

Wasatch Integrated Announces New Waste Sorting System

By Nathan Rich

April 1, 2019

Wasatch Integrated Waste Management District (Wasatch) is pleased to announce construction of the new Davis Materials Recovery Facility and Transfer Station at the site of the former Davis Energy Recovery Facility (burn plant) which closed in May 2017. The new facility includes a state-of-the-art solid waste processing system and transfer station to serve the waste disposal and recycling needs of Davis and Morgan Counties, for the foreseeable future.

Why Now?

Wasatch has always focused on environmental performance and has historically achieved landfill diversion rates near 50%, primarily through the operation of the Davis Energy Recovery Facility which converted a portion of our waste into energy. Closure of the Davis Energy Recovery Facility after 30 years of operations is placing a higher demand on the Davis Landfill which will now reach capacity within 20 years without a change to the system. The new processing system will allow us to divert a substantial amount of waste from the landfill again.

What is a Transfer Station?

A transfer station is simply a large enclosed building where garbage collection trucks, like the one that picks up your household 90 gallon cans, can unload waste onto a concrete tipping floor. The waste is then loaded into much larger trucks for more efficient transportation to a large regional landfill.

Transferring a portion of our waste to a regional landfill now will extend the life of the Davis Landfill which is important to maintain system flexibility while allowing the landfill to continue offering valuable customer services, including delivery of self-haul waste, green waste recycling facility, sale of compost and woodchips, the household hazardous and electronic waste recycling facility, and the landfill thrift store. Unfortunately, transferring waste long distances comes with the added cost of transportation, which is another reason we have chosen to construct a Materials Recovery Facility.

What is a Materials Recovery Facility?

A materials recovery facility is a highly mechanized and sophisticated system of equipment which can selectively separate and remove recyclable items or usable materials from the waste (or comingled recycling) stream. The system we are building is unusual because it is being designed to process all of the waste you place in your garbage can. This type of Materials Recovery Facility is called a “mixed waste processing facility”. The mixed waste processing facility will allow us to remove items of value from the waste stream before money is spent to haul your waste to a regional landfill.

What will be recovered from my garbage?

1. The mixed waste processing facility will recover recyclable materials which have a market value. The system will be able to separate plastics of all grades, aluminum, steel, and cardboard. We anticipate that mixed paper recovered from the waste will be too contaminated to be sold at market. Also, glass will not be recovered. As the market for recyclables changes, operations can be modified to collect additional items for recycling.
2. The mixed waste processing facility will separate organic materials from the waste including food waste and grass clippings. A portion of this material will be sent to the new anerobic digester in North Salt Lake as a feed stock for anerobic digestion to create renewable

(green) natural gas. The anaerobic digester is operated by Wasatch Resource Recovery (WRR) in partnership with the South Davis Sewer Improvement District.

3. Non-recyclable plastics (plastics with no market value) and paper (which is too contaminated to recycle) will be recovered and turned into an engineered fuel. This fuel will be consumed by a local cement plant and will displace the use of fossil fuels, such as coal and petcoke, as fuel.

What about my recycling can?

Although we will be recovering a large portion of recyclables from your regular trash can, we will not be able to recover paper clean enough to market for recycling (there is currently no market for mixed paper, but that is likely to change in the future). Also, the other materials you place in your recycling bin will be of better quality than the materials we are able to recover from the general waste stream. Keeping your recycling bin is a matter of personal preference. In fact, if you otherwise need two garbage cans, the recycling can is typically less expensive than a second waste can. Your city will be able to direct your recycling bin to the new facility for processing at no charge.

When will the project be finished?

The transfer station is currently under construction and will be finished within the next two months. The mixed waste processing facility is currently in final design and should be operational during the 1st quarter of 2020.

How much will this project cost?

The total project cost is approximately \$20 million.

How will the project be paid for?

The project is being financed with tax exempt municipal solid waste revenue bonds. The project received an AA bond rating from Standard and Poor's and the bonds have been sold at a blended interest rate of 3.24 percent over a 20 year period. This is the first new financing undertaken by the District since bonding for construction of the Davis Energy Recovery Facility in 1984. As with the prior bond issue, it is our intent to pay the bonds down ahead of schedule.

What about my garbage rates?

The District currently charges a household use fee of \$5.20 per month for each 90 gallon waste can, which is collected by your city along with fees for hauling and other waste related projects. This fee was first implemented in 1995 at \$10 per can per month. The fee has been reduced several times over the years to the now \$5.20 per can per month. The household use fee is being increased by \$2 per can per month to a total of \$7.20 per can per month to support the financing and operation of the new system.

What else should I know?

The project also includes a new education center and employee facilities to support operations and will provide an additional 41 jobs to the local community. You are welcome to contact Nathan Rich, Executive Director of Wasatch Integrated Waste Management District, at nathanr@wiwmd.org or (801) 614-5601 if you have any questions or to find out more.