

## Cost of trash and recycling

*The Upton Board of Health is being presented with a substantial increase in the cost of curbside collection of trash and recycling. This increase is a response to the situation in China, who is the final destination for most of our recycling products. China's recycling policies have become more restrictive; only accepting clean, quality material and eliminating 24 types of recycling material. Currently about 35% of the recycling we put out at the curb must be disposed of as trash because it won't qualify as a clean, recycled product.*

*At the town meeting this spring on May 2nd, the line item for Waste Removal--Curbside will show an increase of \$120,000.00, at a cost of \$410,000.00 up from \$290,000.00. The Board of Health wants to continue to offer residents a quality, essential service, and therefore is submitting the increased budget to the residents during the town meeting. It is possible for any resident attending the town meeting to have a discussion on this line item if they wish, by putting a "hold" on it.*

### ..... FAQ's .....

- 1. Isn't the cost of trash/recycling collection self-supportive?** No, only a portion of the cost of the collection is paid for through trash bag sales (approximately 40%), but the remainder is paid for through the tax rate (approximately 60%).
- 2. How much is collected through the sale of trash bags?** For the calendar year 2018, the Town of Upton collected a total of \$219,615.00 in trash bag sales.
- 3. Will there be an increase in the cost of trash bags to residents?** Yes, to help offset the waste removal increase, the BOH is proposing a .30 cent increase per bag. The large yellow bags will cost \$20.00 per a 10 count roll and the small blue bags will cost \$13.00 per a 10 count roll. This increase in bags will provide approximately \$40,000.00 in additional revenue that can be applied to the increase.
- 4. Why is the hauler increasing the cost of pick up so much?** Because of the problems with recycling, the hauler is now charging a rate of \$68.00 per every ton of recyclables they collect from the town. Previously, there was no charge. Recycling tonnage for the year 2018 totaled 855 tons. The hauler must also now hire more employees to sort the recycling and limit it to only a clean, acceptable product.
- 5. Has the town looked at other haulers to see if it may be more affordable with someone else?** Yes, the BOH issued a Request for Quotes. Only one other hauler responded and their quote was over \$550,000.00 for a year.
- 6. Is this situation only occurring in Upton?** No, the recycling problems are being experienced throughout the country. Several towns are experiencing budget issues. The city of Boston is being charged \$100.00 per ton for their recycling. DEP is aware of the problem and we are hopeful that a resolution will be forthcoming in the near future.
- 7. Is there any options other than to pay the increase in cost?** Yes; If the *Waste Removal-curbside* line item is held during the town meeting, a vote could be taken to:
  - A.** Stop curbside recycling for an undetermined time period, the cost for trash collection *only* would total \$250,000.00 for the year, a savings of \$160,000.00 from the proposed budget. Residents may be able to bring their recyclables to a nearby facility in another town or dispose of the recyclables as trash.
  - B.** Approve of the current line item this year, but opt out of our incinerator and haulers contract in one years' time without penalty. Each resident will then be required to hire their own licensed hauler for trash pickup. This will eliminate all trash related budget items and Upton trash bags will no longer be required. **Each resident would be financially responsible for the cost of their private pickup.** This would not take effect until fiscal 2020/21.

**More questions?** Please call the BOH at 508-529-6813 or email us at [dtiernan@uptonma.gov](mailto:dtiernan@uptonma.gov)