




This Strategic Plan has been developed by the Steering Committee of the Tri-County Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program, in order to both affirm the Program’s mission and activities to its nine governing bodies and also to provide for public understanding, transparency and communication about the Program with the citizenry it serves.

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Introductory Statement	 <p>This Strategic Plan has been developed by the Steering Committee of the Tri-County Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program, in order to both affirm the Program’s mission and activities to its nine governing bodies and also to provide for public understanding, transparency and communication about the Program with the citizenry it serves.</p> <p>Contact information: Tri-County Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program 2705 East 2nd Street, The Dalles, Oregon 97058 Website: www.tricountyrecycle.com Email: info@co.wasco.or.us Phone: (541)-506-2636</p>
Mission Statement	To help protect our Mid-Columbia region by providing services to reduce the impacts of hazardous wastes and to improve materials management for the benefit of human and wasteshed health.
History – Background Statement	<p>The Tri-County Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program (HWR Program, or Program) provides hazardous waste disposal and recycling education & outreach to residents of Wasco, Sherman and Hood River counties.</p> <p>The Tri-County Program is a partnership between Wasco, Sherman and Hood River counties and the local governments of The Dalles, Hood River, Dufur, Maupin, Mosier and Cascade Locks. The Program is housed within the Planning Department of Wasco County in The Dalles, Oregon.</p> <p>Efforts to organize the Program began in 1999, spearheaded by Glenn Pierce, former Environmental Health officer for North Central Public Health District (then known as the Wasco/Sherman Health Department) and Art Braun (former owner of The Dalles Disposal).</p>

The interest to form this Program came partly in response to strategic changes at the time by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). DEQ had previously organized and/or paid for one-time household hazardous waste collection events throughout Oregon. During the late 1990's, DEQ signaled that (instead of merely underwriting the direct disposal costs for hazardous waste events) they wished to additionally leverage their available funds to encourage and incentivize counties and communities to develop their own hazardous waste collection programs. DEQ did this by offering planning grants and capital funding grants. The Tri-County Household Hazardous Waste Planning Committee was successfully awarded both types of grant monies, which led to a facilitated planning of the Program, formal collaboration of three counties and six cities, establishment of a stable funding resource in the form of a surcharge on locally disposed municipal solid waste, the construction of two permanent household hazardous waste collection facilities, and eventual rollout of regular hazardous waste collection service.

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) management is an issue that is hard to address as individual communities, particularly in rural areas. By working together, these community partners were able to pool resources and expertise to provide services to all our citizens in a cost-effective way.

Hazardous Waste Collection

At present, the Tri-County HWR Program provides hazardous waste collection and disposal services to households, businesses (conditionally exempt generators, or CEGs), orchardists and farmers of the Tri-County area. The Program owns and operates two hazardous waste collection facilities, which are located at The Dalles Disposal Service, 1317 W. First Street in The Dalles, and at Hood River Garbage Service, 3440 Guignard Drive in Hood River.

Both facilities opened in July 2006. The Tri-County HWR Program holds hazardous waste collection events at both permanent facilities, as well as once a year at various rural locations. The HWR Program contracts with a certified hazardous waste disposal company for the collection, transportation, recycling and disposal of hazardous waste.

Recycling Education and Outreach

The Oregon Opportunity to Recycle Act (1999) gave the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) statutory authority to mandate waste recovery and recycling rates for counties. At the time, each county was assigned a target level of waste recovery/recycling, based upon historical trends and potential for increased recycling efforts. Wasco County had a target rate of 35%; Hood River County had a target rate of 25%; and Sherman County has a target rate of 20%. Those goals are subject to change by DEQ.

In the fall of 2007, the Tri-County HWR Program expanded its services to provide planning, education and promotion

	<p>services relating to recycling in the Tri-County area. Expanding the services of the program allowed the Tri-County HWR Program to manage the requirements for waste reduction and recycling mandated by the state of Oregon for the three counties. A commingled recycling sort was adopted by the franchised haulers in all of Wasco County (excluding the non-profit Dufur depot), and recycling services were expanded to all businesses in Northern Wasco County. All businesses in The Dalles were provided with information about the new sort and about how, where and when their recycling would be collected. The Dalles Disposal was granted a rate increase of 10.4% to cover the cost of an additional truck and employee to provide the expanded recycling services.</p> <p>DEQ’s priorities and rationale for what we now call ‘materials management’ (i.e., the full life cycle of stuff from design to discard) may likely change over time. Thus the Tri-County HWR Program partners with service providers and county and city governments to focus on dynamic public outreach and education, with the goal of helping the community understand what, where, how and why to recycle. This includes assisting and complementing the existing work done by the franchised haulers and the current local government efforts promoting recycling. In that regard, this program provides hands-on help to households, businesses and institutional users of the system.</p>
<p>Management Oversight & Staff</p>	<p>Formation: The Program was officially formed by a 2003 intergovernmental agreement between three counties and six cities on the Oregon side of the Mid-Columbia area. Those governmental jurisdictions included: Sherman, Wasco and Hood River Counties; plus the Cities of Maupin, Dufur, The Dalles, Hood River, Cascade Locks and Mosier.</p> <p>Lead Agency: Wasco County serves as the Lead Agency for the Program. The Program is housed and managed from within Wasco County’s Planning Department. The Wasco County Planning Director provides direct oversight of the program coordinator, who is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the Program.</p> <p>Steering Committee: The city councilors and county commissioners of the nine member governing bodies provide ultimate oversight of the Program. Those nine governing bodies may each appoint a representative to the Program’s Steering Committee to act in their interest. That Steering Committee generally meets quarterly to review and approve budgets and contracts, provide program guidance, establish service levels for hazardous waste collection, and to provide financial oversight. Likewise, the Steering Committee typically forms subcommittees to develop guidance on issues such as: bylaws, budgets, service levels, strategic planning and policy.</p> <p>Staff: The Program staff are employed by Wasco County. Staff uphold the intent and direction of the governing bodies, as determined through the Steering Committee, in concert with and in compliance with the policies and procedures of the Lead Agency, Wasco County.</p>
<p>Guiding Documents</p>	<p>Management Plan: In 2002, the <i>Household Hazardous Waste Management Plan for Hood River, Wasco and Sherman County, Oregon</i> (Management Plan) was adopted by the (then) Tri-County Household Hazardous Waste Planning</p>

Committee. That Plan was prepared to address the human health and environmental impacts related to hazardous waste generated by households, farmers and small businesses within Hood River, Wasco and Sherman Counties. The Plan identified new services which the counties and cities, working in partnership with the waste haulers and other interested parties, would offer to better manage those hazardous wastes.

IGA: In 2003, the *Intergovernmental Agreement for the Tri-County Household Hazardous Waste Management Program* (IGA) was signed by all nine representative jurisdictions, thus officially forming the Program.

Bylaws: In 2004, the same nine IGA member jurisdictions enacted the *Tri-County Hazardous Waste Program Steering Committee Bylaws* (Bylaws), thereby adopting organizing principles and rules for the transaction of business by the Tri-County Hazardous Waste Program Steering Committee.

The Wasco County Wasteshed 2007-2009 Recovery Plan Update (2007) comprised a statutorily-required review of Wasco County's recycling activities in order to develop a plan to reach that county's DEQ-mandated recycling recovery goal of 35%. The plan provided guidance for implementing and promoting improved recycling and waste prevention services in Wasco County.

Strategic Plan: In 2016, the *Tri-County Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program Strategic Plan* (Strategic Plan) was approved by the Steering Committee. The Strategic Plan builds upon over twelve years of experience since program inception and over ten years of providing hazardous waste collection, plus recycling and waste reduction outreach and education services. The Strategic Plan serves to provide the most essential and encompassing document that answers the following questions: What is the Program history? Why and how was the Program formed? What is the organizational structure and oversight? What does the Program do? Who does it? Why? How is the Program funded? How can I learn more about the Program, and/or provide input about it?

Work Plan: The *Tri-County Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program Work Plan* (Work Plan), which is updated annually, features a list of core objectives, areas of interest, and planned activities. The Work Plan is aligned with the Strategic Plan. The Work Plan explains how each core objective and listed activity relates to the Strategic Plan. The Work Plan also addresses whether and how to measure the effectiveness of Program activities.

Budget: The *Tri-County Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program Budget* (Budget) is developed each year by the Lead Agency, with assistance from a sub-committee of the Steering Committee. That Budget is reviewed and approved annually by both the Steering Committee and the Wasco County Commissioners. The Program budget cycle begins each July 1st. The Budget is aligned with the Work Plan (thus to the Strategic Plan), in that the updated Work Plan is used to

	<p>inform the budget process. Ultimately, the approved budget then influences what activities are affordable as outlined in the Work Plan. Funding for the Program comes primarily from a household hazardous waste surcharge upon franchised garbage & recycling fees for both curbside and self-haul service within the three-county service area.</p> <p>2050 Vision: The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) published a document in 2012 which was titled 2050 Vision for Materials Management in Oregon. Developed by a broad group of statewide stakeholders, that report provides the State of Oregon’s perspective on solid waste, recycling and hazardous waste in a much more holistic and long-term way (versus mere downstream end-of-life management). The 2050 Vision, and the subsequent ongoing statewide dialogue stemming from it, serve as essential guidance as to the State’s perspective about what is important (and why) regarding materials management, whether aspirational or regulatory. Though the HWR Program is not beholden to this external document, it certainly provides valuable analyses, insights and conclusions that the Program may draw from, as the Program’s materials management issues are mostly a microcosm of State’s issues.</p>
S.W.O.T. Analysis	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (and Trends too).
<p>Strengths Internal to the organization. What the HWR Program does really well.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Institutional memory – The Program began in 1999 (early planning phase). The staff and Steering Committee both comprise a great depth of relevant expertise plus Program experience. ➤ Affirmation- The Program has received awards for community partnerships and collaboration. ➤ Revenue stability- Program fees stem from a surcharge on relatively reliable solid waste service fees. ➤ Dedicated staff -The HWR staff, as well as the peripheral staff, strive for continual improvement. ➤ Affordability of services- The Program fees are spread thinly across all garbage customers in the three counties. ➤ Convenience- The Program holds quarterly hazardous waste collections in Hood River and The Dalles, and eight annual events in outlying towns, plus accepts hazardous waste by appointment. Taken together, this level of service provides robust options for proper disposal of unwanted household hazardous waste. ➤ Continuity and Efficiency- The Program’s regional approach to outreach and education provides affordable coordinated information across a vast geographic area through the convenience of a single information source.
<p>Weaknesses Internal to the organization. What services the HWR Program doesn’t do well.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strategic Planning- A lack of clear guidance. The Program has lists of things to do, but no formal prioritization and evaluation of activities. Instead, the Program is somewhat reactive (versus planned). ➤ Organizational Capacity- Stagnant Program income provides an obstacle to expanding objectives. More things need to be done than the Program has staffing or resources to accomplish. ➤ Program staff do not report regularly to the County Commissioners and City Councils of the Program’s Inter-Governmental Agreement. ➤ There is no metrics for evaluating Program performance.
<p>Opportunities External to the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Legislation – State level product stewardship programs that require some shift in the end-of-life management costs to manufacturers (i.e., household hazardous waste, agricultural pesticides, batteries, mercury-containing

<p>organization. What the Program can capitalize on.</p>	<p>lighting, mattresses, carpet, packaging, appliances, smoke detectors, tires, medicines and sharps).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partnerships- Citizen volunteerism. Training (Master Recycler or Recycling 101) coupled with guidance from staff to leverage citizen passion (for recycling) in ways that amplify ‘best practices’ information about materials management. ➤ Partnerships- Waste Connections. With Program support, a shift towards the hauler/service provider being the primary information and customer support hub for materials management instructions. ➤ Partnerships- Klickitat and Skamania counties. These counties can potentially work with the Program (and Waste Connections) to help provide a single (web and app-based) platform for the entire Mid-Columbia area that could provide location-specific basic information about materials management options. ➤ Collaboration- Product Stewardship Organizations. The Program envisions collaborative efforts (between the Program, the contracted hazardous waste collector and various product stewardship organizations) that may expand, at no additional cost to our Program, the collection services that the Program offers. Example: providing e-waste collection at our hazardous waste events. ➤ Strong citizen support for recycling services. ➤ Citizen support for hazardous waste collection and management services.
<p>Threats External to the organization. What the HWR Program doesn’t have control of.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Regional cultural differences. The Program is communicating with a very diverse population (three examples- English/Spanish, urban/rural, and household/business/agricultural users). ➤ There is a lack of competition for franchised garbage/recycling hauling throughout the Program’s service area. ➤ Reduced recycling options in Southern Wasco County due to closure of Mel’s Sanitary Service. Hauler has limited local expertise in outreach (including, lack of web presence). ➤ Limited oversight of hauler services, including complaints by hauler or by customers regarding curbside service. ➤ Lack of clarity over roles and responsibilities (between hauler, local government, and Program) in each of the Program’s jurisdictions. ➤ Increased costs for hazardous waste collection. ➤ Program’s lack of influence pertaining to provision of recycling services, which are determined by franchise agreements between service provider and municipalities. ➤ Contamination of recyclables (especially the commingled mix). ➤ Volatile commodity prices for recyclables (due to numerous externalities such as: The value of the U.S. dollar, world price of crude oil, changes in technology, domestic and/or foreign policies, consumer demand in China, etc...). Also, a general decline in the value of recyclables (by weight). ➤ Funding reduction –Potential policy changes that might reduce local municipal solid waste (MSW) coming to the landfill, thus negatively affecting the Program’s revenue. ➤ Regulation – Possible DEQ requirements which may include unfunded mandates resulting in negative financial consequences for the Program. For example, legislation that requires things to be done (i.e., increased Program

	activities). Specifically, forthcoming expanded Opportunity-To-Recycle requirements.	
Trends What aspects of materials management are developing or changing that the Program should be aware of?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Shift from “garbage & recycling” to “materials management”. ➤ Shift from source-separated recycling to commingled recycling. ➤ Increased contamination of recyclables, which decreases the value of collected materials. This may lead to a reduction of recycling services. ➤ Changes in types or volumes of materials managed (i.e., shift from metal, tin and cardboard packaging to flex packaging). ➤ New technologies and/or policies relating to materials management. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Policy examples: Product Stewardship, including Extended Producer Responsibility. ○ Technology examples: optical sorting, plastic-to-fuel, and plant-based plastics. 	
Organizational Tenets		
• Organizational Vision	We envision that the mid-Columbia community produces, uses, and disposes of materials responsibly, and conserves resources, therefore helping to protect our environment.	
• Mission Statement	To help protect our Mid-Columbia region by providing services to reduce the impacts of hazardous wastes and to improve materials management for the benefit of human and watershed health.	
• Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Safe ➤ Efficient and Effective ➤ Transparent ➤ Respectful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Equitable and Fair ➤ Collaborative ➤ Innovative ➤ Excellent in service
Major Goal #1	Reduce risks associated with unwanted and minimally regulated hazardous waste (i.e., household, small business, and agricultural).	
• Specific Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide regular hazardous waste collection events for households, small businesses and public agencies, and farmers, ranchers and orchardists of Wasco, Sherman and Hood River counties. ➤ Educate citizens within the Program’s service area about the dangers of hazardous products, and about safer alternatives. ➤ Pursue product stewardship initiatives that may: (1) enhance the convenience and affordability of properly disposing of unwanted hazardous wastes; and, (2) that may prompt the design of newer products with lower toxicity throughout the entire lifecycle of their development and use, and that may have higher recyclability. ➤ Reduce the amount of hazardous waste generated by households, businesses and agriculture. 	
Major Goal #2	Increase recycling.	
• Specific Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Scrutinize, evaluate and recommend ‘best practices’. ➤ Provide recycling outreach and education information to all citizens, businesses, and public agencies in Wasco, Sherman and Hood River Counties. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with Stakeholders (municipalities, public agencies and franchised haulers) to coordinate messaging and public conversation. ➤ Reduce contamination of collected recyclables. ➤ Work with citizens, businesses and agencies to help them utilize recycling services more effectively.
Major Goal #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reduce waste.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific Objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Scrutinize, evaluate and recommend ‘best practices’. ➤ Provide waste reduction outreach and education information to all citizens, businesses, and public agencies in Wasco, Sherman and Hood River Counties. ➤ Work with Stakeholders (municipalities, public agencies and franchised haulers) to coordinate messaging and public conversation. ➤ Reduce the amount of solid waste generated. ➤ Reduce contamination of collected recyclables. ➤ Enhance opportunities for reuse and repair. ➤ Provide technical assistance to businesses and agencies to help them reduce waste at their operations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation 	<p>This Strategic Plan will be scrutinized each year contiguous with the review of our related Work Plan. The Work Plan will be aligned with this Strategic Plan. We will update and approve our Work Plan annually. When developing our Work Plan, we will ask these questions about the proposed activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Relevance: How does each Work Plan activity relate to the Goals and Objectives of our Strategic Plan? ➤ Cost: How much does this activity cost? Can we afford it? Can we continue the activity while avoiding costs? ➤ Prioritization: How does this activity rank (i.e., priority? required or aspirational? relative to budget? etc.)? ➤ Status: What is the condition of this activity (i.e., not yet started, started, ongoing, or completed)? ➤ Effectiveness: How effective have our efforts been in implementing this activity, as measured against relevant objectives and/or baseline data. We will also assess usefulness of the activity, and use this information to inform whether to cease, continue or amend the activity. ➤ Compliance with regulatory requirements.