



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, June 07, 2011

Study Session

Item X1

Discussion Concerning Residential Clean-Up Cards

Staff Contact: John Collins

Council Agenda Memo

From: Jeff Wattier, Solid Waste Superintendant
Shannon Oster, Assistant to the City Administrator

Meeting: June 7, 2011

Subject: Review of Residential Clean-Up Card Program

Item #'s: 1

Presenter(s): Jeff Wattier, Solid Waste Superintendant
Shannon Oster, Assistant to the City Administrator

Background

From 1993 to 2002, the City of Grand Island's Solid Waste Division provided free disposal of garbage and debris to residents at the Transfer Station one week per calendar year, also known as "Free Week." There were several problems with Free Week for the Solid Waste staff, as well as residents. Residents were forced to wait in long lines at the Transfer Station to drop off their loads for disposal, which created frustration with the process. The Transfer Station was not (and currently is not) equipped or located to receive high traffic volumes. The Solid Waste Division encountered high costs from the program due to increased overtime, an increase in other operational costs, and residents abusing the program.

In 2003, the Residential Clean-Up Card (RCC) began as an alternative to Free Week. The RCC was supposed to provide a more cost-effective, customer-friendly process for assisting residents in keeping up the community appearance. The RCC allows residents two free loads up to 800 pounds each to the Transfer Station. RCCs are issued by the Public Works administrative staff at City Hall.

The purpose of the RCC program is to encourage residents to keep their property looking clean, specifically the outside of property looking orderly by offering an opportunity for disposal throughout the year. The purpose of the program is not intended to allow stockpiling of trash or other items. It is also not intended to assist residents in remodeling their property by disposing of construction materials.

Discussion

Issuing of RCCs has become an extremely time consuming program for the Public Works staff to administer. When the RCC program began in 2003, the Public Works staff had two full-time support staff available for issuing RCCs; however personnel reductions have left only one full-time person available for administering the program. The program takes approximately .3FTE, which is a significant amount of time for a quartile four program (the lowest priority). The purpose for reviewing the RCC program is to address the amount of time PW staff spends on the RCC program through identifying alternatives.

In addition to the amount of time spent by Public Works issuing RCCs, the program has experienced widespread abuse. Some of the abuses include: contractors using the card for work they are charging for; landlords using the cards to clean-up rental properties; using the card as an alternative to regular garbage pick-up; and organizations or groups using cards. Consequently, rules have been tightened to prevent abuse, which has resulted in more time spent issuing cards. The RCC program alternatives presented will seek to prevent abuse to the program while not creating more of an administrative burden on staff.

The following seven alternatives will be presented for the Council:

1. City Wide Clean-Up Volunteer Event
2. Specified Free Weekend by Ward/Area of City
3. Utility Bill Insert
4. Online
5. Issue Week
6. Issued and Administrated at the Transfer Station
7. Additional Free Yard Waste and Eliminate Card Program

Conclusion

This item is presented to the City Council in a Study Session to allow for any questions to be answered and to create a greater understanding of the issue at hand.

Residential Clean-Up Card Program

Grand Island City Council Study Session

June 7, 2011



How We Got Where We Are Today...

- Free Week (1992 – 2002)
 - Intent was to clean and beautify community
 - City continued this program after taking over from County
 - G.I. residents disposed of items for free at the Transfer Station one designated week per year



Photo of Free Week

How We Got Where We Are Today...

Free Week Problems

Labor Intensive

- City staff planning and organizing, Solid Waste (SW) Division overtime, volunteer labor, Hall Co. inmate labor

- SW Division staff basically playing “catch-up” all week

Widespread abuse of the program

- Residents would bring multiple loads for free disposal

- Banned items such as tires, appliances, etc. would be disposed of due to hectic nature of program

How We Got Where We Are Today...

Free Week Problems

- Many would “stockpile” waste until Free Week
- Major traffic congestion and long lines to wait in



*Photo of Free Week
congestion and long lines*

Residential Clean-Up Card (RCC) Program

RCC program implemented in 2003

Allows residents to dispose of two free loads (up to 800 lbs. per load) at Transfer Station

Started at 600 lbs. per load

General Fund reimbursed SW Enterprise Fund tonnage value

SW revenues come from the tonnage value

CARDS ARE NON-TRANSFERABLE

Clerk's Signature

Clerk's Signature

_____ ID

_____ Address

_____ Name

Residential Clean up Card

Valid January 1 to December 31, 2011

\$10 Fee on Uncovered Loads

Transfer Station
5050 Old Potash Highway
(308) 385-5433
Mon.-Fri. 7-4 Sat. 7-12

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Restrictions

- No lead acid batteries, No tires, No appliances
- No shingles, drywall, or demolition materials
- No regular household garbage
- No hazardous waste or liquids
- **One Card per Address, Must be resident of Grand Island**
- Will be required to show valid identification
- **All Vehicles Must be Tarpred or Netted to Prevent Loss of Materials**

\$10 Fee on All Uncovered Loads

RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS ONLY

LOST CARDS WILL NOT BE REPLACED.	GOOD FOR TWO FREE LOADS. (up to 800 lbs per load)
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Benefits of RCC program vs. Free Week

- Residents can dispose of materials at any time throughout the year at their own leisure
- Reduced traffic congestion/frustration by residents
 - Much more convenient/less time-consuming to dispose of items when needed throughout the year
- SW Division staff can manage waste much easier by spreading it out through the year
 - Much less staff time spent on planning and organizing RCC program vs. Free Week

Problems with RCC Program Begin...

- Solid Waste Division – Abuse and Lost Revenue
 - Various types of abuse to the RCC:
 - Residents obtaining and using multiple RCC received from friends, neighbors, family members, etc.
 - Use of the RCC as alternative to garbage service (i.e. stockpiling their trash to bring it to the Transfer Station twice per year in lieu of garbage service)
 - Contractors obtaining customers' cards to dispose of construction/demolition materials from for-hire projects
 - Organizations/businesses using RCC program
 - No revenue from RCC loads

Lost Revenue: Historical RCC Figures

General Fund reimbursed the SW Enterprise Fund for RCC tonnage value from 2003-2008

Actual reimbursed amount from 2003-2008: **\$223,228**

Stopped after 2008

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Cards Issued	2,465	3,120	3,618	2,934	3,173	3,148	2,856	2,733
Tons	774	1,027	1,107	983	986	1140	977	968
Tonnage Value	\$28,715	\$38,101	\$41,069	\$36,469	\$36,580	\$42,294	\$36,246	\$35,912

Lost SW Division revenues from 2009-2010: **\$72,158**

Major Problems with RCC Program Continue...

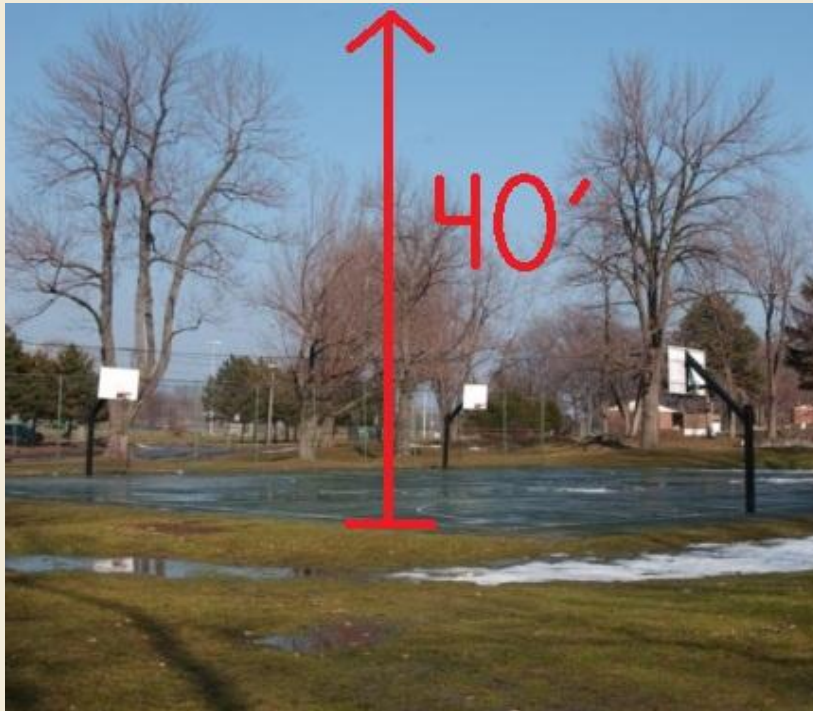
- Public Works – RCCs are issued at City Hall by Public Works (PW) administrative staff
 - Issuing cards becomes a very time consuming program
 - .3FTE for issuing the cards/keeping track of database
 - PW went from two FTEs in 2005, to one FTE available for issuing RCCs.
- RCC ranked a Quartile 4 program in PW General Fund and SW Enterprise Fund in both 2010 and 2011 program prioritization scoring

Costs of RCC Program

PW General Fund & SW Enterprise Fund Expenses	2011 Budget
Personnel – SW	\$34,000
Personnel – PW	\$24,500
Operating – SW	\$15,200
Operating – PW	\$2,600
Total Program Expenses	\$76,300
Cost of Program (Free Disposal)	\$35,912

There is a revenue of the tonnage value of the program. The revenue is not over the program expense.

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equivalent to...



**A Basketball Court With
Waste Piled 40 Feet High**



50 Tractor-Trailer Semi Loads

G.I. SW vs. Other State Landfills/Transfer Stations

	Grand Island	Kearney	Hastings	Lexington	York	Columbus	Norfolk
Type of Facility	T.S. & L.F.	Landfill	Landfill	Landfill	Landfill	Transfer Station	Transfer Station
Grass & Leaves Free?	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
Free Disposal Program?	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Price/Ton For Disposal	\$37/ton & \$31/ton	\$32.50/ton	\$35.50/ton	\$36/ton	\$36/ton	\$57/ton	\$52.55/ton

Additional Free Programs Provided by the SW Division

- Neighborhood Association Clean-Ups
 - Clean Community System assists with planning, organization, etc.
 - Tonnage accepted for free and SW Division pays costs for local garbage company to haul materials to the Landfill
- Surrounding community Clean-Ups
- Natural Disasters/Weather Events – free disposal for residents
 - 2005 Flood - Open extended hours and accepted 934 tons for free, in addition to the 1,107 tons of RCC tonnage received in 2005
 - 2006 Ice Storms - Open extended hours and accepted 10,000 cubic yards of tree limbs/branches for free
 - Cost \$28,900 for tree grinding services
- Grass and Leaf disposal
- CSOs can use cards to encourage problem properties to clean-up

Alternatives to the RCC Program

1. City-Wide Clean-Up Volunteer Event
2. Free Weekend by Ward/Area of City
3. Utility Bill Insert
4. Online
5. Issue Week
6. Issued and Administrated at the Transfer Station
7. Additional Free Yard Waste and Eliminate Card Program

1. City-Wide Clean-Up Volunteer Event

- One weekend during the year at two or three locations for free drop-off
- Partner with Clean Community System for planning and hosting event
- Volunteers critical – directing traffic, unloading vehicles, checking IDs, verifying the items are accepted for disposal

Estimated Costs	
Personnel	\$ 32,500
Hauling Charges	\$ 34,000
Operating Expenses	\$ 17,500
TOTAL:	\$ 84,000

2. Free Weekend by Ward/Area of City

- Bring back “Free Week,” but divide the City into two separate weekends by ward or address
- Require a lot of public outreach so residents understand when is their assigned weekend.

Solid Waste Expenses	Estimated Costs
Personnel	\$ 30,000
Hauling Charges	\$ 34,000
Operating	\$ 15,200
Total:	\$ 79,200

3. Utility Bill Insert

- Include a RCC as a utility bill insert in January mailing.
- Require the person to bring the insert and bill to Transfer Station to drop-off their RCC load.
- Show ID with matching name and address to utility bill.
 - Businesses would not be allowed a RCC load.
- Limit to one load per year.





Solid Waste Expenses:	Estimated Cost
Personnel	\$34,000
Operational	\$15,200
Total:	\$49,200

4. Online

- 🌐 Create an online form for residents to complete, and then pick-up RCC at City Hall when they show an ID.
- 🌐 Still need to issue RCC traditional way to accommodate citizens that do not have a computer
 - 🌐 Does not reduce staff time or other savings

Solid Waste and Public Works Expenses:	Estimated Costs
Personnel – SW	\$ 34,000
Operating – SW	\$ 15,200
Personnel – PW	\$ 24,500
Operating – PW	\$ 2,600
Total:	\$ 76,300

5. Issue Week

-  Restructure how cards are issued by issuing cards only one week a year, at beginning of calendar year.
 -  Would require several people to assist during the period for high customer traffic.
-  Residents still receive a free program that can be used throughout the year.
-  Potentially reduce load to one per year

Estimated Costs:	
Personnel (General Fund)	\$ 5,000
Operating Expenses (General Fund)	\$2,600
Personnel (SW)	\$34,000
Operating Expenses (SW)	\$15,200
Total:	\$56,800

6. Issued and Administered at Transfer Station

- Move issuing process out of City Hall to Transfer Station
- Limited space leaves no room for customer service area at Transfer Station
- PT Clerk would need to become FT for issuing cards

SW Expenses	
Personnel	\$75,800
Operating	\$15,200
Total Costs	\$91,000



7. Additional Free Yard Waste & Eliminate Card Program

- Expand free disposal to trees, branches, bushes, etc at Yard Waste Site.
 - Currently free: grass and leaf disposal
- Still provides a free service for residents used at their leisure throughout the year, while eliminating the timely/costly step of issuing and receiving a card.
- Approximately 50% of RCCs already are used for tree/branch disposal

Solid Waste Expense	Estimated Cost
Tree Grinding Contract Service	\$13,000

Each alternative should be evaluated based on the ability to resolve the two major problems with the program: Reduce PW staff time & Prevent Abuse

Alternative	Reduce PW Time	Prevent Abuse
1. City-Wide Clean-Up Volunteer Event	Somewhat	No
2. Free Weekend by Ward/Area of City	Yes	No
3. Utility Bill Insert	Yes	Yes
4. Online	No	Yes
5. Issue Week	Somewhat	Yes
6. Issued and Administrated at the Transfer Station	Yes	Yes
7. Additional Free Yard Waste and Eliminate Card Program	Yes	Yes