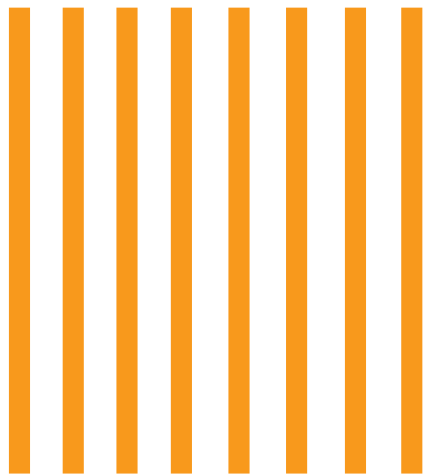




Serving Counties Since 1886

County Recycling Fee Authorization

COUNTY GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES



Fact Sheet 2007

Many counties throughout the Commonwealth provide supplemental recycling services to their constituents, including household hazardous waste pickup, recycling of electronics and tires, recycling drop-off centers and tire recycling. In more than half the counties, these services have been funded by a county administrative fee levied on trash collected in the county. These services are now in danger of being cut or eliminated as the result of a Commonwealth Court decision declaring these administrative fees illegal, leaving these counties without a revenue source to fund these programs. Counties seek authority from the General Assembly to levy a fee that will replace the revenue that was previously generated by the administrative fee.

Act 101, the Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling and Waste Reduction Act, requires all counties to develop municipal waste management plans. The Act also establishes a variety of grants that are available to counties and municipalities to develop these plans, fund partial staff expenses for a recycling coordinator and pay partial expenses for household hazardous waste recycling programs. The county administrative fee levied by 42 counties in the Commonwealth provided the remainder of the revenue necessary to fund these programs. This fee was assessed on waste haulers who delivered waste from the county to a landfill.

In a 2005 opinion, the Commonwealth Court ruled that because the General Assembly has not granted express authority to counties to impose an administrative fee, counties could not collect an administrative fee to fund recycling programs. The decision means that many supplemental recycling programs are in jeopardy, and many counties are evaluating the services they have been able to provide with the administrative fund revenues and are scaling back programs accordingly. It can be reasonably projected such scale backs will have a number of detrimental environmental impacts, including more hazardous waste in landfills, and more illegal dumping on public and private lands.

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The Association seeks a funding source to replace the county administrative fee. Counties support an amendment to Act 101 to grant authority for counties to levy a fee that would be used for county solid waste planning and administration.

For more information on the county administrative fee and recycling programs counties administer, contact Kristen Goshorn at 717-232-7554 x 3113, or kgoshorn@pacounties.org.