# Whatcom County

# Draft Comprehensive Solid Waste

# MPj04075320000[1]MPj04013610000[1]Management Plan

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**Revised 2008**

## Plan Summary

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### What This Plan Covers

This Plan is intended to help protect and preserve human health, environmental quality, and natural resources by guiding solid and moderate risk waste efforts and decisions in Whatcom County between 2008 and 2012, and influencing them further into the future. The Plan does not detail the solid waste related activities which will be undertaken by local government, but instead discusses the types of activities necessary if solid waste generated within the county is to be managed in a safe and economical manner. This document is divided into four sections:

**Section**

1. **Introduction, purpose and structure**
2. **Five-Year Plan which describes what is to be accomplished between 2008 and 2012**
3. **Twenty-Year Plan which presents the mission and goals for solid waste management within the county**
4. **Background section**

Throughout this Plan the term “the system” is used to denote the Whatcom County Solid Waste Management System. The system refers to the Disposal of Toxics Facility (Moderate Risk Waste Facility) and activities undertaken by the Whatcom County Public Works Department, Solid Waste Division, and financed by excise tax on hauled garbage and appropriate available grant funding. The facility is operated and activities undertaken in order to fulfill the responsibilities delegated to Whatcom County under Washington law, the mutual responsibilities assumed by the County and its 7 cities and towns under the terms of their interlocal agreements, and the responsibilities arising from this Plan.

### Mission Statement

**To facilitate an economically efficient waste prevention, recycling and disposal system that protects human health and the environment for the citizens of Whatcom County. Develop, monitor and enforce various federal, state and local government plans, laws, regulations and grants.**

Based on this mission, the following goals were developed:

#### The Goals

To reduce, or prevent where possible, the generation of solid and moderate risk wastes and their associated problems through service-oriented, cost-effective actions where prevention or reduction will protect human health, safety and environmental quality.

To solve problems related to solid and moderate risk waste through service- oriented actions that protect human health and safety, and environmental quality.

To provide necessary support for the other two goals, using service-oriented, cost-effective actions.

### Plan Organization

The Twenty-Year Plan, presented in the third section of this document, is a compilation of the tasks necessary to accomplish these three goals. The Five-Year Plan, presented in the second section, contains those tasks which must be accomplished relatively quickly.

### Five-Year Plan

The Five-Year Action Plan was developed by analyzing the activities from the Twenty-Year Plan, and selecting those considered to be most effective in resolving the planning issues established earlier in the planning process. Some of the issues and tasks designed to resolve them are summarized below, and will be undertaken as part of the Five-Year Plan.

* **Ongoing planning/public policy decision-making mechanism** – this Plan must be kept current, which requires future decisions to be made in an intelligent and timely manner. An important component of this update was the development of a plan modification and revision mechanism. The mechanism permits deviating from the Five-Year Plan by dropping activities, or by undertaking activities from the Twenty-Year Plan after notification to SWAC, all cities and towns, and DOE, followed by a County Council vote.
* **Moderate risk wastes** – the Five-Year Plan calls for Whatcom County Public Works and the Health Department to continue their efforts in education regarding pollution prevention and safe disposal. It intends for the Health Department to continue its compliance activities, and for the system to continue its efforts to make it convenient, safe, and economical for residents and small quantity generators to dispose of moderate risk wastes.
* **Waste prevention** – while the wisdom of recycling is generally accepted, it would be even more advantageous to, where practical, avoid producing waste in the first place. This Plan call for continuing to develop and implement programs designed to prevent waste and pollution, largely in coordination with recycling and other programs.
* **Recycling** – This Plan calls for continuing the goal of the previous plan to achieve a 50% recycling rate. However, if that goal is reached, it can be re-examined with a new goal set forth. With that in mind, the system will continue its existing educational efforts, along with a series of coordinated programs designed to optimize private sector recycling efforts.
* **Illegal dumping and enforcement issues** - Whatcom County Public Works, along with the Health Department will continue its efforts to provide litter pick-up and illegal dumpsite cleanups, as well as enforce current regulations to help stop illegal dumping.
* **Special wastes** – opportunities for disposing of wastes, which require special handling and/or disposal, because of their hazardous nature, or their physical qualities, must be available.
* **Content of disposed material** – there are still things being disposed of with solid waste, which shouldn’t, such as household and small quantity generator moderate risks, and recyclables.

Finally, in addition to the activities designed to resolve a particular issue, some activities called for in the Five-Year Plan support the resolution of all issues, or are basic to accomplishing the mission of the system. These activities include compliance and environmental protection activities undertaken by the Health Department as well as by the system, communicating and coordinating with appropriate parties, collecting and analyzing necessary data, and evaluating the system’s activities in order to improve them.

## Plan Sections

Section 1 . . . . Purpose and structure

 Section 2 . . . . Planning Issues

 Section 3 . . . . The Twenty-Year Plan

 Section 4 . . . . Planning Background

 Appendices:

1. SEPA Compliance
2. Whatcom County Code
3. WUTC Cost Assessment
4. Sample Interlocal Agreement
5. Maps