

# Dealing with trash depends on attitude

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Johnson, for example, notes that Birmingham residents have been voluntarily recycling glass, metal, newspapers and plastic since 1976.

"BUT ONLY A small percentage of the total population participates," said Johnson, treasurer of the Recycling Center of Birmingham.

Even so, she is confident voluntary programs can successfully be expanded.

Steven C. Stanford, maintenance planner for the county's department of public works, is confident recycling can be expanded to businesses.

Industrial waste and construction debris will not be handled by the county's waste management program, but normal trash generated by commercial interests will — and thus be subject to separation and recycling.

"I think most businesses will gladly cooperate," said Stanford, who for the last 18 months has been drafting and implementing recycling efforts for county offices. "It's not particularly difficult and it can save a lot of money."

The Oakland County government is a vast bureaucracy with about 3,200 employees.

Realizing it will be easier to preach the virtues of recycling if they first practice them, county officials set out with a modest goal of separating and recycling high-grade white paper and green-bar computer paper.

"So far, we've recycled the equivalent of 1,140 trees," according to Stanford who said the recycling program

## taking on TRASH

gram started in the Public Works Building and gradually spread to other county departments.

THE COUNTY BUREAUCRACY is as big, or bigger, than many companies or offices, Stanford explained. "If we can recycle paper, so can others."

Under Stanford's program each desk or work station has separate containers for letters, computer paper and other trash. "It's sometimes just a tray or basket," he said. "Sometimes it's a matter of having a second waste basket."

"People just got accustomed to the idea and they went along with it," he said. "But any program has to be phased in and have the support of every person."

The two million pounds of paper recycled by the county is baled and sold to Midstates Fibres Inc., on Goddard Avenue in Detroit, Stanford said. The price for the recycled paper has varied from \$35 to \$120 per ton, depending on a volatile market, he said.

But even if the county had to pay the broker a small per-ton fee to accept the recycled paper, it would still be cheaper than paying to have it incinerated or buried, he said.

# Millage issues on ballot to fight landfill

By Pat Murphy  
staff writer

Three townships in Oakland County are getting ready to impose additional property taxes, if necessary, to raise money to fight efforts to locate a proposed landfill in their communities.

Addison and Oxford townships — in which two of the top five possible sites are located — each have property tax issues on the Nov. 7 ballot. Highland Township — in which three of the top five sites are located — is preparing for a special election next spring, said township clerk William E. Brian.

"We're ready for a special millage should the need arise," Brian said.

The various millage proposals are an indication of how strongly residents in the respective communities are opposed to hosting the landfill, said Michael J. McDonald, supervisor of Addison Township.

The proposal on the Nov. 7 ballot in Addison asks voters to approve or reject a property tax increase of up to one mill for each \$1,000 of state equalized valuation for as long as two years.

Each mill is the equivalent of \$1 per each \$1,000 of state equalized value. Since assessors peg the assessment of a house at roughly 50 percent of market value, the owner of a house valued at \$100,000 would pay an extra \$50 per year if the proposal passes, officials said.

The proposal would raise about \$93,000 per year, according to the assessor's office.

It would be levied "to establish a Landfill Protection Defense Fund for the protection of the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the Township from pollution or impairment of Natural Resources which may result from locating a landfill site in the Township of Addison," according to the ballot.

*The various millage proposals are an indication of how strongly residents in the respective communities are opposed to hosting the landfill.*

— Michael J. McDonald,  
Addison Township supervisor

In Oxford Township, voters are deciding on a two-mill increase.

Thus the owner of a house valued at \$100,000 would pay an additional \$100 per year for a similar defense fund for an anticipated legal battle.

If approved the proposal would raise almost \$400,000 each year, according to the assessor's office.

A \$200 million landfill is one part of Oakland County's long range plan for handling solid waste. Other parts call for widespread mandatory recycling and a \$160 million trash-to-energy incinerator.

The sites for the incinerator and the MRF (materials recovery facility) are both to be located in Auburn Hills.

But the site for the landfill, with a minimum of 401 acres, has not been determined although a Landfill Siting Advisory Committee has evaluated more than 20 sites before narrowing the field to five — all in Addison, Oxford or Highland townships.

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