



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

## Public Data Practices Request Policy

### Right to Access Public Data

The [Minnesota Government Data Practices Act](#) (MGDPA) presumes that all government data are public unless a state or federal law says the data are not public. Government data is a term that means all recorded information a government entity has, including paper, email, flash drives, CDs, DVDs, photographs, etc.

The MGDPA also requires that a government entity, in this case, Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy (R&E), keep all government data in a way that makes it easy for you, as a member of the public, to access public data. You have the right to look at (inspect), free of charge, all public data that we keep. You also have the right to get copies of public data. The Government Data Practices Act allows us to charge for copies. You have the right to look at data, free of charge, before deciding to request copies.

R&E cannot require you, as a member of the public, to identify yourself or explain the reason for your data request. However, depending on how you want us to process your request (for example, if you want us to mail you copies of data), we may need some information about you. If you choose not to provide us with any identifying information, we will provide you with contact information so you can check the status of your request. Please keep in mind that if we do not understand your request and have no way to contact you, we cannot begin processing your request.

### How to Make a Public Data/Summary Data Request

You can look at data or request copies of data that R&E keeps. Make your request for data by completing the Data Request Form, available on the R&E website and send the completed form to [info@recyclingandenergy.org](mailto:info@recyclingandenergy.org) or mail to:

Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy  
Data Practices  
100 Red Rock Road  
Newport, MN 55055

If you choose not to use the provided request form, you can send an email to [info@recyclingandenergy.org](mailto:info@recyclingandenergy.org) with the following information:

- A notice that you are making a request under the Government Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13)
- A clear description of the data you would like to inspect or have copied
- Whether you would like to inspect the data, have copies of the data, or both

Information about copy charges is on pages 3-4. If necessary, we will provide notice to you about requirements to prepay for copies of the data.

Please let us know if you do not understand some of the data (technical terminology, abbreviations or acronyms). We will provide an explanation if you ask.

The MGDPA does not require us to create or collect new data in response to a data request if we do not already have the data or to provide data in a specific form or arrangement if we do not keep the data in that form or arrangement (for example, if the data you request are on paper only, we are not required to create electronic documents to respond to your request). If we agree to create data in response to your request, we will work with you on the details of your request, including cost and response time.

In addition, we are not required by the MGDPA to respond to questions that are not specific requests for data.

### **How We Respond to a Public Data Request**

Upon receiving your request, we will work to process the request as follows:

- If it is not clear what data you are requesting, we will ask you for clarification.
- If you are a member of the public, and we do not have the data, we will notify you within a reasonable amount of time.
- If we have the data, but the data is not public, we will notify you as soon as reasonably possible and specify which law classifies the data as not public.
- If we have the data, and the data is public, we will respond to your request appropriately and promptly, within a reasonable amount of time, by doing one of the following:
  - Arrange a date, time and place for you to inspect data for free if your request is to look at the data; or
  - Provide you with copies of the data as soon as reasonably possible
    - You may choose to pick up your copies, or we will mail them to you. We will provide electronic copies upon request if we keep the data in electronic format and we can reasonably make a copy.
  - Note: Response time may be impacted by the size and/or complexity of your request.

Following our response, if you do not make arrangements within 60 business days to inspect the data or pay for copies, we will conclude that you no longer want the data and consider the request closed.

### **Requests for Summary Data**

Summary data are statistical records or reports that are prepared by removing all identifiers from private or confidential data on individuals. The preparation of summary data is not a means to gain access to private or confidential data.

Upon receiving your request, we will respond within ten business days informing you of the estimated cost of your requested data, if any, and the data you requested or details of when it will be ready. We will prepare the summary data provided that the requesting person prepays for the cost of creating the summary data.

## Costs/Fees

Minnesota Statutes, section 13.03, subdivision 3(c) allows us to charge for copies, although there is no fee to inspect data.

## Inspection of Data at No Charge

A fee may not be charged for inspection of government data. This includes situations where:

- R&E displays computerized data on a terminal or prints a copy of the requested data for the requestor to inspect the data
- A person wishes to visually inspect a paper document or data kept in any other medium that may be inspected visually
- A person requests access to electronic data via their own computer equipment, and possibly prints copies or downloads data on their own equipment

## Members of the Public

If the request is for 100 pages or fewer of black and white paper copies, the maximum allowable charge is 25 cents per page or 50 cents for a two-sided copy. This charge is a flat rate, and R&E cannot add on any additional charges, such as cost of mailing or paper.

If the request is for more than 100 pages of paper copies or another type of media (photographs, video, flash drive, CD, DVD, etc.), R&E may charge the actual cost for an employee to search for and retrieve the data and to make copies (paper or electronic) and mailing costs, if any.

## Establishing Actual Costs

The following items can be included in calculating actual costs:

- Cost of media or paper (CD ROMs, DVDs, etc.)
- Mailing costs
- Employee time to prepare copies (*employee time must be calculated based on wages/salary of the lowest-paid entity employee who could complete the task. If, because of the subject matter of your request, we find it necessary for a higher-paid employee to search for and retrieve the data, we will calculate the search and retrieval portion of the copy charge at the higher salary/wage.*)
- Costs of reproduction that cannot be done by the entity, such as photographs
- Employee time to search and retrieve data (*this only applies for data requests from members of the public, including public data and summary data*)

The following items cannot be included in calculating actual costs:

- Employee time to separate public from non-public data
- Operating expenses of copier, such as electricity, depreciation, maintenance, etc.

- Costs not related to copying, such as preparing the invoice, cover sheet, etc.
- Returning data to off-site storage
- Sorting, reviewing, or verifying accuracy if not necessary for copying
- Sales tax
- Accounting functions
- Costs related to inspection
- Employee time to provide information about the data to the requester (i.e., explain content and meaning of data)
- Costs incurred because data are not maintained in a manner that makes them easily accessible for convenient use

#### **Revision History**

- 6.13.2024 , Revision 1

## **Data Practices Responsible Authorities**

### **Joint Leadership Team**

Michael Reed, Responsible Authority  
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### **Joint Leadership Team**

David Brummel, Responsible Authority  
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### **Contract Manager**

Jim Redmond, Responsible Authority Designee  
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### **Ramsey County Attorney**

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### **Washington County Attorney**

John Ristad, Compliance Official  
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Stillwater, MN 55082  
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### **Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Commissioners**

Individual Commissioner  
Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy  
2785 White Bear Ave N.  
Maplewood, MN 55109

*Office contact information available on the [Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy website](#).*