



## Road to Zero Waste

Comments at Community Conversation #1: Reduce & Reuse

June 11, 2013

### Community Member Comments:

- I live one mile from the landfill. I am impressed by ReSource talk. How do you get stuff (materials, resources) from the landfill? – How do you partner with the Landfill – How do we improve that.
- ReSource is a local nonprofit – all materials are donated, including bigger things (2 basketball courts, as example) – Education is the key
- Is Larimer County Landfill bringing trash from far away?
- Stephen Gillette (Larimer County Solid Waste Department Manager) – There are no location restrictions. Materials come to Larimer County Landfill from: Cheyenne, Wyoming; Larimer County; Weld County; Boulder County
  - Before 2000, we charged double for out of Larimer County. Since then, the amount of materials has gone down.
  - There is a Colorado law that prohibits scavenging at the landfill. This is a liability to the landfill. One reason is the danger of biohazards like hypodermic needles.
- I live in a senior apartment complex. Recycling is impossible there because there is no place for recycling bins and using the garbage chute is easy. We need a big bin for people to recycle.
- People would be more open to regulations if coupled with programming that makes it easy to recycle. The main impediment is the program is not easy.
- When government bans materials from the landfill, we need to make it easy. It helps business invest. There is a tension. Make it easy and new opportunity, but government shouldn't do it all.
- A lot of the cost of fees is in the transportation of goods and processing. Money is needed to help with those costs (for nonprofits) and business could help to reuse and recycle
  - Education is important. We recycle, too at our Thrift Store: small amounts of metals; e-scrap (anything with a plug)
  - It is hard to get the word out to help people to understand the true cost of waste.
- When materials are banned, my thrift store gets lower quality products dumped on premises such as non-working TVs, shoes without soles, etc. If it costs to take things to the landfill, we become a dumping ground. 20% is not usable for original intent, such as broken couches. They take them apart and salvage some metal, but basically it incurs costs for the business to dispose of them.
- The state of California addressed leftover containers at restaurants. Finer restaurants in Fort Collins don't use Styrofoam containers. In Europe "to go" is unheard of.
- I grew up in Denver. We had a trash can and a garbage bucket for food scraps that a city truck picked up every 3 – 5 days. Why did we get away from that?
- Redesign compost and food scraps recycling. Look at models of smaller systems, either street-wide or neighborhood-wide to reduce transportation of materials.

- Food waste recycling is more and more important to people. We need to do more on making regulations easier for composting.
- Land is really cheap in Colorado. Anyone can open another landfill. Economics push our options. Composting is expensive.
- Education is important. 14,000 cattle are thrown away even before purchased by supermarkets because butchering knives are so dull that it ruins the meat. A lot of food is thrown away even before the consumer gets the products.
- Look at communities like San Diego where they have a building where people can drop off reusable materials and products (resource recovery park). Put something in front of the landfill like that.
  - I toured the Larimer County Landfill and was astonished by the amount of metal that is going into the landfill.
- In Boulder they developed a different scenario – “Recyclers Row” and ReSource was given six acres for a recovery and reuse facility. It doesn’t have to be run by the landfill or city.
  - EcoCyle in Boulder sends out door-to-door education canvasser. Fort Collins should be doing something like that.
- Maybe Larimer County Landfill should be closed – Traffic is coming from all over, so roads being damaged and air and water impacts.
  - Like small composting systems, waste management systems should be decentralized rather than centralized. Look at doing composting at landfill.
  - Topsoil is being ripped south of landfill and used to cover landfill. What a waste of a natural resource.
- Ask supermarkets to be a location where residents could exchange and swap sealed containers that are full for empties. – Everyone goes to the supermarket – it helps them to attract customers. Could have a private company do this at supermarket parking lot – not near the store.
- Get rid of subsidies that compete against recycling, such as government subsidies for virgin oil extraction.

**Summary notes:**

- Need more education
- Services need to be convenient and available
- If bans are implemented, educate and make it easy first.
- Create Resource Recovery Park (Integrated Recycling Facility)
- Have different services at the same location for landfill, Recycle Row – for food scraps and salvaging or scavenging.
- Problems in multi-family complexes and senior housing needs to be easier
- Food composting – regulations need to encourage facilities to be built
- “No Ban Without a Plan”