



## Environmental Practices

### Objective:

Protect and restore water quality, biodiversity, open space, and ecosystems

### Strategy:

Use a combination of incentives, technical assistance and regulations to promote desirable environmental practices by individuals and businesses

### Why is this strategy important?

King County has broad ranging responsibilities to protect environmental quality. To affect meaningful improvements to threatened or declining land, water and atmospheric conditions, King County uses incentives, technical assistance and regulations proportionate to the significance of the threat or challenge. As many other public, private, civic and community organizations contribute to improving environmental outcomes, King County will selectively contribute, rather than duplicating capacities of others.

King County's strategy balances several methods to improve environmental behavior and practices of residents and businesses. County use of tax incentives for land management practice improvements are enabled in state law. Technical assistance is critical as a resource for those who are ready to change, but lack the skills. Regulations are typically used as a last resort and are frequently driven by state and Federal processes.

### How is our performance?

**Incentives:** Over 1,075 landowners and 10,400 acres are presently participating in the Current Use Taxation programs including the Public Benefit Rating System and Timber Land Programs. The Public Benefit Rating System (PBRs) and the Timber Land programs provide incentives to encourage landowners to voluntarily conserve and protect land resources, open space and timber. In return for preserving and managing resources, the land is assessed at a value consistent with its "current use" rather than the "highest and best use." The reduction in assessed land value is greater than 50 percent and as much as 90 percent for the portion of the land participating in the program.

**Solid waste and recycling:** 2011 targets for single-family recycling are 55 percent and solid waste disposal levels are 25 pounds per household per week. In 2011 we met those targets, with a single-family recycling rate of 55 percent, and a single-family disposal level of 25 pounds per week. Overall solid waste disposal continued the decline that began in 2008.

As of December 2011, over 99 percent of single-family garbage customers had food waste collection services available. In 2011, the Division's "Recycle More. It's Easy to Do." campaign included print, TV, radio, and online ads resulting in over 16.8 million media impressions; media events, including "A

Banana Peel Gets Recycled" and "Spring Cleaning Week" earning 7.8 million impressions; and retail partnerships with Allied Waste Services, Bartell Drugs, and Round Table Pizza that promoted curbside recycling service and recycling of food scraps and food-soiled paper. The Bartell Drugs partnership provided discounts for compostable bags and countertop food waste containers for residents.

The "Recycle More. It's Easy to Do." campaign also conducted outreach and education to residents of seven cities with recycling rates under 35 percent, including the cities of Kenmore, Kent, Renton, SeaTac, Tukwila, and Maple Valley. Outreach and education activities included providing recycling information at community events, where questions were answered by the division's volunteer Master Recycler Composters (MRCs). In 2011, the MRCs spoke to 12,875 residents at community events in support of the Recycle More campaign.

## **What can you do?**

Learn more about what you can do to reduce waste and increase recycling through the following resources.

- **Garbage and recycling services**
- **Food waste and recycling**
- **Yard waste**
- **Electronics recycling**
- **Fluorescent bulb recycling**
- **Appliance recycling**
- **Textile recycling**
- **Recycling collection events**
- **Household hazardous waste collection**
- **the Wastemobile**
- **Construction recycling**
- **Recycling other materials/items**
- **On-line materials exchange**
- **Green building**
- **Eco-consumer tips**

Learn more about what you can do to reduce waste and increase recycling through the following resources.

- **Develop a forest stewardship plan for your forested property**
- **Learn how to protect your home from wildfire and have a healthy forest too**
- **Consider enrolling protecting your forested land through a property tax reduction or transfer of development rights program**
- **Purchase local farm products. See a list of local farms**
- **Support local farm preservation efforts and consider enrolling in the Farmland Preservation Program.**
- **If you own land that is not being farmed, consider enrolling it the FarmLink Program.**

## **Moving forward**

King County will continue to provide outreach and education around recycling, food composting, and reducing solid waste. King County's Solid Waste Division is proposing a higher recycling target for

2012 (57 percent) because several cities have new garbage and recycling service contracts contributing to waste reduction and increased recycling. In addition, the "Recycle More. It's Easy to Do." campaign will have a new focus on conducting recycling education and outreach to the county's Spanish-speaking community, as Latino/Hispanic residents represent 15.2 percent of the total population and are the fastest growing segment of the population in King County. Other than English, Spanish is the most frequently spoken language in the county.

## **Related Links**

**[KingStat Solid Waste Performance](#)**

**[King County Sustainable Building Incentive Programs](#)**

**[Charts and Maps](#)**

# 2011 Percent of Single Family Household Solid Waste Recycled



