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This SWMP is just rehashing old ideas. To actually reduce the amount of waste going to landfill, MPCA has to suggest radical solutions. There are two main obstacles standing in the way of reducing solid waste through reduce/reuse/recycle/compost - lack of information and lack of willingness.

1. Lack of information - recycling is complicated. Most people do not know the difference between Polyethylene Terephthalate, High Density Polyethylene, or the other 5 plastic categories, and how this affects their recycling. Different cities have conflicting and confusing standards on which types of plastics can be recycled and which can not, and very rarely are the Plastic Codes used, despite this being a simple system to understand. If recycling communication clearly stated - "In City X we can recycle Plastic 1, 2 & 5, so please put these in your recycle bin - you can find this number on most types of packaging (include a picture)." Some cities claim that all plastic can go into the single source recycling, but this just makes things excessively complicated at MRFs and likely leads to large batches of plastics ending up at landfill anyway.

2. Unwillingness - pulling on environmental heartstrings has reached its peak effectiveness, and asking people to reduce their waste will not yield results much higher than the 45% diversion rate currently achieved. What motivates people is money, so it is time that trash was treated like a utility, where each household pays based on their usage. Pay as you throw (PAYT) programs have been used successfully across the world, and they have been shown to reduce MSW and greenhouse emissions (EPA, 2016). PAYT provides a financial incentive to reduce MSW, and fits with environmental justice strategies - those who consume less, pay less. For example, my wife and I are very conscientious about recycling and composting, and subsequently we produce less than one bag of MSW per week. At the current fixed-price haulage model, we pay \$30/month for trash pickup, so ultimately end up paying over \$7.50 per bag of MSW removed. Households that do not make the effort to recycle/compost/reduce also pay \$30/month, but throw away several bags of MSW per week, meaning their cost per bag is far lower. Current models incentivize producing as much MSW as possible to get your money's worth. With PAYT, the incentive is to reduce waste to save money. A well implemented PAYT program may even force companies to increase their use of recyclable packaging as savvy consumers avoid buying products packaged in unrecyclable materials.

EPA (2016). Pay-as-you-throw and climate change. US Environmental Protection Agency. Retrieved June 8th, 2023 from

[https://archive.epa.gov/wastes/conservation/tools/payt/web/html/payfact.html#:~:text=Pay-as-you-throw \(PAYT\) is a,advantages of generating less waste.](https://archive.epa.gov/wastes/conservation/tools/payt/web/html/payfact.html#:~:text=Pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) is a,advantages of generating less waste.)