

2014

Larimer County Solid Waste Department Annual Report

LANDFILL | HAZ WASTE | EDUCATION | ENVIRONMENTAL CARE | TRANSFER STATIONS



PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION



*N*otes from the Director

*E*mployees Make us great!

2014 was a very busy year here at Solid Waste. The landfill received over 1-million cubic yards of trash. A portion of these volumes were materials from the flood of September 2013. We also received a large amount of rubble from major deconstruction projects and roofing materials from the hail storms that damaged many houses in northern Colorado.

Our Household Hazardous Waste facility remains a popular destination and is used frequently by our citizens to drop off their chemicals or to visit the Drop `n` Swap program to pick up free paint or other items .

This last year the Larimer County Recycle Center received over 39,000 tons of materials. At the same time, the recycling commodity market has hit one of its lowest levels in recent years. In spite of this drop in value, people continue to want to do the right thing. We have recycle drop-off locations in various Larimer County locations: at the landfill in Fort Collins, in Berthoud, Estes Park, Rocky Mountain National Park, Wellington, Glacier View, and Red Feather.

The Solid Waste Department continues to look for new ways to serve the citizens of Larimer County. If you have an idea, drop by and share it with us in person, or by email, telephone letter. We are always ready to “talk trash” with our customers! Let us know how we can serve you better.



Stephen Gillette

 Solid Waste Director

We celebrated promotions, and new hires in 2014.

- Eddie Enriquez is our new Assistant Director
- Jennifer Rivera was promoted to Landfill Worker II.
- Cory Bethune was promoted to Landfill Traffic Director
- Doug Grimm is our newest Sr. Equipment Operator
- We welcomed Wes Markussen to our Equipment Operator team
- Andrea Bilderback is now our newest HHW team temp.
- We said goodbye to a 18 year veteran of the Landfill team, Tony Kear as well, as he moved on to his new ventures.



In 2014, we created a *new survey tool*, to get more detailed feedback on customer satisfaction. It is the goal of every staff member to give our customers an outstanding experience when visiting the Larimer County Landfill. Our team is proud of our satisfaction rating, and are eager to learn how to improve your customer service experience. Next time you visit the landfill we hope you take a moment to tell us how we are doing.



*N*ew in 2014

We prioritized some projects and purchases in 2014 to better serve our customers

- *New Dozer* replaces older heavily used model
- *New staff parking area* opens up customer parking spaces at the Business Office
- *Education Center* has a new entrance and traffic flow
- *New Recycle Scale* is under construction, due to be completed in 2015
- *1 office space is now 2* our new Assistant Director has a new space above our shop. This space is shared with the Landfill Manager
- *Installation of a new water tank & pump* to speed up the fill process for dust suppression



“How can we serve our customers better now and in the future?”



We have begun to looking ahead and making preparations for what may happen NEXT to the Landfill. With this question in mind we curve our business decisions toward all the possible scenarios. Our new projects and purchases are prioritized with consideration to the options and possibilities that lay ahead.



Flood Recovery Continues

“What will happen to the landfill, when it’s full?”

In 2014 we continued to play an integral role in the flood clean up of 2013. The first deconstruction of an uninhabitable house happened in mid 2014. The materials were brought to the Landfill to a special secluded area, safely away from our customers, for immediate burial.

The materials brought in to the Landfill from the multiple natural disasters of the last several years have been logged and calculated into lifespan of our landfill.

We are often asked ***“How many years will the landfill be open?”***.

As of January 1, 2015, the landfill, has about 11 years of life remaining based on current average volumes.



We have many decisions ahead, and our history will play a role in what needs to be addressed for the future.

- How will solid waste be handled in the future?
- Does a landfill fit into municipal solid waste management?
- Should the County continue to be involved in solid waste management?
- Is it better to have private commercial landfills providing solid waste handling services to the citizens?
- What new technologies or systems are available for solid waste management?
- How can we make the next landfill last longer?
- What cost impact would there be to Larimer County citizens?
- Could a new landfill be compatible with surrounding properties?
- Is a transfer station an option in the future?
- Should recycling be part of a new operation or is it left to private industry?
- What will happen to this landfill when it is full?

In 2014, some of these questions came to light much sooner than we expected as we monitor our capacity.



Hazardous Waste Diversion

Education & Outreach

The Household Hazardous waste facility was born with the idea of diverting the toxic chemicals away from our unlined landfill so that these contaminants don't have the opportunity to leach into our soils and water due to decomposition and moisture. Our Hazardous Waste program is not to be confused with recycling of traditional commodities or electronics which are both separate programs operated under contract by Waste Management Inc.

Our Hazardous Waste facility dedicates one day per week (Wednesdays) exclusively to small, qualifying businesses by appointment only. Businesses schedule their participation time, and pay a small fee for our service. The rest of the week, the hours are set to assist citizens with hazardous waste solutions. Whenever possible we accept common household hazardous wastes like lawn chemicals and household cleaners and paint. If the product is still safely usable we put it out on our shelves to give to other patrons FREE. This program is called the "Drop N Swap". You may find anything from laundry detergent to paint and everything in-between. The Drop N Swap is open Tuesdays 9-4, Thursday, Friday, Saturday 9-4.

"Can I really get FREE paint?!!"

Yes! FREE paint and many other FREE household products at the Drop N Swap program! We always have plenty of paint to choose from but just like a garage sale, our inventory is ever changing and you never know what will be available and when. We encourage you to just come and look, it's FREE and it's fun!! You are helping your budget and the environment at the same time by using these leftover products as they were intended.

Education plays a vital role in creating a sustainable future for present and future generations. Visitors of all ages explore the Garbage Garage Education Center and learn about the importance of reducing, reusing, and recycling, as well as how a landfill operates. Exhibits are refreshed and updated to keep pace with visitor needs.

Through on-site visits and outreach to schools, service organizations and other groups of all ages, as well as at community events, our educational efforts reach thousands of people each year.



Cub Scouts visit and learn more in order to meet requirements for their recycling badge. (left)



Not for kids only...adults play games with plastic bottle caps! (above)



Special drop-in events such as "Haunted Halloween" provide fun and learning for all ages. (below)

Community volunteers are vital to our educational efforts, and in helping us maintain a safe and attractive environment for learning.

Here, a community volunteer uses paint from HHW to refresh a donated picket fence. (Right)





*E*nvironmentally speaking

*G*lobal Community

Environmental impacts are a key concern in the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of a landfill. At Larimer County Landfill, we strive to minimize the landfill's effect on human health and the environment. As part of this effort, we regularly conduct inspections and complete air and water quality tests to monitor the landfill's environmental impact.

A specialized drill rig was on site in May to conduct extensive testing of the gas that is generated within the landfill, and results were used to calculate air emissions of non-methane organic compounds (NMOCs). The landfill's NMOC emissions remain well below the regulatory threshold of 50 metric tons per year, so we are not required to collect and control landfill gas. The gas wells that were installed in the completed Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3 areas are part of a voluntary collection system.

Groundwater testing in 2014 included some special *assessment monitoring* in addition to the routine *detection monitoring* that is conducted quarterly around the landfill. Laboratory results from the October assessment monitoring showed that there are no detectable semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), organochlorine pesticides, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), organophosphorus pesticides, chlorinated herbicides, cyanide, or sulfide in the contaminated area northeast of the landfill. Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are still present in the groundwater, but quarterly monitoring results show that the extent of the contaminated area has not increased in many years.

We are used to visitors at the landfill but in 2014 we hosted some guests from Kenya who were here to see first hand what a Solid Waste landfill operation looks like. They came with many questions and left with some first hand knowledge of our landfill model. In this region of the world solid waste management is in its infancy compared to some of our local landfills and modern equipment. We were happy to host and offer our expertise to them as they begin to pull together a plan for better, healthier disposal options.





Wildlife Sightings

Summary of Finances

We are often surprised and excited by wildlife encounters at the landfill.

Annually we have bird watchers who observe and track the many types of gulls who frequent the landfill. This year the bird watchers were bewildered by the drop in numbers of gulls until the reason was spotted... a visiting bald eagle! We were delighted to receive photos from their extreme clarity lenses, detailing the magnificence of this national symbol.

We also have several duck families taking advantage of the water near the landfill. There is a pair that seem to want to come inside the Business Office to have a look around, as did a very big Bull Snake.

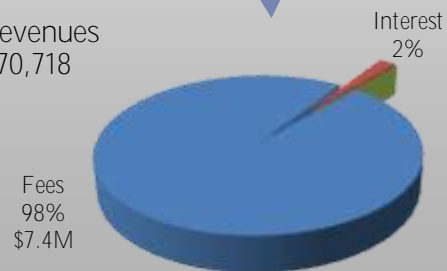
We also had a lone chicken that we tried to catch with our cameras. We really don't know where he came from or went. He seemed very sly and smart enough to stay off the roads and hung around for several weeks.

We commonly have many rabbits, coyotes, prairie dogs, foxes, deer, miscellaneous rodents, and snakes. You never know what critters you may have the opportunity to see.

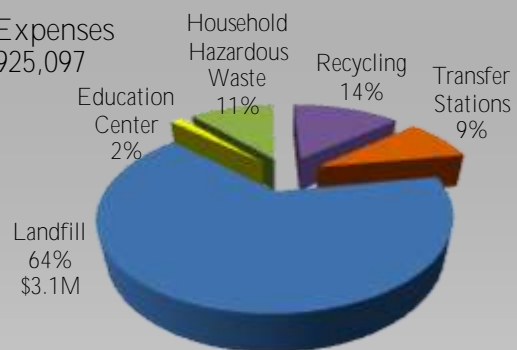
We do our best to leave the wildlife undisturbed. And this is why it's important that your dogs and other pets remain in your vehicle when you visit. We enjoy seeing the wagging tails, and will give them a milkbone at the gate when they visit, but for their safety, we remind you to keep them inside your car while you unload.



2014 Revenues
\$7,570,718



2014 Expenses
\$4,925,097



The Larimer County Solid Waste Dept is an enterprise fund department. Which means we do not receive tax money.

Total revenues \$7.6 million.

Landfill - \$6,852,173

Recycling - \$223,084

Education - \$25,375

HHW - \$54,701

Transfer Stations - \$263,400

Interest/Sale of Assets - \$151,985

Expenses for 2014 were \$4.9 million.

Personnel - \$1,732,969

Operating - \$2,610,435

Capital - \$581,693

These figures are unaudited.

The audit is to be complete mid 2015



Flood debris continues in 2014



Kenyan visitors came to learn



Environmental stewardship - monitoring our impact daily



Solid Waste Department
FAST Facts
We receive ZERO tax dollars !!



We have 7 major service areas:
Sanitary Landfill * Hazardous Waste
* Environmental Compliance
* Education * Transfer Stations
* Recycling * Support Services

Larimer County Vision Statement

- Larimer County will add value to the lives of its citizens by:
- Building Partnerships
 - Being Customer Driven
 - Empowering People to Take Responsibility
 - Being a Fulfilling and Enjoyable Place to Work
 - Being a Good Steward of Public Resources

This publication printed on recycled paper



New Recycle scale is delivered

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Public Works Division

Engineering
Natural Resources
Road and Bridge
Solid Waste
The Ranch



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