

Recently Asked Questions about Silverton's New Curbside Recycling Effort

Can a two-family housing unit get more than one recycling bin? Can a four-family housing unit get more than two recycling bins?

Yes! Under the contract with the Village, Rumpke will provide one wheeled recycling cart per household, so two-family units can have two and four-family units can have four wheeled carts. If you are in one of these units and want more carts, simply email Chloe Coleman at C.Coleman@Silvertonohio.us. Chloe will hook you up.

Rumpke's experience has been that in most other cities in our region, a two-family unit can share one cart and a four-family unit can share two, and because storage space can be at a premium for most multi-family units, Rumpke starts out with a shared cart approach. Again, anyone living in a two-family or four-family that wants another wheeled cart needs to only contact Chloe and she will have Rumpke deliver more.

I recycle a lot. My 65-gallon cart is full before the every-other-week collection. Can I get a second cart? Can I use another container to hold my recycling?

Thanks for recycling a lot! Silverton is striving to divert 20% of our community's waste stream by 2020, and we are starting at just 6%. We appreciate everyone doing their part to meet this community goal!

The Village will look into the costs of having high-recycling households receive a second wheeled recycling cart. If you are interested in having another wheeled 65-gallon cart, contact Chloe and she will see what she can do with Rumpke. She can be reached at C.Coleman@Silvertonohio.us.

In addition, you can use other boxes or containers for recycled material. We encourage this. The Rumpke recycling collection crew will gladly take recycling from any container that is clearly being used for recycling. Many homes still have the red, 18-gallon recycling containers, which work great and will still be gladly emptied by Rumpke.

Why did Silverton not offer weekly recycling collection instead of every-other-week?

Two main reasons for this approach. For most Silverton households, every-other-week recycling is perfectly adequate. Most Silverton residents are new recyclers and won't fill their 65-gallon cart within two weeks. And from Rumpke's perspective, sending a recycling truck down every street to collect recycling carts that are less than half full is not cost effective. Overall, this every-other-week approach is environmentally more efficient because this solution cuts in half the number of truck trips to collect Silverton's recyclables.

Second, Rumpke is trying to move away from weekly recycling pickup wherever and whenever they can. They are bidding recycling around our region that incentivizes fortnightly recycling. For Silverton to have offered weekly recycling collections, it would have cost an additional \$1.35 per month per household based on the 2017 bid results. This additional fee means that Silverton would simply have not offered curbside recycling at all. Some communities like Deer Park and Amberley Village that had weekly recycling before the 2017 Rumpke bid saw weekly recycling increases that were very sharp because Rumpke is trying to move every community to fortnightly recycling. In the end, Deer Park and Amberley

policy makers decided to keep the weekly recycling, but they are paying a lot more for this same level of service they had before.

Many communities are expected to move to fortnightly service in the coming years because weekly recycling will be too expensive. This is simply the direction in which the marketplace is going. With the introduction of this new service in Silverton in 2018 it seemed better to start curbside recycling with the level of service (every other week) that other communities will be heading towards in the near future.

Will Silverton's price go up in the coming years?

Yes. The price charged to residents today is \$13.24 per household per month. In July of 2019 the monthly price per household will go to \$14.24, and in July of 2020 it will rise again to \$15.24. That monthly price will remain fixed at \$15.24 until June of 2022. It is inaccurate, though, to say that this is more expensive because Silverton's solid waste prices had to be rebid anyway. Cost increases were inevitable. Given the uncertainty in fuel prices, labor costs, environmental regulations, global recycling market change (i.e. "the Chinese Sword"), and economic business cycles, prices for recycling and trash service are expected to rise sharply in the next five years. Locking in our community's solid waste and recycling price as far out as Ohio law allows a municipality to do is in every resident's best interest.

And look at the cost to Rumpke customers in adjacent Sycamore Township. Starting August 1, residents in Sycamore who subscribe for trash and recycling with Rumpke will pay \$18.55 per month, plus a fuel surcharge that goes up or down with the price of oil. According to Rumpke, this surcharge is presently around \$2-3 per month per household. By pooling our buying power together and bidding with other units of local government, Silverton's price in 2018 is more than \$5 per month per household cheaper not even accounting for the fuel surcharge! And Silverton's price is fixed for five years going forward.

This new recycling approach seems to penalize those of us who recycled before. Is it accurate to say we are getting less frequent recycling collection but paying more?

It is NOT accurate to say that. While subscribers received weekly collection through June and the Village's service is now every other week, people who paid for subscription recycling actually are seeing a reduction in their monthly charge starting in July. Subscribers used to pay \$2.75 per month to Rumpke and \$12.06 per month through the Greater Cincinnati Water bill through the end of June. Starting July 1, 2018, the Silverton rate will be \$13.24 per month per household, or a \$1.18 rate increase but the \$2.75 Rumpke subscriber charge goes away. Not that it is life changing, but Silverton subscribers save \$1.57 per month in the first year under the new Village program.

It is perfectly accurate to say households that used to recycle are getting less frequent service. It is not accurate to say they are paying more for the lower level of service because the price is actually lower for at least the next two years. And recycling costs for subscribers in other areas will be going up a lot in the coming years, so you have to look at the costs over the next five years, not just today. Nobody can state with certainty that this approach will cost people who subscribed more in the end because we simply don't know yet what subscribers would have paid in the coming years. But the market is moving in a direction that is expected to be much more costly for subscribing households in the near future.

I recycle so much that I don't really need weekly trash collection, but I would prefer weekly recycling instead. Is this possible?

Weekly trash collection is really a public health need, especially this time of year. Trash in a hot trash can starts to rot and smell, attract vermin, and pose a health risk to all. So, moving away from weekly trash is not a viable public policy option, even for those who put out a minimal amount of trash.

Can I pay Rumpke more to have weekly recycling?

No. Again, Rumpke is trying to move everyone to every-other-week recycling.

Where do we put our composting?

We do not offer curbside organic collections. This is common in parts of Europe, but has yet to catch on in most parts in the United States. Silverton households are free to start their own backyard composting system. Michelle Balz of the Hamilton County Solid Waste District is planning to come back to Silverton in the fall to give a composting class at the Silverton Block Watch Association. This has not been scheduled yet, so please keep an eye out for notice on Facebook and in the Silverton e-Connector.

Why do we require people to pay for recycling?

You cannot separate trash and recycling services. They are opposite sides of the same coin. Cities in our region structure the costs of these services differently. Madeira, our neighbor to the east, provides every household a 35-gallon trash can and free recycling. But, in Madeira, if you have more trash than fits in your 35-gallon can, you have to pay more for it. This is a strong economic incentive to recycle more, but residents who generate a lot of trash don't like this model. Some townships in our region don't bundle and bid trash or recycling services at all—every household subscribes on their own. As detailed earlier, this is the case in neighboring Sycamore Township, and Sycamore residents pay at least \$5 more per month even without factoring in Rumpke's subscriber fuel surcharge. This township approach of not having a community-wide contract for trash and recycling is more expensive per household, and it generates more truck trips because it is common to have two trash haulers serving different houses on the same street.

The Village of Silverton's policy objective for many years has been to charge as little as possible for trash service. This is because our community has a sizeable low- to moderate-income population and many retirees on fixed incomes. Price has been and continues to be a big concern for Village Council. Council modified its policy objective to add curbside recycling for all homes this July after our 2017 bid. To soften the fiscal impact to our residents, Council is writing down the full cost of the new recycling service for the next two years with tax dollars to phase in the full \$15.24 rate over time. Using tax dollars for solid waste services is uncommon in our region, especially for modest communities like Silverton. Communities typically fund trash and recycling with user fees. But Council was concerned about impacting residents too much too fast with the full costs of curbside recycling from user fees alone.

Most communities in our region include recycling with their basic trash service, regardless of how the costs are divided. Silverton recycles less than half of the typical Hamilton County community. And 85% of Silverton's households had decided not to recycle through subscription. Thus, the Silverton community lagged far behind our regional peers on this important environmental measure, as evidenced by our 6%

recycling rate. The Village's goal is to lessen our community's environmental impact and recycle at least 20% of our waste stream by 2020. This required a policy change to make it more convenient for the entire community, and thus Silverton is implementing this new program even as we phase in its full cost per household.

As with any change in policy, there are some who benefit and some who will not. Some households in our community will pay for recycling and trash services but choose not to recycle. Other households who had weekly recycling by subscription will have to adapt to fortnightly recycling instead. Everyone will have to keep track of whether or not it is a recycling week on their trash day. But the policy change will lead to a higher rate of community recycling overall, thus benefitting the environment. And those among us who were willing to subscribe for recycling before should, in the final analysis, support this policy change because of its overall environmental benefits, even if it has its inconveniences on an individual level.

The Village of Silverton is open to your comments or suggestions. Please email Tom Carroll at T.Carroll@Silvertonohio.us and Chloe Coleman at C.Chloe@Silvertonohio.us with any questions or suggestions and we will get back to you very soon.

Why is the Village promoting recycling at all?

The new curbside recycling program is part a broader environmental effort by the Village of Silverton. The Village purchases all of the power the Village uses for public buildings, street lights, traffic controllers, parks, and other public facilities from 100% renewable power sources. The Village began this effort in 2017, and still saves money over what the Village paid for electricity from 2014 to 2016. The source of Silverton's power is wind turbines. This year, when renovating the space that is the new Town Hall, the Village installed a geothermal heating and cooling system that will dramatically reduce the amount of power it takes to operate the building. Council recently changed the Zoning Code to facilitate solar panel installations in our business districts. A \$2.5 million intersection improvement at Montgomery and Stewart that is already underway will not only improve safety and accommodate new development, it will improve efficiency and thus reduce idling for many of the 31,000 cars and trucks that go through that intersection every day.

Silverton is taking a series of steps to be better environmental stewards because it is the right thing to do. Recycling is part of an overall effort to reduce our community's carbon footprint and have a more sustainable future.