

# Waste-to-Energy: Better for our environment and climate than landfilling

Waste-to-energy is a critical part of an integrated solid waste management system while we work to end waste and create a circular economy. Processing waste to recover energy and resources is preferred over landfilling, based on sound science.

The federal government and 23 states recognize the recovered energy as renewable because it is created from waste, a byproduct of daily life.

Without waste-to-energy, the three counties in the Partnership would send an additional 711,000 tons of trash to landfills per year, enough to line up garbage trucks bumper to bumper from Saint Paul to St. Louis, Missouri, or to use up all the additional landfill capacity the state recently approved at four metro area landfills in less than four years.



**Without waste-to-energy, the trash going to landfills would fill up garbage trucks from Saint Paul to St. Louis.**

## Waste-to-energy is better for our environment than landfilling

- Landfills pose long-term environmental and health risks, releasing toxics to our air and water and leaking chemicals like PFAS. Waste-to-energy destroys over 99% of PFAS in the waste stream.
- Minnesota has already spent over \$500 million to clean up landfills.
- Waste-to-energy creates value from discarded resources instead of dumping them in landfills at the expense of future generations.

## Waste-to-energy is better for our climate than landfilling

- Each year 30,000 tons of steel and other metals are recycled from the metro area's waste-to-energy operations, eliminating 45,800 tons of greenhouse gas emissions from new steel production.
- Every ton of trash processed by waste-to-energy has 30 times less polluting greenhouse gas emissions than a ton of trash decomposing in a landfill.
- Waste-to-energy is more efficient at recovering energy from waste than landfill gas capture.

### Need more information?

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**The Partnership on Waste and Energy**—a collaboration between Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington counties—seeks to end waste, promote renewable energy and enhance the health and resiliency of communities we serve while advancing equity and responding to the challenges of a changing climate.