



**RAMSEY/WASHINGTON  
RECYCLING & ENERGY**  
CONNECTING VALUE TO WASTE

# 2017

## ANNUAL REPORT



**Guiding Principles** the Future of Resource Management in the East Metro:

1. Plan for a 20-30 year horizon.
2. Build on the current system and allow changes in processing to emerge over time.
3. Assure flexibility.
4. Manage risks.
5. Pivot the view from “waste” to “resources” to add value to the local economy and environment.



## FAST FACTS



**GREEN GUIDES:** handy booklets mailed to all households and more in the two counties, with complete information about ways residents can reduce, reuse, recycle and dispose of items.

**310,529** green guides distributed to residents and community partners in Ramsey and Washington Counties.



**JOBS:** **156** jobs are directly associated with the R&E Board and R&E Center: **66** with the R&E Board, **55** with Xcel Energy, and **35** with trucking and other contractors.



**SAVE THE FOOD CAMPAIGN:** **\$28,350** investment was leveraged into **\$5.3** million in donated media – a factor of **185-1**. This produced **577** transit signs, **5** billboard placements, and **25** backlit posters in the skyway system.

**7,617,179** pounds of food diverted by Second Harvest Heartland partners in 2017 from Washington and Ramsey Counties.



**350** BBQ sandwiches served at the annual hauler picnic in September.



**TRAILERS:** **113** trailers in use; 36 purchased in 2017.



The R&E Center operated at **\$10/ton** less in 2017 than when it was privately owned and operated – a **12%** decrease.



**14,675** tons of metals were recycled in 2017.



Energy output: **30,000** homes powered by Xcel Wilmarth plants that use RDF from Newport.



The reduction in GHG emissions compared to landfilling is **11,268** metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e. Equivalent to **2,413** passenger vehicles driven for a year, or **12,328,228** lbs coal burned.



The carbon sequestration is equal to **292,023** tree seedlings grown for **10** years.



**CONTRACTS:** **211** contracts covering waste delivery, joint activities, facility operations, CAP, and more. **78** haulers and **6** transfer stations are under contract. Contracts meet public sector standards set out in state law.



Both counties use a County Environmental Charge (CEC) to fund recycling and waste programs. The CEC is collected by haulers via the trash bill. R&E conducts audits to make sure the charges are properly collected: vendor performed audits on **24** waste haulers and transfer stations.



**15** Board, Executive Committee, and Committee meetings in 2017.

## FINANCIALS

**The R&E Board is responsible for two principal budgets: the Joint Activities Budget and the Facility Budget.** The Facility Budget includes an Equipment Maintenance and Replacement budget to provide ongoing funding for major maintenance projects.

**Joint Activities Budget:** The Joint Activities Budget has five programs and is funded by Ramsey and Washington Counties.

PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION	2017 EXPENDITURES
Project Management	Managing the R&E Board	\$949,100
Non-Residential Recycling	Activities related to recycling by businesses and institutions, including BizRecycling, BizAware , etc.	\$1,600,724
General Outreach	Outreach aimed at residents of the counties	\$211,703
Policy Evaluation	Activities related to implementing waste designation, evaluating new technologies suitable to the R&E Center, and policy work on state and regional waste management	\$666,063
Resource Recovery	Hauler rebates for waste delivered from the two counties	\$4,651,364
<b>Total Joint Activities Expenditures</b>		<b>\$8,078,954</b>

**Facility Budget:** The Facility Budget includes funding to operate and administer the R&E Center and is an enterprise fund. Revenue comes from tipping fees paid by haulers, fees paid by self-haulers and sale of marketable recyclables.

EXPENSE	DESCRIPTION	2017 EXPENDITURES
Personnel	Union, non-union and contracted labor and benefits	\$6,090,640
Fuel Supply	Payments to Xcel Energy and Great River Energy for RDF use	\$6,073,062
Landfill	Tipping fees and taxes paid to three contract landfills	\$4,865,945
Waste Processing	Payment to GRE for MSW transferred to be processed	\$1,125,607
Transportation	Trucking costs to haul materials to power plants, recyclers, landfills	\$6,223,613
Transload	Fees paid to private transfer stations to transfer waste	\$2,229,447
Operations	Operating expenses for processing MSW	\$7,384,790
Debt Service	Payments on loans to Ramsey and Washington Counties	\$1,420,803
<b>Total Facility Expenditures</b>		<b>\$35,413,907</b>

# R&E CENTER OPERATIONS



R&E CENTER OPERATIONS:	TONS	PERCENT
MSW Managed in R&E System	466,338	
Delivered to Transfer Stations	214,515	46%
Delivered to R&E Center	251,823	54%

MSW to R&E Center	416,354	89%
MSW to GRE	17,035	4%
MSW to Landfills	32,949	7%
	<b>466,338</b>	<b>100%</b>

RDF Produced	324,988	78%
Metals Recycled	14,675	4%
Residue Landfilled	26,438	6%
Bulky Waste Landfilled	38,413	9%
YE Inventory, Moisture, Losses	11,841	3%
	<b>416,355</b>	<b>100%</b>

## ADMINISTRATION & TRANSITION

Ramsey and Washington Counties have worked together to ensure trash is well managed in the East Metro area for nearly 30 years. This collaboration has led to high recycling rates, low costs, and engaged communities. The counties have invested heavily in the success of the R&E Center, providing significant financial incentives to assure that trash not recycled is processed, and not landfilled. The East Metro system depends on the R&E Center for continued success.

Ramsey and Washington Counties are working together to find new technologies to use in the coming 20 to 30 years to process what is left in trash from homes and businesses and get the most value out of what is disposed even with increasing recycling and reducing waste. Additionally, these new technologies can help increase good jobs locally and protect taxpayers and the environment. Commissioners in both counties recognize the need to do better and move trash from being a drain to a resource with value instead. The counties want to do this by extracting more recyclables and using trash to make energy more efficiently and make materials to be used by others to manufacture consumer goods.



The R&E Board bought the R&E Center from a private business at the beginning of 2016. To help with the change from private to public owners, Great River Energy Newport Services (GRENS) operated the R&E Center for the first two years. During 2017, most of the transition work was completed, and the R&E Board began full public operation in 2018. The transition to public ownership included many elements:

- **Finance** – Systems and policies for budgeting, accounting, asset management and surplus, auditing, and fund management.
- **Procurement** – Developed guidelines and converted contracts to public sector standards, major contracts for labor, fuel supply, landfills and waste delivery.
- **Information Systems** – Assured secure and updated information technology, and improved internet access and speed.
- **Human Resources** – Systems in place for hiring, benefits, payroll, and labor relations.
- **Operations** – Maintaining efficient operation of the R&E Center with a focus on safety.
- **Licensing and Permitting** – Updated and converted permits to reflect R&E ownership of the R&E Center and its operation.
- **Communications** – Working in partnership with the counties, developed communications targeted at a variety of audiences.
- **Insurance and Risk Management** – Identified and mitigated various business risks associated with R&E operations.
- **Capital investments** – Completed eight of nine projects to update old equipment and improve operations.
- **Waste Designation** – Completed the two-year process to put waste designation in place.
- **Planning** – Each county completed solid waste master plans that aligned in many places and highlighted collaboration.

## DELIVERING TRASH



**In 2017 the two counties and the R&E Board finished a two-year process to put “waste designation” into effect.**

Ramsey and Washington Counties have worked together for nearly 30 years so that recycling and trash are properly handled in the East Metro area. This collaboration has led to high recycling rates, low costs, and engaged communities. The R&E Center processes trash into products of value. To do that well, and to be able to plan and invest for the future, requires trash to be delivered to the R&E Center.

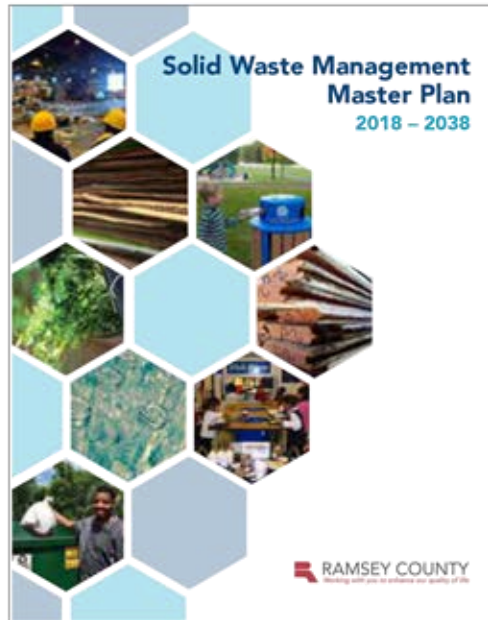
Waste designation allows the counties to enact an ordinance that requires all or a portion of solid waste to be delivered to a designated waste management facility. It helps the counties meet goals of using waste in the highest and best use. State law outlines a transparent process to put designation into place – involving many steps and approval by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). Designation was approved in 2017, and went into effect in January 2018.

While an ordinance requires trash delivery, the counties prefer working with haulers on a voluntary business, using contract. As of 2018, 78 waste haulers and 6 transfer stations, all private companies, are under contract to deliver all of the trash from the two counties to the R&E Center.

Waste designation helps the counties meet state, regional and county goals of using waste in the highest and best use. It allows for a more stable, predictable trash processing system that can help better manage various risks and control costs. It ensures that trash management is done in a way that reduces environmental, public health and financial risks. Designation supports the reliable operation of and long-term financial viability of the R&E Center and allows for future advances in waste management.

## WASTE MANAGEMENT MASTER PLANS

County Waste Management Master Plans are an important tool in protecting public health and the environment by establishing policies and strategies to reduce both the amount and the toxic character of waste which impacts occupational health risks, environmental risks related to the disposal of waste, and health risks related to environmental emissions. Ramsey and Washington Counties worked collaboratively to develop new Master Plans in 2017 for submission to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. These plans include details about the continued partnership on recycling and waste management.



## ODOR MANAGEMENT



Trash facilities produce odors. Work to understand and reduce odors began as soon as the R&E Board decided to buy the R&E Center. The Mississippi River Valley from Saint Paul southward has a lot of industry, with many types of odors produced. R&E has closely examined the things that affect odor, prepared a plan, and started taking action, including the following:

- Changes in the process of how trash is received and handled.
- Investment in new technology to target and modify any odors emitted from the Center.
- Trained inspectors regularly test the air on-site and in the neighborhoods near the Center.
- Partnering with the City of Newport to jointly address odor impacts.

### CONTACT US:

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