



## Dakota County Environmental Resources

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### MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** June 13, 2016  
**TO:** West St. Paul Mayor & City Council  
**FROM:** Renee Burman, Dakota County Sr. Environmental Specialist  
**SUBJECT:** County Commercial Recycling Pilot Results

**SUMMARY:** Effective 2016, most owners of commercial buildings with businesses within North American Industry Classification (NAICS) Codes 42-81 located in the seven-county Metropolitan area are required to recycle a minimum of three materials (MN Stat. §115A.151), such as paper, metal, glass, plastic and organics (food waste, soiled paper).

A Dakota County Board Priority is to assist the business community in meeting the new state recycling mandate by developing a business recycling and organics program. To determine what types of resources businesses need, the County initiated a six-month recycling and organics collection pilot project in 2015 using funds from a \$50,000 grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The Robert Street corridor in West St. Paul was identified as a prime location for high-volume generators, and project planning and implementation was coordinated with West St. Paul staff. Eight food waste generators (e.g., grocery store, restaurants) along participated.

West St. Paul Business Recycling Pilot Results: At the June 13 City Council Work Session, County staff will present pilot project results, including information that demonstrates that once barriers are overcome, significant increases in recycling occurs. Pilot data indicate that collectively, the recycling rate increased from 22% (traditional recyclables such as paper, glass, plastic, metal) to 81% (39% recyclables; 42% organics), an increase of 162 tons (46 tons of additional recyclables; 116 tons of organics). Barriers overcome included program start-up costs (e.g., for containers, compostable bags and service ware, labels, organics hauling service), dumpster enclosure space issues and general lack of knowledge about what can be recycled.

Next Steps. County staff will provide an update on post-Pilot resources for all businesses located in the County to help improve recycling. Also, a brief update on the County's 2016 - 2017 Solid Waste Master Plan revision will be provided. A significant stakeholder engagement effort, including with cities, will be undertaken to identify how local government regulatory, educational and financial tools can be enhanced to increase recycling and organics collection within Dakota County.