

## Curbside recycling coming soon to other half of city

**Also, apartment complexes and trailer parks can soon opt in to recycling. Already, more recyclables are collected curbside than from the public blue bins.**

By Jodi Rogstad  
[jrogstad@wyomingnews.com](mailto:jrogstad@wyomingnews.com)

CHEYENNE -- For city residents who live north of Pershing Boulevard, curbside recycling is set to begin in late May or early June.

"When am I going to get my can? I hear it every day," the city's sanitation director, Dennis Pino, said. "It's coming."

That would bring curbside recycling to all 18,500 residences in Cheyenne.

The cost is a mandatory \$5 per month for pickup every other week. Residents can put paper, cardboard, aluminum and some types of plastics in one container; however, glass isn't accepted.

The city now hauls the materials it collects from half the city to Denver and drops it off at Alpine Waste and Recycling. To cut down on the number of trips, the city is using a state grant to build an addition to the transfer station to house a baler.

Pino says the down recycling market is now showing signs of recovery. For the first time in 14 months, the city will get a check for the recyclables instead of having to pay Alpine to drop it off; no word yet on the amount.

Already, the tonnage collected from people's homes outweighs what's collected at the free public blue bins stationed at the parking lots of big box retailers. Even with the citywide curbside recycling, Pino wants to keep these bins for county residents -- it removes trash from the waste stream.

Last month, the city picked up 135.2 tons from curbside (this figure includes the Nos. 1 and 2 plastics at the drop-off bins). From the drop-off bins, crews collected 71.8 tons of newspaper, cardboard, glass and aluminum.

Add up all the recycling, and the city still hauls more than 19 times more trash to the landfill in Ault, Colo., which averages about 4,000 tons a month.

The city is currently analyzing the recycling program to see how much it should charge next year.

Assistant public works director Vicki Nemecek said that analysis is part of the solid waste plan, which will examine all costs of running the solid waste division, including recycling.

Since December, sanitation has been collecting data, from how often people are setting out recycling containers to fuel usage.

"It's difficult to estimate costs when you haven't implemented the program," Nemecek said. "When we made the estimate, it was just that."

She said they'll have a good idea by July 1 -- the start of the next budget year -- of what to charge.

Pino said he expects the rate of recycling to grow as the weather gets warmer and as it becomes more convenient to do so.

For instance, apartment complexes and trailer courts in the city will soon be able to opt into the recycling program.

The Cheyenne City Council votes Monday on an ordinance to set the rates, which range from \$75 a month for six-days-a-week pickup to \$25 for weekly pickup. The ordinance would be on the second of three readings.

Pino said the Dumpsters and containers are ready to go, and pickup will be available once the ordinance passes.

But before north side single-family homes get curbside recycling, the city must buy another 10,000 bins, which will cost an estimated \$500,000.

On Monday, the City Council will vote on making funding available for \$1.7 million worth of new equipment for the sanitation, recycling and landfill division.

Then the city will seek bids on containers. The start of the program will depend on when the bins are delivered.

That money will come from loans, which will be repaid from the division's solid waste fund. The city also plans to buy another

automated collection truck, which would cost about \$249,000.

But Pino said the early complaints have died off.

In fact, he heard from one woman who wrote to say the curbside program saves her a couple hours a week.

"She doesn't have to gather the stuff together, load the car, wait in line," Pino said. "Now she doesn't have to worry about it. People are realizing it's less of a burden."

So far, these residents are doing a good job, Pino said. The contamination rate is about 3 percent, which is less than expected.