

Greening Your Life

One Day at a Time

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Introduction

- ▶ Nearly 30 years of professional waste/recycling experience
- ▶ Recycling - Bin Improvements and Problems
- ▶ Beyond the Curbside Cart
- ▶ Remember the Basics - Reuse & Waste Reduction
- ▶ Beyond Materials - Energy, Water, Transportation

Recycling - Bin Improvements and Problems

- ▶ Late 1980s Curbside Recycling Bins appeared
- ▶ Keep 'em separated: Newspaper, Glass bottles, Aluminum Cans, Tin Cans, and Plastic #1 & #2 (*take off labels*)
- ▶ 1990s Paper expanded: Cardboard, Chipboard, White and Colored Paper, Magazines, Catalogs, Phone Books, Envelopes, Letterhead, Post-It Notes
- ▶ 1990s Additions: Aluminum Foil, Aluminum Baking Pans, Empty Aerosol Cans, Dried Out Paint Cans, and Plastic #3, #4, #5, & #7

Curbside Service Improves Participation

- ▶ 2000s Switch from Bins to Carts!
- ▶ CoMingle is the Word: All the paper and all the containers
- ▶ No more washing Tin, Aluminum or Steel containers
- ▶ Plastics simply need rinsed
- ▶ Put the Caps back on the Plastic Bottles!
- ▶ Participation Grows - Recycling is Easy
- ▶ ***Contamination Grows*** - *not everything can get recycled through the curbside programs.*



China's Impact

- ▶ 2013 China enacted the Green Fence Policy
 - ▶ 10 months markets fell as shipping containers were rejected
 - ▶ First real push to all MRFs to send less contaminated bales of material
- ▶ 2018 China enacts the National Sword Policy
 - ▶ Call on developed nations to stop treating China as a dump site
 - ▶ Impossible high standard for bales of material
 - ▶ Huge problems for MRFs as loads are rejected and returned
 - ▶ Values of materials plummet
- ▶ 2019 Haulers pass increased costs to cities and commercial clients
 - ▶ Some cities and commercial clients stop recycling

Ying and Yang



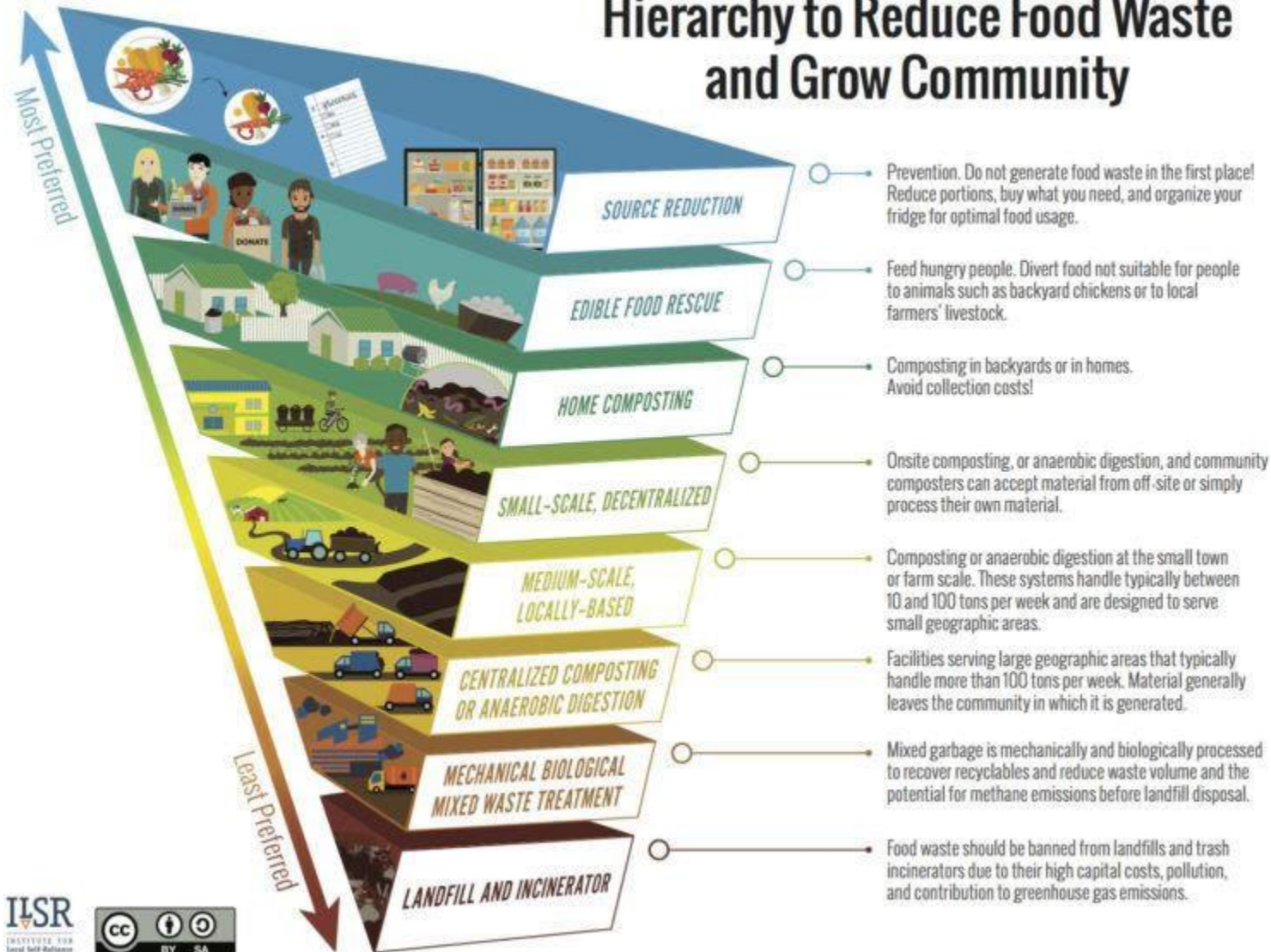
- ▶ Some MRFs responded by upgrading
 - ▶ Equipment costs millions of dollars and many MRFs are investing for the long haul
 - ▶ MRFs that can't improve are being sold to investors
- ▶ Education is being pursued again
 - ▶ Since 2001 little has been done to educate residents on recycling
 - ▶ Some communities are partnering with haulers to leave contaminated carts at the curb
 - ▶ Statewide Contamination Task-Force was formed in Illinois
 - ▶ Statewide messaging on common recyclables is being pursued
- ▶ Recycling is still WORKING!
 - ▶ Steel, Aluminum and Glass, along with some plastics, are recycled domestically
 - ▶ Plastics and more are being sold to other Asian nations and still getting to China
 - ▶ More items are available that are made from recycled content

Beyond the Curbside Cart

- ▶ Household Hazardous Waste
- ▶ Batteries (hint: Single Charge Batteries are not hazardous)
- ▶ Construction & Demolition Materials
- ▶ Books (hint: soft cover can go in the curbside program)
- ▶ Electronics
- ▶ Plastic Grocery Bags and other plastic film
- ▶ Textiles
- ▶ Tires

Beyond the Curbside Cart - Food and Composting

Hierarchy to Reduce Food Waste and Grow Community



Remember the Basics - ReUse and Waste Reduction

- ▶ Better than Recycling a Plastic Bag:
 - ▶ Bring a Reusable Bag
 - ▶ Reuse the bag as a garbage can liner
 - ▶ Knit the Plastic Bags into Mats
- ▶ Better than a Single Use Cup:
 - ▶ A reusable, washable Water Bottle
 - ▶ A refillable coffee mug
- ▶ Better than a Straw:
 - ▶ Drink without a straw
 - ▶ Use a paper or steel straw



ReUse and Waste Reduction

- ▶ Better than Buying New - Buy Used
 - ▶ It takes 1,100 gallons of water to grow enough cotton to make one pair of jeans
 - ▶ It takes 400 gallons of water to grow enough cotton to make one t-shirt
 - ▶ Shop Garage sales, Goodwill, Thrift Stores, Plato's Closet, Ebay
- ▶ Look for Items made from recycled plastic and recycled cotton



Prairie View Landfill

Waste Generates Methane

Methane is Captured, Turned into Energy



Beyond Landfill - Energy from Waste

- ▶ Will County with Waste Management installed Gas-to-Energy
- ▶ Three engines provide power to 3,000 homes
- ▶ Considering Expanding to turn some into fuel
- ▶ Considering Solar Panels on buffer area
- ▶ Funds from selling the energy are used for Green Will County Offices



Beyond Materials - Energy

- ▶ Earth Hour is in March on a Saturday evening 8:30-9:30pm
- ▶ Kill-O-Watt Meter Everything
- ▶ Switch to LED lights
- ▶ Consider Installing Solar
- ▶ Consider Geothermal
- ▶ Do you really need blow up decorations?



Beyond Materials -Water

- ▶ Install Rainbarrels at home and at work
- ▶ Create a Rain Garden in part of your yard
- ▶ Put a Bucket in the Shower until the water gets hot
- ▶ Take your Car to the carwash instead of doing it yourself
- ▶ Ask your City to do bioswales in parkways
- ▶ Plant Native Species
- ▶ Run the Dishwasher when full
- ▶ Use Cold water to Wash clothes



Beyond Materials - Transportation

- ▶ Mass Transit: Train, Bus, Pace Rideshare
- ▶ Switch to an Electric Car
- ▶ EV causes you Range Anxiety? Switch to a Hybrid Vehicle
- ▶ Bicycle to a restaurant, a movie, the grocery store
- ▶ Do all the errands in a single trip
- ▶ Pull away from stops slowly
- ▶ Walk into take-out places, don't idle



Last Thoughts & GIANT THANK YOU!

- ▶ Subscribe to the County's Green Email Newsletter
- ▶ Follow us on Facebook or Twitter
- ▶ Tell your friends and family what you learn
- ▶ Continue to make the best choices for you and your family with the environment in mind!

- ▶ Questions or comments: mkeane@willcountygreen.com