



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

5A
Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: January 27, 2026

Title of Item: Recycling Contract

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY	Action Requested: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft)	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing* <small>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</small>
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Submitted by:

Andrew Carlstrom

Department:

Environmental Services

Presenter (Name and Title):

Andrew Carlstrom, Environmental Services Director

Estimated Time Needed:

15 Minutes

Summary of Issue:

On November 25, 2025 the Board approved soliciting bids to operate the Aitkin County Recycling Center and recycling drop-off locations. Bids were to be submitted by January 9, 2026. We received two bids: one from Waste Management of Minnesota in Baxter, MN (our current contractor since 2021) and one bid from Garrison Disposal of Aitkin, MN (our former contractor from the 1990 until 2020).

The Solid Waste Advisory Committee (which has no decision power nor authority to act) met and reviewed both RFP bids from each contractor, utilizing the evaluation criteria. The Committee is recommending to the County Board to accept the proposal, and authorize entering into a contract with Garrison Disposal. Please see memorandum and findings for evaluation criteria.

Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:

Advertise for RFP's and see if there are any other interested companies to bid on the recycling proposal. Or hire additional staff, purchase equipment, and operate the facility and unattended recycling drop-off locations

Recommended Action/Motion:

Approve accepting the RFP with Garrison Disposal for operation of the Aitkin Recycling Center, unattended recycling drop-off sites, and authorize entering into a contract.

Financial Impact:

Is there a cost associated with this request? Yes No

What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$ 175,000.00 (approximate)

Is this budgeted? Yes No *Please Explain:*

\$210,000.00 was budgeted for 2026. Any additional can be taken out of the solid waste reserve funds.



AITKIN COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PLANNING & ZONING

Aitkin County Government Center
307 2nd Street NW, Room 219
Aitkin, MN 56431

aitkinpz@aitkincountymn.gov
Phone: 218-927-7342
Fax: 218-927-4372

MEMORANDUM TO AITKIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

DATE: January 27, 2026

FROM: Andrew Carlstrom, Environmental Services Director – Planning & Zoning Administrator

RE: Proposal Evaluation Criteria for RFP Bids

The County shall use the following criteria to evaluate and rank proposals. These criteria are listed in alphabetical order and do not reflect their relative importance to the County.

1. Convenience. Convenience will be based in terms of additional or alternative site locations different from the base program specified in this RFP. The County will look for equity of distribution of alternative sites throughout the County. Convenience also includes material preparation requirements for residents if alternatives to the RFP base program are proposed (e.g., difficulty of sorting in the household; ease of understanding preparation instructions).

The Solid Waste Advisory Committee believes due to the proximity of Garrison Disposal Transfer Station being located in Aitkin, response time will be decreased for servicing the Aitkin County Recycling Center, as well as for the majority of drop-off recycling sites within Aitkin County. Decreased response times and periodic site visits are anticipated to reduce overage and contamination charges during the heavy recycling seasons. Garrison Disposal is proposing comingled recycling (single stream) for convenience to citizens, and is capable of accommodating additional sites throughout the County at any time or as need arises.

2. Cost-Effectiveness. Cost-effectiveness will be evaluated in terms of bottom-line, annual cost to the County. Unit cost per ton will be a secondary indication of efficiency and potential for more savings to the County. Proposals that show how they will strive to reduce recyclable contamination and process rejects will be given preference.

The Solid Waste Advisory Committee recognizes the cost-effectiveness of Garrison Disposal's proposed bid of a dump/haul charge and disposal/processing fee per ton for each load. All loads will be individually weighed on a certified scale in order to ensure the accuracy of recycling tons. During heavy recycling, decreased response time due to proximity, as well as periodic site visits for additional monitoring, will reduce potential contamination and overage charges. During the heavy summer recycling and zoning permitting seasons, the monitoring of the recycling center by Planning & Zoning staff has been challenging without a dedicated, full-time person. The Committee recognizes that Garrison Disposal can offer a more customized service, thus eliminating a future need of adding a staff position to the recycling center and saving the County's bottom-line. Although the Garrison Disposal proposed bid is marginally higher, accuracy due to the weighing of recyclables on a certified scale, as well as their use of the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) for Midwest Region is anticipated to result in more accurate annual price adjustment for Aitkin County. Regarding annual price adjustments, Waste Management is proposing an increase based on the annual rolling average of the CPI Water Sewer Trash or 5% increase, whichever is greater. This would undoubtedly result in a significant increase to Aitkin County over the next five years. Garrison Disposal's price per base unit to dump an eight yard dumpster at the Aitkin Recycling Center is estimated at \$33.42, while current contractor Waste Management proposal is estimated at \$31.94. Garrison Disposal's price per

base unit to deliver, pickup, and dump one twenty-yard roll-off canister at Malmo (our second busiest public recycling drop-off) is estimated at \$576.60, while current contractor Waste Management proposal is estimated at \$515.56. For more information, please see attached base program cost and price estimates contained in both RFP proposals.

3. Experience. Proposers should demonstrate past and present recycling and/or solid waste operations.

The Solid Waste Advisory Committee believes locally-owned and operated Garrison Disposal has sufficient experience with over thirty years of familiarity and faithful service operating Aitkin County recycling operations. Garrison Disposal operations offer solid waste and recycling services, including residential and commercial collection, recycling collection, drop-off recycling, roll-off container service, and transfer and consolidation operations.

4. Fairness. Proposers should show how they can best encourage more residential and commercial recycling throughout the County, regardless of the hauling firm serving that home or establishment.

The Solid Waste Advisory Committee believes Garrison Disposal will sufficiently coordinate and develop an effective public education and communication plan in conjunction with Aitkin County to include: a comprehensive recycling brochure, improvement on existing recycling signage at all drop-off sites, and clear container labeling. Garrison Disposal has also offered a digital outreach program to include a dedicated Facebook page for the public focused on recycling opportunities in Aitkin County.

5. Financial Capabilities. Proposers should demonstrate they have adequate resources to undertake the proposed services. Relative long-term security of proposed markets will be an important consideration.

The Solid Waste Advisory Committee believes Garrison Disposal is proposing recycling that allows operational flexibility, redundancy of operations, and the efficient use of their staff to service the Aitkin County Recycling Center, as well as the eleven recycling drop-off sites within the County. Proposed end-markets will be at the discretion of Garrison Disposal and they will retain the ability to adjust material flows as necessary to maintain service continuity.

6. Safety. Proposers should demonstrate adequate experience and capabilities in identifying and managing safety risks to the public and workers. Past safety programs and records may be considered.

The Solid Waste Advisory Committee recognizes Garrison Disposal's previous thirty years working with Aitkin County recycling operations. Experience has shown that Garrison Disposal maintains driver safety training programs, conducts equipment safety procedures, compliance with OSHA standards, meeting MPCA requirements, as well as complying with local, state, and federal regulations.

7. Uniformity. Proposers should show commitments to providing uniform, consistent, public information to residents and businesses.

The Solid Waste Advisory Committee acknowledges Garrison Disposal's continuous presence Monday through Friday servicing residential and commercial customers in Aitkin County conducting solid waste and recycling operations. Garrison Disposal's current public information messaging, public image, and services delivered to Aitkin County citizens is consistent with the future goals of Aitkin County.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 218-927-7342 or by email at
andrew.carlstrom@aitkincountymn.gov



Proposal for Recycling Services in Aitkin County

Submitted To:

Andrew Carlstrom - Environmental Services Director
Aitkin County Environmental Services
307 2nd Street NW, Room 219
Aitkin, MN 56431

In Response to:

Aitkin County Request for Proposal (RFP) – Recycling Services

Proposed Contract Term:

March 1, 2026 – February 28, 2031 (Five-Year Base Term)

Submitted By:

GDC - Garrison Disposal
P.O. Box 308
Aitkin, MN 56431

Primary Contact:

Adam Henderson
Phone: 218-927-6435
Email: Adam@NisswaSanitation.com



January 9, 2026

Aitkin County

Andrew Carlstrom - Environmental Services Director

Aitkin County Environmental Services

Dear Mr. Carlstrom,

Garrison Disposal (GDC) is pleased to submit our proposal to provide recycling services for Aitkin County. As a locally based solid waste and recycling provider with a long history of successfully operating this program for the County, we are well positioned to deliver reliable service, continuity of operations, and a strong value to residents across Aitkin County.

Our proposed approach emphasizes suitable access to recycling through convenient drop-off sites, clear and predictable pricing, and operational flexibility to adjust service levels and locations as County needs evolve. Our focus is on keeping the program simple and easy to use, while actively working to reduce contamination and processing inefficiencies through education, signage, and site design, ultimately helping to control costs and improve overall program performance.

GDC brings decades of experience in recycling and solid waste operations, including direct experience operating the Aitkin County Recycling Center and County drop-off system. We support impartial recycling opportunities countywide through the County's recycling program, regardless of the hauling company serving individual homes or businesses, and we will work collaboratively to support the County's public information and outreach efforts. Safety remains a core priority in all aspects of our operations, from public drop-off areas to collection and processing activities.

With strong financial resources, adequate staffing, modern equipment, and established relationships with intermediate processors, GDC offers Aitkin County a dependable long-term partner.

We appreciate the opportunity to be considered and look forward to continuing our shared commitment to effective and responsible recycling services for the communities of Aitkin County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Adam Henderson".

Adam Henderson

GDC - Garrison Disposal



A. Description of the Proposer: Capabilities and Experience

Garrison Disposal (GDC) is a locally owned and operated solid waste and recycling company serving Aitkin County, Crow Wing County, Cass County, and surrounding areas of central and north-central Minnesota. Our operations encompass the full spectrum of solid waste and recycling services, including residential and commercial collection, recycling collection, drop-off recycling, roll-off container service, and transfer and consolidation operations.

GDC has direct prior experience operating the Aitkin County Recycling Center and the County's drop-off recycling system and is familiar with the operational, regulatory, and community expectations associated with this program. This familiarity with County facilities, service locations, and program expectations allows for seamless implementation and continuity of service.

GDC utilizes a shared staffing model across solid waste and recycling operations, allowing for operational flexibility, redundancy, and efficient use of personnel. All operations are supported by full-time employees. Issue response and service coordination are handled by a combination of our ownership team, general management, and customer service representatives, ensuring timely decision-making and direct accountability. No subcontracting, joint ventures, or third-party operational partnerships are proposed for the services outlined in this RFP.

B. Proposed Processing / Marketing Operations

GDC will provide processing and material management services consistent with the RFP base program. Recyclable materials collected from County drop-off sites and the Recycling Center will be weighed, consolidated, and transferred through GDC's own transfer facility and transported to intermediate processors or recycling facilities that support downstream marketing.

Operations and Equipment

- Contractor-owned handling and loading equipment
- Transfer and consolidation performed at permitted facilities
- Materials managed in accordance with applicable regulations
- Certified scales for weighing materials

Market Structure and Stability

Downstream marketing is supported through established relationships with regional recycling and intermediate processing facilities. This structure provides access to recycling markets while maintaining flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions. GDC makes no representation regarding specific end-markets and retains the ability to adjust material flows as necessary to maintain service continuity.



Safety

Safety is a core operational priority. GDC maintains driver safety training programs, equipment safety procedures, and public drop-off safety signage. Operations are conducted in compliance with applicable OSHA standards, MPCA requirements, and other relevant local, state, and federal regulations.

C. Proposed Collection Operations

GDC will provide complete collection services for all designated Aitkin County recycling drop-off centers identified in the RFP.

Collection Equipment and Containers

- A combination of roll-off trucks and commercial front-load trucks will be utilized as appropriate, depending on the site.
- Typical roll-off container size utilized for this program is expected to be 20 cubic yards, and typical commercial dumpster size will be 8 cubic yards.
- Recycling will be collected using a single-stream system.

Servicing, Response and Site Cleanliness

- Sites will be serviced as needed or on an on-call basis with a one-business-day response following notification. Full containers will either be removed and replaced with empty containers or dumped.
- Routine site inspections will occur during servicing.
- Cleanup of windblown material, contamination, or illegally dumped material associated with recycling activity.

Weighing and Recordkeeping

- Full roll-off containers will be weighed using GDC's certified scale at its transfer facility.
- Dumpster contents will be weighed using GDC's certified scale at its transfer facility. In certain circumstances, dumpster weights may be estimated using standard industry practices and/or historical averages.
- Detailed collection logs will be maintained in accordance with RFP requirements.

Recycling Center Operations

- The Recycling Center will operate as an unattended public drop-off facility during posted public hours. GDC personnel will conduct periodic site visits to perform material handling, equipment operation, cleanup, and routine maintenance activities.



- The Contractor will provide the following:
 - Regular housekeeping, litter control, snow removal, and minor repairs
 - Operation of Contractor-owned processing and handling equipment
 - Utility costs will be paid by the Contractor
- Large repairs and capital improvements to the building or site infrastructure shall remain the responsibility of the County.

D. Proposed Public Relations / Public Education Efforts

GDC recognizes that effective public education and communication are critical to the success of the County's recycling program. GDC will coordinate with the County, and local site hosts as appropriate, to support program awareness and site monitoring.

Education Materials and Signage

- Development of a County-approved recycling brochure outlining acceptable materials and preparation requirements.
- Installation and maintenance of clear instructional signage at all designated drop-off locations.
- Container labeling to reduce contamination and improve user compliance.

Digital Outreach

As an optional alternative to the base program, GDC also proposes a digital outreach program via the creation and partnered management of a dedicated Facebook page focused on recycling in Aitkin County, subject to County approval.



E. Cost Estimates

Base Program Cost Estimates

Site No.	City/Location	Establishment (As Host for Site)	Service Type/Materials	Minimum Frequency of Service	Proposed Containers	Per Dump/Haul Charge	Disposal/Processing Fee (\$/Ton)	(Optional) Disposal/Processing Fee (\$/YD)
1	Aitkin Co. Courthouse	Aitkin County	Unattended/Cardboard only	On Call	1-8 Yard On-Call	\$ 19.50	\$ 86.00	\$ 6.75
2	Aitkin Co. Recycling Center	County/Contractor	Attended/Full service	Empty as needed (On-site)	15-8 Yard On-Call	\$ 14.50	\$ 86.00	\$ 6.75
3	Aitkin High School	High School	Attended/Full service (For school use only)	On Call	1-8 Yard On-Call	\$ 19.50	\$ 86.00	\$ 6.75
4	Aitkin Rippleside Elem School	Elementary School	Attended/Full service (For school use only)	On Call	1-8 Yard On-Call	\$ 19.50	\$ 86.00	\$ 6.75
5	Hill City (new proposed site)	City of Hill City	Unattended/Full service	On Call	1-20 Yard On-Call	\$ 609.00	\$ 86.00	\$ 6.75
6	Hill City School	School	Unattended/Cardboard only (For school use only)	On Call	1-20 Yard On-Call	\$ 609.00	\$ 86.00	\$ 6.75
7	Long Lake Conservation Center	Conservation Center	Unattended/Full service	On Call	1-20 Yard On-Call	\$ 525.00	\$ 86.00	\$ 6.75
8	Malmo	Petry's By The Lake	Unattended/Full service	2nd and 4th Monday thru Thursday	1-20 Yard On-Call	\$ 525.00	\$ 86.00	\$ 6.75
9	McGrath	Pour Lewey's	Unattended/Full service	2nd Wednesday of Month thru Thursday	1-20 Yard On-Call	\$ 609.00	\$ 86.00	\$ 6.75
10	McGregor School	School	Unattended/Full service (For school use only)	On Call	1-20 Yard On-Call	\$ 525.00	\$ 86.00	\$ 6.75
11	Palisade	Palisade Public Works	Unattended/Full service	On Call	1-20 Yard On-Call	\$ 525.00	\$ 86.00	\$ 6.75
12	Savanna State Park	MN DNR	Unattended/Full service (For park guests only)	On Call (Seasonal)	1-20 Yard On-Call	\$ 609.00	\$ 86.00	\$ 6.75

Cost Notes and Inflation Adjustment

- Processing costs are embedded within the proposed hauling and disposal rates. No separate fixed processing fee is proposed.
- Proposed annual price adjustments are addressed in - Section I. 'Rate Adjustments and Regulatory Changes.'

F. Alternatives to the Base Proposal

In addition to the base program, GDC offers the following optional alternative services:

- Evaluation of additional or alternative drop-off locations to improve convenience and geographic equity.
- Optional digital outreach tools, such as a collaborative, County-approved recycling information Facebook page.
- An optional 10-Yard dedicated steel recycling roll-off dumpster located at the Aitkin County Recycling Center.



- Alternative pricing models can be prepared to meet the needs of the County.

Any additional or alternative services would be clearly described and priced separately from the base proposal, at the County's request.

G. Reporting and Documentation

GDC will provide all reports required by the RFP, including:

- Monthly collection and processing reports (due by the 15th of each month)
- Annual summary reports (due by February 15)
- Site-level data on weights, frequency, and contamination

H. Compliance, Insurance, and Financial Assurance

GDC affirms its ability to meet or exceed all legal, insurance, and bonding requirements specified in the RFP, including:

- Required liability and workers' compensation insurance
- Performance bond or irrevocable letter of credit
- Compliance with all local, state, and federal regulations

I. Prohibited Materials, Contamination, and Rate Adjustments

Description of Prohibited Materials

For purposes of this Agreement, "Prohibited Materials" include, but are not limited to: radioactive, volatile, corrosive, flammable, explosive, biomedical, infectious, bio-hazardous, or toxic substances or materials; regulated medical or hazardous waste as defined under applicable federal, state, or local laws or regulations; materials containing protected or regulated information in any format (including paper or electronic media) subject to privacy or data security laws such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), as amended; and any other materials that are deleterious or capable of causing damage to facilities, equipment, personnel, or the public, or that materially impair the operation, integrity, or durability of recycling equipment or infrastructure.

Contamination Management and Allocation of Responsibility

GDC will actively manage contamination and prohibited materials through public education, signage, container labeling, site maintenance, and operational best practices intended to reduce improper materials and protect recyclable commodities.

Notwithstanding these efforts, recyclable materials collected through attended and unattended public drop-off sites may contain contaminants and/or prohibited materials beyond the reasonable control of the Contractor. Routine management of these materials is included within normal processing operations. However, disposal and handling costs



associated with extraordinary contamination or prohibited material shall not automatically become the sole responsibility or property of the Contractor and may be addressed through pass-through costs, program adjustments, or other mutually agreed solutions between the County and Contractor.

Additional charges may be assessed for bulky or prohibited items, including but not limited to appliances, concrete, furniture, mattresses, tires, electronics, pallets, yard waste, propane tanks, and similar materials.

Market Conditions and Disposal

The Contractor reserves the right, upon notice and to the extent permitted by law, to discontinue acceptance of specific categories of recyclable materials due to changes in market conditions or regulatory requirements. No representation is made regarding the recyclability or market availability of any material.

Rate Adjustments and Regulatory Changes

Collection and hauling rates shall be subject to annual adjustment based on changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), Midwest Region, as published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, applied on the contract anniversary date. Disposal rates reflect third-party processing and disposal market conditions and may be adjusted to reflect documented changes in such market rates, including annual average pricing, regulatory fees, or other applicable charges. No CPI adjustment shall be applied to disposal rates.

J. Conclusion

GDC offers Aitkin County a proven, locally experienced, and operationally strong partner for recycling services. Our prior success with this program, combined with current staffing, equipment, and infrastructure, positions us to deliver dependable service, strong public outcomes, and long-term program stability.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this proposal and look forward to working with Aitkin County to continue improving recycling services for its residents and communities.

Adam Henderson
GDC – Garrison Disposal



AITKIN COUNTY

RFP for Recycling Services

DUE 3:00 PM Friday January 9th, 2026

SUBMITTED BY

WM of Baxter

CONTACT

Randy Ott | Senior Account Executive – Public Sector

218-256-9334 | rott1@wm.com





January 9th, 2026

Aitkin County Environmental Services
307 2nd St NW, Room 219
Aitkin, MN 56431

Dear Aitkin County:

WM is pleased to provide the enclosed proposal in response to your inquiry. We look forward to providing everything you need and expect in a recycling service provider; safe, reliable collection of recycling, and responsive customer service. We also provide:

- **Dedicated Account Manager** – Randy Ott - Senior Account Executive – Public Sector will be your point of contact for this contract. He will provide Aitkin County with customized, local support and answer questions or address service requests immediately.
- **A Personalized Customer Service Experience** – Our team is designed to provide the highest level of customer satisfaction, from on-the-street collection to our customer service center. You will benefit from our 24/7 customer service capabilities such as digital live chat, after-hours customer service features, and a convenient mobile app.
- **Advanced Service Technologies** – Using real-time service confirmation, GPS tracking, and proprietary routing technology allows us to provide the most consistent service standards. In addition, our integrated systems work together to maximize collection reliability.

WM is committed to offering the best service and value for Aitkin County.

Sincerely,

Randy Ott

Randy Ott – Senior Account Executive
218-256-9334 | rott1@wm.com

WM: Who We Are and What We Do – For You

When you work with WM, you tap into more than just waste collection – you gain access to a powerful network of resources backed by decades of experience serving various industries across the U.S. and Canada. From collection to disposal, our technology and infrastructure are built to handle every part of your environmental services – efficiently and responsibly.

With a global team of ~61,700 professionals and the industry's largest network of facilities, WM brings unmatched technical capability. Leveraging our local know-how, we help you reduce waste, improve operations, and work toward your environmentally focused goals with practical, proven offerings.

Let us help you turn today's waste into tomorrow's opportunity.

WM At-A-Glance

People	Operations		
-61,700* team members	\$22 billion* revenue	262* operating landfills	18,347 collection vehicles
Material is Repurposed	Energy is Renewable	Communities are Thriving	
105* recycling facilities	12,000 alternative-fuel vehicles	800+ community organizations supported through monetary and in-kind contributions	
49 organics processing facilities	18 landfill gas-to-energy facilities	13,500 acres actively managed through certified wildlife habitat programs	
15.2 million tons of material recovered in 2023	-200 natural gas fueling stations	300 habitat, species, and education projects	
3 CORe® facilities processing organics into bio slurry	136 renewable energy projects owned or hosted at WM landfills	70+ Wildlife Habitat Council-certified programs across North America	

Data represents information published in the WM 2024 Sustainability Report.

*Figure reflects more recent update in the WM 2024 Annual Report.

Financial Strength

WM's financial strength is the foundation for our commitment to serve our customers, perform our obligations, and protect the environment in conducting our broad waste management services.

Revenue in 2024 was \$22 billion, and WM has an asset base of \$44.6 billion. The company generates strong and consistent cash flow and has access to an extensive line of credit.

WM's financial strength gives you assurance that we can and will fulfill our obligations.



- WM is committed and financially able to perform all operations in full compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations and to provide clear documentation of that compliance.
- WM offers the most extensive network providing waste management services in North America, including transportation, disposal, treatment, recovery, remediation, waste identification, and several other specialty services. This network enables us to provide a single source of responsibility, from transportation through disposal of waste.
- New capital requirements are internally financed by WM using cash flow from existing operations - freeing our new trucks, carts, containers, and facility investments from the timelines and terms of third-party creditors.

WM's financial strength helps us to continually advance services for all the customers we serve and we are committed to maintaining that strength.

Operations - Industry-Leading Onboard Technology

Our fleet of trucks is equipped with our onboard computing system (OCS), which enhances communication between our operations and customer service teams. OCS replaced paper route books with electronic route sheets that are updated in real time. Collection drivers see all stops and service tickets on their touch screens, which can be updated remotely and in actual time by our route managers and dispatchers. Drivers use their OCS to log completion of each service performed.

Our OCS is complemented by the following industry-leading software and technology:

- **eRouteLogistics®:** Customized mapping and routing software system used to develop and modify routes.
- **Plan Versus Actual (PvA) Technology:** Software that plots planned route versus actual route status.
- **Integrated Onboard Computer System:** Our state-of-the-art onboard computing system on each truck is integrated with our dispatch teams' in-office software to facilitate seamless communication and service delivery.
- **WM Smart Truck® Technology:** Our Smart Truck® technology documents service data through sensors and onboard cameras to provide real-time service verification and overage and contamination recognition. Data collected on route, which includes GPS mapping and photo and video documentation of service, is reviewed by a WM audit team. If an issue is identified, such as contamination or overage, the customer receives a notification based on their communication preferences.
- **DriveCam®:** Forward-facing camera that constantly records whenever there is a sudden movement, such as hard braking, swerving, or a collision.

Safety: A Core Value for WM

Safety is a core value for our company. We understand the magnitude of the responsibility we have and strive to confirm that each task, piece of equipment, and company policy and procedure reinforces safe actions and behaviors.

Overall injury rates in our industry have improved in recent years and WM's performance in this area has ranked among the best. We actively work with our trade association, the National Waste & Recycling Association, to advance safety within our industry and among our customer bases.

You do not need to search long to see how we fulfill our commitment to safety – it is woven into everything we do – from hiring practices to training to advancing safety technologies to preventive maintenance.

Once hired, our drivers undergo intensive immersion training at our state-of-the-art training centers. Over two weeks, drivers gain experience through classroom training and simulated driving courses that reflect real-life obstacles. At the end of training, each driver receives a comprehensive evaluation that confirms their understanding of and commitment to WM's culture of safety.

Ethical Responsibility

At the core of everything we do is our firm commitment to adhere to ethical business standards and practices. We have been recognized annually as an Ethical Leader by many organizations, including Ethisphere Institute as a "World's Most Ethical Company" in 2025 for the 16th year, as well as by the Better Business Bureau, Wildlife Habitat Council, and the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes. These honors reflect our commitment to our employees who strive to take care of our customers, communities, shareholders, environment, and each other.

Environmental Stewardship

Environmental stewardship is the core of our business - our promise to customers, our competitive advantage, and our obligation to the locations in which we operate. In a business as highly regulated as ours, protecting the environment, maintaining compliance, and innovating to improve operations requires an unwavering focus, expertise, comprehensive systems, and internal checks and balances. We have a long track record of supporting high regulatory standards and striving to go beyond them.

Unparalleled Recycling Program

As North America's leading post-consumer recycler and largest marketer of residential recyclables, WM has been leading change in the ever-growing and dynamic recycling industry for more than three decades. From the \$1 billion we have invested in recycling processing infrastructure to the 14.8 million tons in recyclables we managed in 2023 to the industry's first recycling education program, Recycle Right® - WM is committed to making our world more sustainable.

World-Class Customer Service

At WM, our core principles guide everything we do. Providing world-class customer service is at the top of our list. For our customers, a positive customer service experience rarely goes unnoticed, and we believe those everyday interactions are our best opportunity to provide you an exceptional experience. We have been nationally recognized for our commitment to unsurpassed customer service and combined with our tested processes and innovative new technologies, we bring you a level of service reliability and customer satisfaction that is truly unmatched.

Commitment to Near-Zero Emissions

Since the early 1990s, WM has prioritized equipment efficiency and innovation to reduce our vehicles' greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, in part by converting our diesel trucks to run on cleaner natural gas. For every diesel truck we replace with natural gas we reduce our use of diesel fuel by an average of 8,000 gallons per year along with a reduction of 14 metric tons of GHG emissions per year - the equivalent of a 15% emissions reduction per truck. WM's fleet now includes 11,307 natural gas trucks, the largest heavy-duty natural gas truck fleet of its kind in North America.

Proven Employee Hiring Practices

To provide the safest and most secure service, our employees undergo comprehensive background checks and drug testing. Prior to employment, all driver candidates must possess a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) for Class-C trucks and must pass a Department of Transportation (DOT) medical exam. Once employed, all drivers are subject to ongoing drug and alcohol screenings.

Awards & Recognition: Excellence You Can Expect

With WM, you get more than basic service – you get a team that strives for excellence in everything we do. Our awards reflect the consistent care, innovation, and integrity we bring to every customer we serve. While we are honored for the recognition in the following areas, driving excellence is part of our culture – even when no one is watching.

Environmental & Community Impact: WM is proud to be recognized for environmental leadership that supports real, measurable outcomes. These awards reflect our ongoing efforts to help manage materials responsibly and protect ecosystems.

- **Barron's 100 Most Sustainable U.S. Companies** (2024)
- **Corporate Conservation Leadership Award – Gold Program of the Year** (Wildlife Habitat Council, 2023–2024)
- **Newsweek's America's Most Responsible Companies** (2023–2024)
- **S&P Global Gold Sustainability Yearbook Award** (2023–2024)
- **TIME's World's Best Companies** (2023)

These recognitions affirm WM's ability to deliver solutions that are both practical and environmentally responsible, while offering transparency as we help you work toward sustainability-focused goals.

Ethical Leadership: In the simplest terms, our values come down to this: Do the Right Thing. The Right Way. This core value not only has a ring to it – it is how we operate. WM has been consistently recognized for ethical business practices that build trust and deliver value.

- **Ethisphere's World's Most Ethical Companies** (2025)
- **Newsweek's World's Most Trustworthy Companies** (2024)
- **Fortune's World's Most Admired Companies** (2024)



These honors reflect our commitment to accountability and integrity – qualities that directly benefit you through reliable, respectful service.

People First, Always: Our people are the heart of WM. We invest in their growth and well-being so they can deliver exceptional service to you.

- **Forbes Global 2000** (2024)
- **Forbes America's Best Employers** (2023)
- **Selling Power's 50 Best Companies to Sell For** (2023)

Veteran Hiring and Support: With thousands of veterans on our team, WM values the skills and dedication they bring. Our efforts to support military talent have been widely recognized.

- **Forbes Best Employers for Veterans** (2024)

Choose WM as your trusted provider – backed by award-winning excellence you can count on.



Pricing & Required Documents

LIST OF DESIGNATED DROP-OFF CENTERS FOR THE BASE PROGRAM PRICING

1. Aitkin Co. Courthouse	CM	1- 8yd 1x Per Week	\$180.06	Rate Per Month
2. Aitkin Co. Recycling Center	CM	20 - 8 yds 3x Per Week	\$31.94	Ticketed Rate Per Container
3. Aitkin High School	CM	1- 8yd On Call	\$59.28	Rate Per Pickup
4. Aitkin Rippleside Elementary	CM	1- 8yd 1x Per Week	\$180.06	Rate Per Month
5. Hill City School	CM	1- 8yd E/O Week	\$66.30	Rate Per Month
6. Hill City (new proposed site)	Roll Off	20 yd	\$586.69	Rate Per Haul No Disposal
7. Long Lake Conservation	Roll Off	20 yd	\$563.33	Rate Per Haul No Disposal
8. Malmo	Roll Off	20 yd	\$515.56	Rate Per Haul No Disposal
9. McGrath	Roll Off	20 yd	\$819.58	Rate Per Haul No Disposal
10. McGregor School	Roll Off	20 yd	\$520.61	Rate Per Haul No Disposal
11. Palisade	Roll Off	20 yd	\$557.50	Rate Per Haul No Disposal
12. Savana State Park	Roll Off	20 yd	\$558.25	Rate Per Haul No Disposal

* All refuse prices are exclusive of Tax and would begin as shown March 1st, 2026.

Waste Management will implement an annual price adjustment on the anniversary of the contract starting with first adjustment on 3/1/2027 when proceeding with a 5 – year agreement. The scheduled increase on all services will be 100% of the change in the Consumer Price Index (“CPI”) Water, Sewer, Trash (“WST”) 12 month rolling average or 5% whichever is greater, published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In addition, the charges shall be adjusted to reflect any new or increases in disposal or processing costs, federal, state, county, or local taxes or fees.

Rates proposed are flat rates, no fuel, environmental, or cost recovery charge fees. Contamination charges may apply if recycling is contaminated per the following Single-Stream Specifications. Contamination charges are currently set at \$12/serviced cubic yard. Acceptable contamination level is currently set to 0%.

*Rates are subject to a fuel surcharge in accordance with Attachment A – “Fuel Surcharge Table” if fuel is above \$4.00/gallon.



Attachment A – Fuel Surcharge Table

The published index for determining monthly diesel prices will be the Department of Energy's (DOE) "Weekly Retail On-Highway Diesel Prices" for the Midwest region. The price published for the first Monday of the month will be used as

that month's diesel fuel price. The prices can be viewed at the DOE's website: ("EIA/DOE"). If diesel fuel is below \$4.00 per gallon, the fuel surcharge will be 0 percent. If diesel fuel is at or above \$4.00 per gallon, the following percentages will apply to Waste Management's base rate.

<u>Diesel Fuel Price per Gallon</u>	<u>Fuel Surcharge</u>
<\$4.00	0%
\$4.00 to \$4.24	2%
\$4.25 to \$4.49	3%
\$4.50 to \$4.74	4%
For every \$0.25 per gallon increase above \$4.75	The Fuel Surcharge will increase by 1%



SINGLE STREAM SPECIFICATIONS

RECYCLABLES must be dry, loose (not bagged), unshredded, empty, and include ONLY the following:

Aluminum cans	Newspaper
PET bottles with the symbol #1 - with screw tops only	Mail
HDPE plastic bottles with the symbol #2 (milk, water bottles detergent, and shampoo bottles, etc.)	Uncoated paperboard (ex. cereal boxes; food and snack boxes)
PP plastic bottles and tubs with symbol # 5 - empty	Uncoated printing, writing and office paper
Steel and tin cans	Old corrugated containers/cardboard (uncoated)
Glass food and beverage containers* - brown, clear, or green	Magazines, glossy inserts and pamphlets

NON-RECYCLABLES include, but are not limited to the following:

Plastic bags and bagged materials (even if containing Recyclables)	Microwavable trays
Porcelain and ceramics	Mirrors, window or auto glass
Light bulbs	Coated cardboard
Soiled paper, including paper plates, cups and pizza boxes	Plastics not listed above including but not limited to those with symbols #3*, #4*, #6*, #7* and unnumbered plastics, including utensils
Expanded polystyrene	Coat hangers
Glass and metal cookware/bakeware	Household appliances and electronics,
Hoses, cords, wires	Yard waste, construction debris, and wood
Flexible plastic or film packaging and multi-laminated materials	Needles, syringes, IV bags or other medical supplies
Food waste and liquids, containers containing such items	Textiles, cloth, or any fabric (bedding, pillows, sheets, etc.)
Excluded Materials or containers which contained Excluded Materials	Napkins, paper towels, tissue, paper plates, and paper cups
Any paper Recyclable materials or pieces of paper Recyclables less than 4" in size in any dimension	Propane tanks, batteries
Cartons*	Aseptic Containers*

DELIVERY SPECIFICATIONS:

Material delivered by or on behalf of City may not contain Non-Recyclables or Excluded Materials. "Excluded Materials" means radioactive, volatile, corrosive, flammable, explosive, biomedical, infectious, bio-hazardous or toxic substance or material, or regulated medical or hazardous waste as defined by, characterized or listed under applicable federal, state, or local laws or regulations, materials containing information (in hard copy or electronic format, or otherwise) which information is protected or regulated under any local, state or federal privacy or data security laws, including, but not limited to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, as amended, or other regulations or ordinances or other materials that are deleterious or capable of causing material damage to any part of WM's property, its personnel or the public or materially impair the strength or the durability of WM's structures or equipment.

WM may reject in whole or in part, or may process, in its sole discretion, Recyclables not meeting the specifications, including wet materials, and City shall pay WM for all increased costs, losses and expenses incurred with respect to such non-conforming Recyclables including costs for handling, processing, transporting and/or disposing of such non-conforming Recyclable Materials which charges may include an amount for WM's operating or profit margin ("Cost"). Without limiting the foregoing, and City shall pay a contamination charge for additional handling, processing, transporting and/or disposing of Non-Recyclables, Excluded Materials, and/or all or part of non-conforming loads and additional charges may be assessed for bulky items such as appliances, concrete, furniture, mattresses, tires, electronics, pallets, yard waste, propane tanks, etc.

WM reserves the right upon notice to discontinue acceptance of any category of materials set forth above as a result of market conditions related to such materials and makes no representations as to the recyclability of the materials. Collected Recyclables for which no commercially reasonable market exists may be landfilled at City's Cost.

* Glass may not be accepted in all locations. Cartons, aseptic containers and other plastics may be allowed if approved in writing by WM.

**Waste Management of Minnesota, Inc.'s (Contractor)
Exceptions to the Aitkin County, MN RFP
for Recycling Services
December 2025**

PDF Page #	Section	Description of Exception
5	6. Monthly Reports	Contractor takes exception and would delete "if the Contractor submits a written request under the procedures specified in the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13), from the end of the third sentence.
6	D. Termination	Contractor takes exception and would insert, "after giving Contractor written notice of thirty (30) days to cure the breach." at the end of the last sentence.
7	7a. Ownership and Responsibility of Material	Contractor takes exception and would add the following language to the end of the sentence: Any other nonhazardous waste materials resulting from illegal dumping at an Unattended Drop-off Center may be handled by Contractor in its sole discretion. Contractor reserves the right to increase rates charged the County and/or assess contamination charges in the event such nonhazardous waste material becomes excessive.

Additional Provisions

Force Majeure

Neither Party shall be in default for its failure to perform or delay in performance caused by events beyond its reasonable control, including, but not limited to, strikes, lock outs, labor disputes, riots, imposition of laws or governmental orders, fires, pandemic and government orders related thereto, acts of God, and inability to obtain equipment, and the affected party shall be excused from performance during the occurrence of such events; provided, that if the force majeure circumstances persist for more than thirty (30) days, the other Party may terminate this Agreement and any or all SOWs without further penalty or liability.