

Comprehensive Policy Plan  
"Utilities"

Policy Letter 506: Volume-Based Garbage Fees

**BACKGROUND:**

One of the few public services that are offered to citizens of Fargo at a rate that is not volume-based is the disposal of solid waste. The City requires local residents to dispose of yard waste at centrally located recycle sites, but generally speaking, there is no limit to the amount of solid waste a resident can deposit on the curb.

The estimated life of the Fargo Landfill is approximately 35 years. Federal regulations have placed restrictions on the use and care of landfills that restrict small communities from having a local landfill. Because of this, Fargo has evolved into a regional landfill, serving numerous communities and private solid waste haulers. Based on continuous changes in the solid waste management program, forecasting for the future siting of a Fargo landfill is difficult. All efforts should be made to reduce the volume of solid waste arriving at the landfill, and the fees charged to dispose of the waste should be balanced for all citizens.

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

**A strong enforcement system must supplement the Solid Waste Management Plan to discourage illegal dumping and encourage waste reduction and recycling programs.**

**CONCLUSION:**

The City of Fargo provides a reliable and cost-effective service that is essential to the residents of Fargo. This solid waste disposal service should have utility rates that reward those who recycle and reduce solid waste, and charge accordingly those residents with higher solid waste volumes.

One concern in managing this program will be in the consideration of charging residents who deposit solid waste in dumpsters at apartments. No program can be flawless, but the current policy for solid waste disposal rates are not in line with the volume-based policies established with other utility service rates.