



Jefferson County Solid Waste RECYCLING PROGRAM CHANGES

Beginning April 1, 2026,

Jefferson County residents will pay directly for recycling.

WHO WILL THIS AFFECT?

Unincorporated Jefferson County residents outside of Port Townsend City Limits.
No changes to Port Townsend resident mandatory garbage and recycling services.

WHAT CHANGES WILL I SEE?

We're **removing all un-staffed county recycling drop boxes:**

Kala Point (3/23/26), Port Hadlock (3/24/26), and Port Ludlow (3/25/26) sites.

Fee-based recycling at Solid Waste facilities: Transfer Station recycling bins will move behind the scales and fees include both recycling and solid waste combined loads. Quilcene Drop Box recyclers must stop at the attendant shack before unloading.

Consolidated recycling types: cans, plastic bottles and jugs, paper, and cardboard will be accepted in one bin. Glass will continue to be recycled separately.

Solid Waste disposal fees should not subsidize recycling.

Jefferson County subsidizes our recycling program by \$326,000 each year! A percentage of every solid waste transaction at the Transfer Station and Quilcene Drop Box went towards the recycling program. In addition, we also depend on offsets from state grants and commodity sales.

Recycling always had a cost. At the start of the recycling program, the value of recyclables helped offset the costs of collection and processing. This helped keep the costs low. In the last decade, commodity values have plummeted while the costs of collection and processing continue to rise.

The contamination level at the drop boxes is high and hasn't dropped despite our best efforts to educate the community.

In 2020 we conducted contamination audits to determine the percentage of unrecyclable materials placed in our bins. The findings were a dismally high rate.

In response, we boosted our education outreach to include:

- Updated and revised recycling flyer to address contamination issues and misconceptions
- Updated and revised the web page including videos and helpful web links
- Revised drop box signs to highlight contamination
- Hosted seven in-person community presentations on recycling
- Posted samples of contamination on sandwich boards at all drop box locations
- Volunteers spoke with citizens at drop box locations (*Volunteers received such negative reactions during this outreach that we determined not to do this again.*)
- Conducted a county-wide survey to assess misconceptions and help re-design outreach actions
- Presentations on KPTZ
- Presentations to community groups



The two audits following this effort found no improvement.

Curbside service is more efficient, cost-effective, and planet-friendly.

One truck can substitute for up to 1,000 personal vehicles driving around the county.

OPTIONS FOR COUNTY RESIDENTS

Port Townsend resident pick up does not change.

Curbside pick-up service

Recycle Only or Garbage Only
or Garbage + Recycling



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Self-haul to Solid Waste facilities

For people who can't access curbside pickup or choose to self-haul their recycling and/or garbage.

Port Townsend—325 Landfill Road

Unload recycling and garbage behind the scales for \$20 up to 220 lbs combined load

Quilcene Rural Drop Box Facility

295312 Highway 101;

\$20 fee for up to two 32-gallon cans of waste + all recycling

Everyone entering the facility must stop at the attendant shack.

Low-income rates available.



Please visit our website for the most current and accurate information about this change!
www.jeffersoncountysolidwaste.com