates these services through [Bremerton Municipal Code Chapter 6.04](#).

## **Poulsbo**

Curbside collection is mandatory. The City of Poulsbo, under the authority of [RCW 35.21.120](#), contracts with Bainbridge Disposal for recycling and organics collection services and sets rates through this contract. The City currently operates its own garbage collection service **but intends to contract for garbage collection beginning in 2026**. The City further regulates rates and services through [Poulsbo Municipal Code Chapter 3.12](#).

## **Port Orchard**

Curbside collection is mandatory. In 2025, the City of Port Orchard ended its collection contract with WM and instead chose to have the WUTC regulate residential garbage, recycling, and organics collection within the city. The WUTC authorizes WM to provide these services under Certificate G000237.

This certificate grants WM the exclusive right to operate without competition ([RCW 81.77](#)). Certificates are perpetual unless the hauler fails to provide adequate collection services, stops operating in the territory, or sells all or part of the territory to another hauler.

In exchange for this protected territory, the WUTC regulates and oversees hauler rates, services, safety, billing practices, and more. The state's certificate system has been in place since 1961.

Although the City of Port Orchard no longer regulates collection services, it establishes minimum service standards through [Port Orchard Municipal Code Chapter 6.04](#).

State law [RCW 35.21.120](#) gives cities the authority to contract for and regulate waste collection services. If the City of Port Orchard decides to return to contracted hauling, [RCW 35.02.160](#) will guide the transition.

## **7.1.2 Commercial collection services**

Commercial garbage collection is available countywide to businesses, organizations, and institutions. **It is mandatory in Bremerton, Port Orchard, and Poulsbo but optional in unincorporated Kitsap County and Bainbridge Island.** Garbage collection is regulated throughout the county:

- Bremerton regulates commercial garbage rates and services through [Bremerton Municipal Code Chapter 6.04](#) and its contract with WM.
- Poulsbo regulates commercial garbage rates and services through [Poulsbo Municipal Code Chapter 3.12](#).

- The [Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission](#) (WUTC) regulates commercial garbage rates and services in unincorporated Kitsap County, Port Orchard, and Bainbridge Island.

Commercial recycling collection is also available countywide as an optional service.

Commercial recycling collection is available on the open market, which means businesses can hire any legally operating hauler. Haulers set their own rates, service areas, and services. Local governments may require businesses to have recycling collection. To help businesses, local governments can contract with a commercial recycling hauler and allow businesses to use the contracted rates and services. However, local governments cannot require businesses to use their contracted hauler.

Commercial organics collection is available as an optional service to some businesses in Kitsap County. Commercial organics collection is available on the open market, which means businesses can hire any legally operating hauler. Haulers set their own rates, service areas, and services. Local governments may require businesses to have organics collection. To help businesses, local governments can contract with a commercial organics hauler and allow businesses to use the contracted rates and services. However, local governments cannot require businesses to use their contracted hauler.

To operate legally, commercial recycling and organics haulers must:

- Only collect and transport recyclable materials.
- Register with the Washington Department of Ecology as a Transporter of Recyclable Material ([RCW 70A.205.300](#)).
- Have a motor carrier permit from the WUTC ([RCW 81.80](#)).
- Have a solid waste hauling permit from Kitsap Public Health District ([Public Health Ordinance 2010-1](#)).

Table 7-2 | Summary of commercial collection services, Kitsap County

Jurisdiction	Garbage			Recycling		Organics	
	Service provider	Regulatory authority	Mandatory collection?	Service provider	Mandatory?	Service provider	Mandatory?
Unincorporated Kitsap County	WM	WUTC	No	Any legal company (open market)	No	Any legal company (open market)	No
Bainbridge Island	Bainbridge Disposal, Inc.	WUTC	No		No		No
Bremerton	WM	Contract	Yes		No		No
Port Orchard	WM	WUTC	Yes		No		No
Poulsbo	?	Contract	Yes		No		No

### 7.1.3 Bulky waste collection services

Large items like tires, furniture, and appliances are difficult to collect using standard collection trucks, so waste haulers offer separate bulky item pickup services for an added fee.

Several local governments also offer special bulky waste services to households, including:

- **City of Poulsbo:** Provides a free garbage dumpster annually to single-family households.
- **Port Gamble S’Klallam and Suquamish Tribes:** Periodically provide community garbage dumpsters for tribal members. The Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe also offers an annual garbage disposal voucher program for tribal members.
- **City of Bremerton:** Contracts for an annual “Beautify Bremerton” collection event, typically focused on yard debris recycling.
- **Kitsap County Noxious Weed Program:** Seasonally offers free disposal of noxious weeds at public transfer stations.
- **Kitsap County Solid Waste Division:** Periodically holds residential collection events for recyclable items like waste tires, expanded polystyrene foam, scrap metal, and electronics. The Division shares upcoming events on its [event webpage](#).

### 7.1.4 Self-hauling

Self-hauling is when a household, business, institution, or contractor transports its own waste directly to a public transfer station or another permitted solid waste handling facility. Self-hauling is currently allowed in Kitsap County under state, county, and city law.

#### Secure your load laws

People who haul waste must cover and secure all materials in their vehicles according to state and local laws. For more information and tips on how to secure loads, visit the [Kitsap County Secure Your Load webpage](#).

### 7.1.5 Junk cleanup services

Residents and businesses that need help cleaning up their properties can hire a junk cleanup company. These companies must be:

- Permitted as a [motor carrier](#) by the WUTC.
- Permitted as a site restoration company by the Kitsap Public Health District. The district keeps a [list of permitted companies](#) on its website.
- Endorsed by the [Department of Revenue](#) when transporting non-vehicle scrap metal.

Junk cleanup companies may not compete with WUTC-certificated haulers or haulers contracted by cities. To prevent illegal hauling, junk cleanup companies:

- Must have their staff gather garbage or residential recyclables/organics from a property and load it into company-owned containers or vehicles.
- Cannot provide containers, dumpsters, vehicles, or trailers for customers to fill with garbage or residential recyclables/organics.
- Cannot collect garbage or residential recyclables/organics left at the curb by customers.

## 7.1.6 Litter cleanup programs

Each local government in Kitsap County maintains its own lands and roads, including cleaning up litter and illegal dumpsites. Below is a general description of how each agency does this work.

### **Kitsap County**

The [Clean Kitsap Program](#), run by the Solid Waste Division, coordinates litter and debris cleanup on county roads and lands. In 2024, the program removed over 162 tons of litter and debris from over 3,000 miles of county roadway. The program:

- Coordinates the [Adopt a Spot](#) volunteer litter cleanup program in unincorporated Kitsap County, Bremerton, and Port Orchard.
- Removes illegal dumpsites reported through [SeeClickFix](#).
- Contracts for roadside litter cleanup services.
- Markets the [Secure Your Load for Safer Roads](#) litter prevention campaign.
- Partners with the Kitsap Public Health District to enforce against and prevent illegal dumping.
- Assists the Parks Department with park cleanups.
- Provides disposal assistance to qualifying agencies, organizations, and charities.
- Participates in the Homeless Encampment Action Response and Transitions (HEART) Program to provide a consistent and compassionate response to unauthorized encampments on County property.

### **State agencies**

The Washington Departments of Transportation (WSDOT) and Ecology maintain state roads and lands in Kitsap County, including State Routes 3 and 16. Their main cleanup strategies are:

- Ecology runs a three-person adult litter crew from March through November.
- WSDOT operates the [Adopt a Highway](#) volunteer program and business sponsorship program.
- WSDOT crews remove large and dangerous road debris and illegal dumping.

- Ecology provides litter prevention campaigns like [We Keep WA Litter Free](#) and [Secure Your Load for Safer Roads](#).

The County assists state agencies with highway cleanups as resources and funding allow.

## **Cities**

City maintenance and operations crews respond to reports of illegal dumping and clean up litter within their jurisdictions. Cities can request disposal assistance or litter cleanup supplies from Kitsap County's Clean Kitsap Program.

### **Litter laws**

Washington law [prohibits littering and illegal dumping](#) and requires drivers to properly secure vehicle loads. Violation can carry fines of \$103 to \$5,000, depending on the type or volume of litter. Littering potentially dangerous items like cigarettes, glass, or needles have higher penalties.

## **7.1.7 Education and outreach**

Waste haulers and local governments educate the community about available collection services. Local governments may also require haulers to provide education through local ordinances or service contracts. Below is a partial list of current outreach methods.

### **Hauler-provided outreach**

WM educates its customers in Bremerton, Port Orchard, and unincorporated Kitsap County through:

- An annual mailer with collection schedule, recycle guide, and organics guide (English language).
- Website with schedules, guides, and instructions for setting out extra materials (multiple languages).
- Cart decals on new garbage, recycling, and organics carts listing acceptable and unacceptable materials (English).
- Customer dashboard and service alerts (English).
- Printed "Oops Tags" to inform customers when unacceptable materials are found in collection containers (English).



Bainbridge Disposal provides:

- A website with guides for garbage, recycling, and composting (English).

### **Local government-provided outreach**

The Kitsap County Solid Waste Division provides the following outreach resources:

- [Curbside collection service webpage](#) (English).
- [Recycle Right](#) recycling guide (English and Spanish).
- [Curbside composting guide](#) (English).
- Periodic giveaways of compost toolkits (English).
- Technical assistance to multifamily properties and businesses, upon request.

Cities also provide municipal webpages with information about available curbside services. The City of Bremerton’s hauling contract requires WM to conduct an annual outreach campaign within the city.

## **7.2 Planning considerations**

### **7.2.1 How can Kitsap County and Bainbridge Island increase participation in curbside collection?**

Curbside collection is more environmentally friendly than self-hauling because it reduces greenhouse gas emissions caused by many individual vehicle trips. It’s also more convenient and can be more affordable for many customers.

Although curbside collection isn’t required in unincorporated Kitsap County or Bainbridge Island, most people use the service. Table 7-4 shows current participation rates for single family residences.

Table 7-4 | Participation rates for single-family collection services

Jurisdiction	Housing units <sup>1</sup>	Garbage/recycling			Organics	
		Mandatory	Accounts	Rate	Accounts	Rate
<b>Unincorporated Kitsap County<sup>2</sup></b>	55,502		50,421	91%	11,195	20%
<b>Bainbridge Island<sup>3</sup></b>	9,058					0%
<b>Bremerton<sup>2</sup></b>	10,608	x	10,155	96%	4,012	38%
<b>Port Orchard<sup>2</sup></b>	4,936	x	5,170	105%	1,793	36%
<b>Poulsbo<sup>3</sup></b>	3,821	x		0%		0%
<sup>1</sup> Data from the Washington Office of Financial Management, April 1, 2024 <sup>2</sup> Data from WM, Jan. 22, 2025 <sup>3</sup> Data from Bainbridge Disposal						

It is difficult to determine multifamily property participation rates because haulers currently track multifamily properties with cart services (instead of dumpster services) as single-family residences.

To increase participation in curbside collection, local governments in Kitsap County could:

- **Mandate collection in unincorporated areas:** Counties can create solid waste districts to require curbside collection and penalize non-compliance ([RCW 36.58A](#)).
- **Mandate collection on Bainbridge Island:** The city can require waste collection through local ordinance, with or without a hauling contract.
- **Offer flexible service options:** Offering more cart sizes and pickup frequencies could attract more customers.
- **Advertise carry-out and drive-in services:** In unincorporated areas, these convenient services are available for an added fee.
- **Improve services to customers with disabilities:** In unincorporated areas and Port Orchard, free carry-out service is currently available to disabled customers. Local governments could improve waste collection services to disabled residents through local ordinance.
- **Make self-hauling less convenient:** The County could make curbside services more attractive by changing transfer station operations. Options include increasing minimum fees, reducing hours, closing smaller facilities, and helping people

compare curbside costs to self-haul rates. This approach could have unintended consequences, like more illegal dumping.

## 7.2.2 How could jurisdictions provide discounted collection services to low-income residents?

No counties in Washington currently offer discounted curbside collection rates to low-income customers, but many are considering it. Under [RCW 81.77.195](#), Kitsap County may request discounted rates from the WUTC-certificated hauler and the WUTC. Other customers within the certificated area would fund these discounts.

In unincorporated areas, seniors with limited income and disabled people with limited income may apply to the Kitsap County Solid Waste Division to cancel their recycling service while keeping garbage service ([KCC 9.48](#)). This program is not popular because many people want to keep their curbside recycling.

Bremerton and Poulsbo currently offer discounted rates to eligible low-income residents. Other cities could establish similar programs under [RCW 35A.21.153](#).

## 7.2.3 How can Kitsap County reduce problematic “group collection sites?”

When garbage trucks can’t safely drive on certain roads, haulers ask customers to move their carts to a different, shared pickup location. In Kitsap County, these shared locations are called “group collection sites.” Some group sites have more than 50 carts. As more households subscribe to organics collection, this number will grow.

When people don’t bring their carts home from these sites after collection, the carts can cause traffic problems, block road shoulders and driveways, attract illegal dumping, and cause litter. The County sometimes receives complaints related to these sites.

In 2023, the County asked WM to review 1,300 known group sites in unincorporated areas. As a result, WM has removed some unnecessary sites, made procedures for creating new sites, and trained drivers to leave sites cleaner than they found them.

Other options for reducing problematic group collection sites include:

- **Enforcement:** The Kitsap Public Health District could fine people who leave waste in the public right of way, which violates [Public Health Ordinance 2010-1](#). This could unfairly affect older or disabled people who have trouble moving their carts.

- **Improving roads.** Some county roads weren't built to handle today's large garbage trucks. Fixing these roads would be expensive and may not be worth the cost. For private roads, the County could develop design standards or educate developers during permitting.
- **Smaller collection vehicles.** The County could encourage or require the hauler to use smaller collection vehicles on some county roads, but this could increase rates for all customers.
- **Helping residents bring carts home:** The County could give people tools to help move their carts, like special hitch attachments for vehicles. These tools can be costly and may not fit all vehicles.

## 7.2.4 How can building and development codes support waste collection?

The Kitsap County Department of Community Development does not have solid waste design standards for newly-built properties or developments. As a result:

- New developments and commercial properties are not reviewed to ensure waste collection access or adequate waste storage capacity.
- Roads are not required to include "cut-outs" or designated areas where carts can be safely placed away from traffic.

This omission can lead to collection and safety challenges. To address this, the County should create and update building and development standards to ensure:

- Adequate space for garbage, recycling, and organics containers at multifamily and commercial properties.
- Dumpster enclosures that prevent stormwater pollution while remaining accessible to collection trucks.
- New driveways and roads can accommodate collection trucks and services.
- Compliance with [RCW 19.27.610](#), which will require the state building code to facilitate organics collection at new multifamily residences and commercial buildings.

## 7.2.5 How can jurisdictions reduce illegal dumping?

Illegal dumping of waste is a problem across Kitsap County. Illegal dumping can lower property values, pollute land and water, and create hazards for people and wildlife. It also costs local governments and property owners millions of dollars to clean up.

People illegally dump for a variety of reasons, including the lack of money, time, suitable vehicles, knowledge, and care. In some cases, people hire unpermitted junk haulers to remove their waste, who then illegally dump the materials after being paid.

In 2024, the County picked up more than 1,000 illegal dumpsites from roads and lands in unincorporated areas, ranging from single trash bags to entire dump truck loads. This number does not include illegal dumping that occurs on city and tribal lands.

The following actions could reduce illegal dumping locally:

- Mandate collection services for all residents and businesses.
- Cities could add on-call bulky waste pickup to their hauling contracts.
- Increase the number of Kitsap Public Health District staff to support more investigations of illegal dumping.
- The County could resume free junk furniture collection events at Olympic View Transfer Station, which ended in 2020 due to cost and disruptions to facility operations.
- Local governments could provide vouchers for free or discounted disposal at transfer stations. These vouchers could be targeted for communities with greater [environmental health disparities](#).
- Local governments could educate the community about the risks of hiring unpermitted junk haulers.

## 7.2.6 How can jurisdictions reduce litter?

Litter is a relentless problem for local governments. Cleanups are expensive and dangerous, especially along busy roadsides. Preventing litter at the source is the best approach to litter, but this can be difficult to do because litter comes from so many sources.

Research estimates that around 40% of roadside litter blows or falls from unsecured vehicle cargo. The Clean Kitsap Program promotes the [Secure Your Load for Safer Roads campaign](#) to teach local drivers about the importance of load security. The campaign has

given away thousands of cargo tie-down tools to help drivers with this behavior. County - owned transfer stations also charge a \$10 unsecured load fee to drivers who arrive with unsecured cargo.

Other options for preventing roadside litter in Washington include:

- Requiring customers to bag their curbside garbage to prevent materials from blowing or falling out during collection.
- Rewriting Washington's drivers guide and driving education to train all drivers how to properly secure their cargo according to [state law](#).

## 7.3 Recommended actions

Number	Recommendation	Responsible party
Rec. X	Adopt solid waste design standards for residential and commercial developments.	Kitsap County Department of Community Development
Rec. X	Continue exploring options for bulky item collection.	Cities; Kitsap County
Rec. X	Continue participation in statewide discussions about low-income discounts in WUTC-regulated areas.	Kitsap County; Bainbridge Island
Rec. X	Develop campaign to inform WM customers that they can upgrade to a 96-gallon recycling cart for no extra charge.	Kitsap County; WM
Rec. X	Develop campaign to inform residents that additional recycling carts are available at a discounted rate.	Kitsap County; WM; Bainbridge Island; Bainbridge Disposal
Rec. X	Increase volunteer participation in the Adopt a Spot Volunteer litter cleanup program.	Kitsap County