



Recycling in Multi-Family Housing Developments: Implementation in the Phoenix Metropolitan Area

THE PROBLEM The city of Phoenix is the sixth largest in the United States with 1.4 million residents who dispose of approximately five million tons of residential solid waste annually to area landfills. Approximately 32% of Phoenix's residents live in multi-family housing developments. This is a source that can be leveraged in order to meet Phoenix's 40% diversion goal by 2020. However, Multi-Family Housing Developments (MFDs) rarely include recycling as part of their waste hauling contracts. In complexes that do include recycling, participation rates are low and contamination rates are high.

THE PARTNER The city of Phoenix, City of Mesa and Republic Services

THE SERVICE To research the different solutions available for the implementation of recycling in MFDs and ascertain their real-world viability through implementation at four pilot properties. This study included customized solution sets, best practices and recommendations for improving recycling performance in Multi-Family communities.

THE SOLUTION In order to increase waste diversion rates and reduce waste hauling cost for property managers, customized solution sets were created and implemented for each property. Solutions were categorized into the three major categories: Community Education, Incentive Systems and Indoor/Outdoor Infrastructure. For example, one property received community education, door-to-door resident education, five gallon hard-shell recycling containers for residents who wanted them and a raffle incentive system to engage residents in recycling behavior. A monitoring and evaluation period followed to analyze the performance of the solutions implemented.

THE OUTLOOK All properties reported positive diversion trends. A nine month second phase of this project is taking place between September 2015 and June 2016 to better evaluate opportunities and challenges cataloged during the study, and to evaluate the effectiveness and resource requirement for implemented solutions.

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