



County Council

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Snohomish County Council Encourages Waste Reduction

On Monday April 22nd, the Snohomish County Council passed resolution 19-015, encouraging Snohomish County to participate in waste reduction and waste prevention efforts in its daily operations. In 2013, Snohomish County adopted the Sustainable Operations Action Plan (also known as SOAP) to integrate environmentally sustainable practices into County government operations.

“This resolution is a great thing for our County and I want to thank Council Vice-Chair Nate Nehring and Councilmember Sam Low for proposing it,” said County Council Chair Terry Ryan.

“I am grateful to the Council for supporting this waste reduction resolution,” said Council Vice-Chair Nehring. “I am proud of our commitment to divert waste from landfills and promote more sustainable waste disposal.”

During the first two years of SOAP implementation, over 464 tons of waste were diverted from landfills including:

- 312 tons in due to composting food waste at the County Jail
- An average of 49 tons per year due to the Zero Waste Fair Initiative
- 103 tons from adding new recycling infrastructure across County facilities

“Through these innovative initiatives we are taking important steps to increase our environmental stewardship,” said Councilmember Sam Low.

The Snohomish County Council supports expanding waste prevention efforts in the County’s daily operations. The County Council supports including new waste prevention and reduction focus strategies in the proposed 2019 SOAP update, including the following:

- Expand the Zero Waste Initiative at the Evergreen State Fair to a year-round effort for all Fairgrounds events and operations.
- Increased education to County employees about recycling best-practices and procurement options for purchasing recyclable materials, compostable food service products, and materials with recycled content.
- Expand on the EPP by developing green purchasing standards for specific product types;

- Provide employee education and training on the County's Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy, particularly the purchase of products made with recycled and recyclable materials, and identifying opportunities for waste prevention.
- Encouraging a "Refill Snohomish" campaign to reduce plastic bottle waste and increase conservation.

"I look forward to participating in the collective effort to continue reducing our footprint," added Councilmember Brian Sullivan. "Any step forward in our efforts is a step in the right direction."

"Even as we celebrate the successes of the SOAP initiatives that we put in place in 2013, we must continue to look for ways to reduce waste, conserve resources, and protect the natural beauty that surrounds us," said Councilmember Stephanie Wright.

There are always more opportunities to reduce Snohomish County's carbon footprint and divert waste from landfills. The County Council supports these practices.