

Household Hazardous Waste Survey 2013

The Solid & Hazardous Waste Education Center (SHWEC) conducted a survey given to various municipalities and programs throughout Wisconsin. The main objective of this survey was for University of Wisconsin Extension to understand the volume of the waste being collected, the cost incurred by each program, and other aspects of Wisconsin Clean Sweep Programs. The survey was completed by 35 program managers in Wisconsin. What follows is a summary of the data collected. Respondents were asked to base their responses on their 2012 program.

Survey Details

The survey was conducted in an online format, which program directors were prompted to answer 18 questions pertaining to their specific program. Three emails were sent out containing information about the survey and to serve as a reminder for each recipient to complete the survey. Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facilities can generally be placed into one of three categories; a permanent facility (weekly collections year round), a seasonal facility (weekly collection on seasonal basis), or clean sweeps held one or more days for each year. Based upon survey responses 69% of the facilities were general clean sweeps held one or more days each year, versus a 20% response being permanent and 4% being seasonal. The county in which the collection programs are held sponsor the vast majority of the programs.

Household Hazardous Waste Clean Sweep Operations and Cost

Each program has various costs associated with the total operation cost per year. These can include, contractor services, maintenance, publicity, rent, waste disposal, salaries, and educational materials. The average program cost was calculated to be \$73,600 per year. A large portion of this annual operating cost is in direct proportion with the cost of the contractor services. In order to fund a Household Hazardous Waste Clean Sweep program, many different options may be considered. Respondents reported using funding sources such as grants, donations, tax levies, fees, and other sources of income. This is represented in Figure 1, which illustrates some of the different types of funding and how many of the programs utilize them.

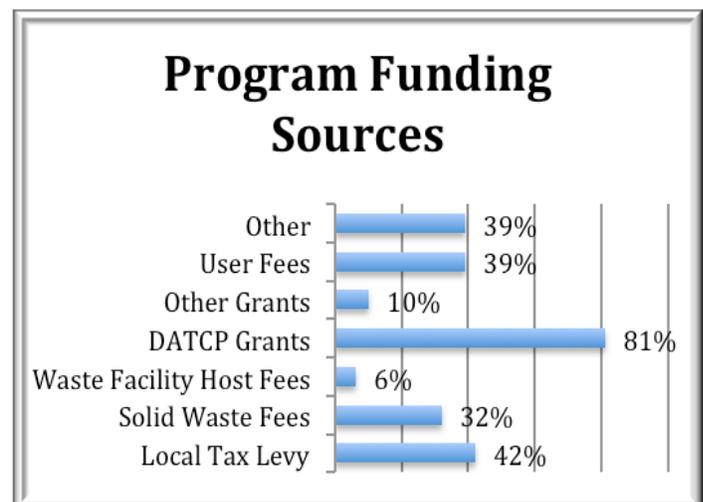


Figure 1

A number of programs have also begun to charge fees for the disposal of household hazardous waste. While 50% of respondents indicated they are not charging households fees, 10% charge a

flat fee, 9% charge a per pound fee on some or all materials. The remaining program indicated charging a flat fee for certain items such as bulbs, electronics or for users who dropped off large volumes of materials.

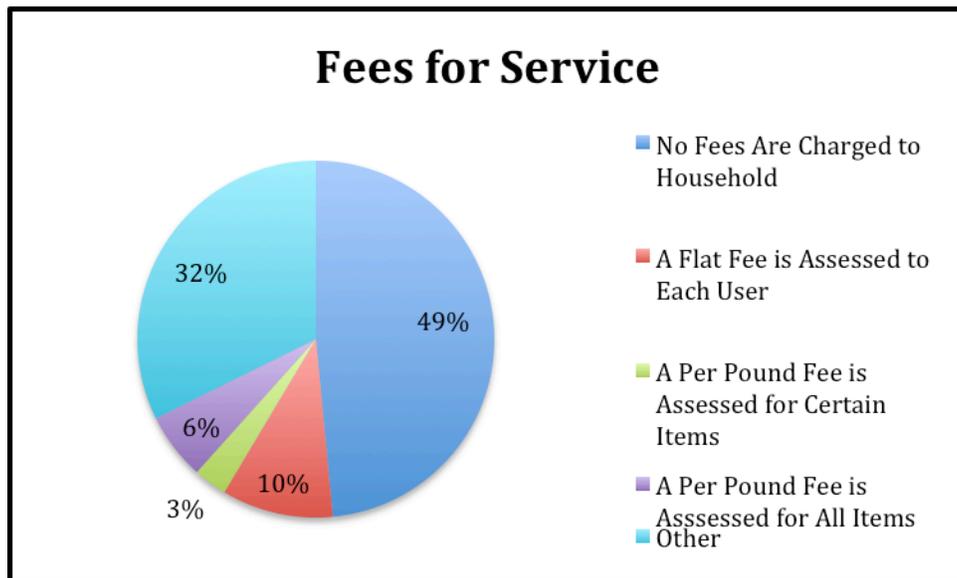


Figure 2

Participation and Volume of House Hazardous Waste Collected

We asked program managers how many participants visited their programs last year as well as the number of households in their service area. With this information we calculated an average 3.4% of households participated in collection programs. *(Note: this assumes no return visits during the year)* We also asked managers to report the volume of waste collected by their program. This allowed for the calculation of a weight of 92.9 pounds dropped off per program participant. We also calculated a per capita weight of 0.6 pounds/person within a program’s service area.

Additional Waste Items Collected

Some HHW programs have chosen to collect additional items for proper disposal in conjunction with traditional HHW materials. These include electronics, bulb collections, tire collections, and pharmaceutical/unwanted medications. Many programs also include a product exchange option for usable goods. Table 1 shows the various responses for each type of material or service listed.

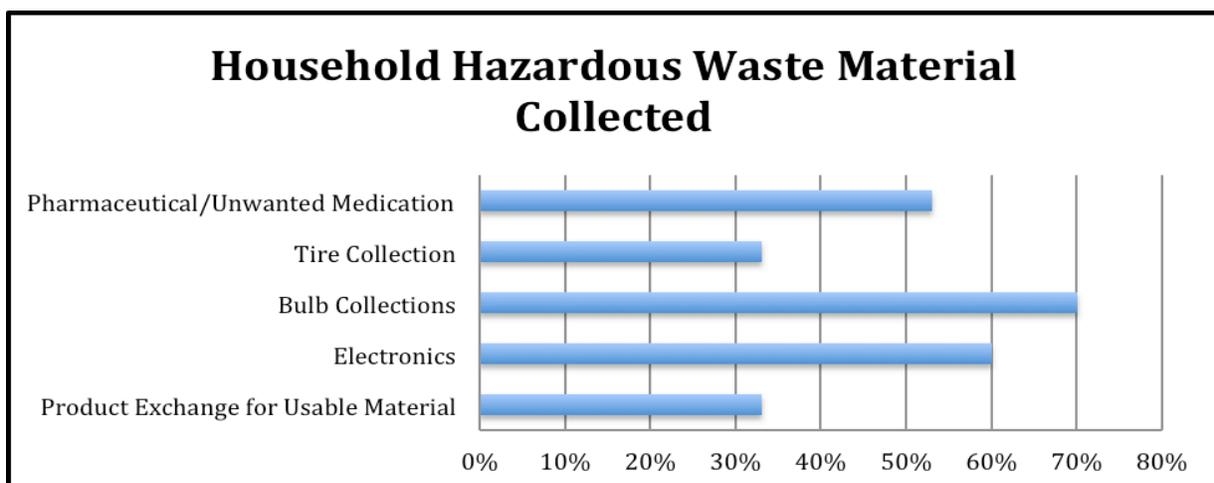


Table 1

Latex Paint

A material that may also be collected by many Clean Sweep programs throughout the state is latex paint. As latex paint is generally not considered to be hazardous waste in Wisconsin many programs have chosen not to accept it at their collections. We asked programs to share how they do or do not manage latex paint. As shown in Figure 3, 49% of the programs do not accept latex paint, many advise to dry the paint and dispose of it properly. A further breakdown of the responses can be seen in the figure.

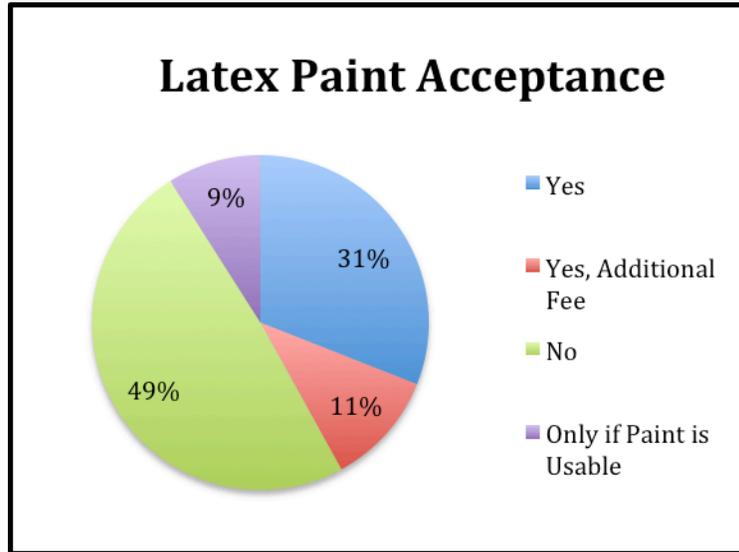


Figure 3

Summary of survey compiled by Michael Rognev with editing by Joe Van Rossum, SHWEC Recycling Specialist.

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