

2022  
ANNUAL REPORT  
**ARLINGTON**



# WM is a Proud Contributor to the Arlington Community

Your community is our community, too! In 2022, WM contributed through in-kind services to Arlington events, including:

- Eagle Festival
- Arlington Street Fair
- Arlington SkyFest



“WM is honored to be the City of Arlington’s chosen environmental services provider for another 10 years. From our frontline drivers and our contract manager to our partners in the City, thank you for another great year of partnership!”

**Rob Rutledge**

Senior District Manager,  
WM Marysville Hauling Site



WM outreach and education staff engage with community.

# Education & Outreach at the Arlington Farmers Market

WM Recycle Corps interns attended the Arlington Farmers Market and provided educational materials to interested Arlington residents. The WM Recycle Corps interns answered waste sorting questions, played games and encouraged attendees to recycle right!



Ashton, WM Recycle Corps intern, discussed proper waste sorting with passionate recyclers.



Shannon Brennan, WM education and outreach staff, presented to the Arlington Rotary.

## Arlington Rotary Recycling Education

WM staff attended the Arlington Rotary meeting on November 17th, 2022, to share Recycling 101 information. WM presented the importance of recycling, explained what is recyclable in Arlington and answered questions. The Rotary Club planned to share this information with their community throughout the year.

# Virtual Recycling Center Tours

The Cascade Recycling Center (CRC) and JMK Fibers Recycling Center (JMK) are WM's local sorting facilities which separate commingled recyclables to prepare them for a second – or even a 10th– life. Our customers often wonder what happens to their recyclables after they're collected. We have been giving CRC tours for years but due to Covid, we began offering virtual tours to school groups, city employees, elected officials, and residents. On our tours, we explain the meaning behind recycling lists and what happens to the materials once they leave our facility. We also discuss the importance of keeping recycling carts free of plastic bags and other tangles including garden hoses and holiday lights. Our tours are about connecting with our customers and exploring all the ways we can make our communities more sustainable. In November 2022, the CRC began a major upgrade to increase diversion and lower contamination through advanced technology, such as the installation of new additional optical sorters. The upgrade will take place over

several months but during this time, our education and outreach team will continue to provide virtual tours.

On American Recycles Day 2022, WM announced a \$56 million investment in recycling technology across Washington state to increase diversion and lower contamination through advanced technology. For JMK, this included a \$7 million investment, following significant upgrades in 2019 which brought additional paper screens, optical sorters, and a second plastic sorter. For CRC, a \$34 million rebuild began in November which will equip the facility with the most technically advanced optical sorting, ballistic separators, volumetric scanners, and more.

WM's outreach team didn't let the construction slow them down. As the facilities underwent these exciting upgrades, the team continued to provide local recycling education by offering virtual tours from the comfort of customers' homes.



WM employees sorting materials at the CRC.

# WM Recycle Corps Interns Hit the Ground Running

With the easing of COVID restrictions in 2022, our team worked hard to make up for lost time and we were back in the field! With summer festivals back on track and local shops and restaurants now fully open, WM's Recycle Corps interns returned to the field this summer to engage with recyclers across Western Washington.

The WM Recycle Corps interns are part of WM's innovative, award-winning recycling education and outreach team. The program looked different in 2021 relying heavily on WM eConnect, WM's remote outreach campaign. In 2022, our collegiate interns were back in the community to help improve recycling habits and reduce waste by working directly with businesses, single family residents, and managers and residents at apartments and condominiums. In 2022, the WM Recycle Corps interns visited 2,020 properties, distributed 1,667 recycling tote bags to multifamily properties, tagged 1,318 carts, called 673 properties, and staffed 16 community events across western Washington. Many interns are multilingual and used their skills to break down language barriers that can hinder recycling participation.

For WM, the summer intern program is all about community partnership, professional development for students, and delivering results for waste reduction and recycling. Our local area initiated the program as an extension of WM's year-round recycling outreach. It's the first of its kind in the industry and winner of the prestigious Gold Excellence Award – one of the highest honors in the recycling industry – from the Solid Waste Association of North America.

The WM Recycle Corps program aims to produce leaders who will continue working for a sustainable tomorrow. The program has become an incubator for sustainability professionals, with many alumni now working as professionals in the green economy sector such as consulting, government work, and private sector outreach.



**2,020**  
PROPERTIES VISITED

**1,318**  
CARTS TAGGED

The WM Recycle Corps is a program ideally suited for the Puget Sound. Cities and counties across the region are the vanguard for sustainability leadership and innovation. The WM internship program is an innovative and effective way for WM to help cities and counties achieve their sustainability goals, one face-to-face conversation at a time.

# Circular Economy Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow



**Mary Evans**

Public Sector  
Solutions Director

WM is proud to help keep our partner communities clean and green. For years, we've been working for a sustainable tomorrow with goals for greenhouse gas emissions reduction, diversity and inclusion, community engagement and recycling. In 2022, we raised our ambitions even higher to prioritize a circular economy.

In November, WM announced plans to invest \$56 million to advance our recycling technology at three material recovery facilities (MRFs) serving our communities across Washington State and North Idaho. These projects are part of WM's companywide plan to invest \$800 million in recycling infrastructure through 2025, including automating existing facilities and developing new facilities.

With the demand for recycled products expected to rise, the investment will enable WM to capture more recycled materials and increase access to recycling for all our customers. WM's \$56 million investment in Washington state will rebuild our Cascade Recycling Center (CRC) in Woodinville, and upgrade JMK Fibers in Tacoma and the Spokane Materials and Recycling Technology (SMaRT) Center with new state-of-the-art technology.

These innovations will reduce contamination and enable more recyclables to be processed to meet stringent quality standards, so manufacturers can make them into new products. The investment will bring greater efficiency through technology and automation.

When people recycle right, materials have a second life. Think new paper, cardboard, soup cans, water bottles and even park benches and clothing. A circular economy keeps materials in circulation as long as possible through product design, recycling technology and new markets for recycled materials. This reduces waste, creates jobs and builds economic resiliency.

We couldn't do this important work without you. I appreciate our robust partnership and the ongoing opportunity to help drive the circular economy with every customer—one cart at a time!



# Innovation Update: Arlington Benefits from WM's Innovation Work with Snohomish County

More than 10 years ago WM entered into a Revenue Sharing Agreement (RSA) with Snohomish County, with the goal of reducing waste and increasing recycling throughout the County. The investment has included behavior studies, cart tagging to reduce contamination, multicultural programs to reach underserved audiences, and programs to improve recycling infrastructure at multifamily properties. Our partnership has honed best practices and our programs have been replicated in many of our partner cities. Our work with Snohomish County has earned national recognition and four Recycler of the Year awards from the Washington State Recycling Association. In 2022, WM used these funds to educate and engage our community in innovative ways, with impactful results.

**Here are a few examples:**

**ALWAYS KNOW WHICH BIN  
IS THE RIGHT BIN.**

DOWNLOAD THE  
WM **CARTWISE** APP  
TO HELP YOU RECYCLE  
RIGHT IN THE NEW YEAR.



## WM Cartwise

Imagine a 10-second search that takes the guesswork out of recycling. That's the magic of WM Cartwise, the mobile app that includes a quick lookup tool, a fun sorting game and WM service information.

In Snohomish County, residents have used the app to search for 188,000 items. The most common searches are for foam, mattresses, and fluorescent tubes.



# Residential Textiles Pilot

We've all seen the power of social media. It's how we share and connect. In 2022, WM explored education and outreach in social media with Spanish-speaking Latina channels. Rather than posting on our own social channels, we partnered with Latina communities that were already active on social media in our local area. Our partners utilized our education and outreach tips and tools and engaged their communities on better recycling, specifically textile recycling. Our partners were energized and extremely active. They set up clothing swaps, a textile fashion show and asked their followers to scour their closets for donations and repair reusable items. The results from this pilot project kept over 1,500 pounds of textile waste from the landfill.



Our social media partners Mujeres del Futuro and Madres de Casino Rd at their Eco-Swap party.



Washington State Recycling Association awarded WM as the 2022 Recycler of the Year.

## Schools Outreach & WSRA Award

After months of COVID interruptions, making lessons count is more important than ever for local schools. That's why the WM team set out to make our annual recycling workshops more relevant and engaging than ever. Workshops supplemented required curricula on habitat and biodiversity, incorporating how waste reduction and recycling fit into environmental stewardship.

We know the workshops were successful because of how students engaged; they asked and answered questions, raced to complete quizzes, laughed and challenged each other and instructors. The Washington State Recycling Association even recognized the impact of our work, naming WM and (Spokane/Snohomish) County Recyclers of the Year Award for Youth Education.

In Snohomish County, WM delivered workshops to over 150 classes, reaching nearly 4,000 students.

# Expanded Odes to Recycling

## Korean / Vietnamese / Chinese

Education and access for all is a critical element of meaningful recycling outreach. For the WM education and outreach team, we're always innovating to reach different parts of our community with effective, culturally relevant messaging.

In 2022, WM continued to see strong results from our ongoing campaign to engage Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese and Chinese speaking residents in waste reduction.

Campaign elements included digital and print ads, billboards, original artwork, and even a community poetry event -- open mic! You can see some of these incredible materials below or stop by the Lynnwood Recreation Center, where some of the program's recycling art is on display.



# WM and the Washington State Legislative Session

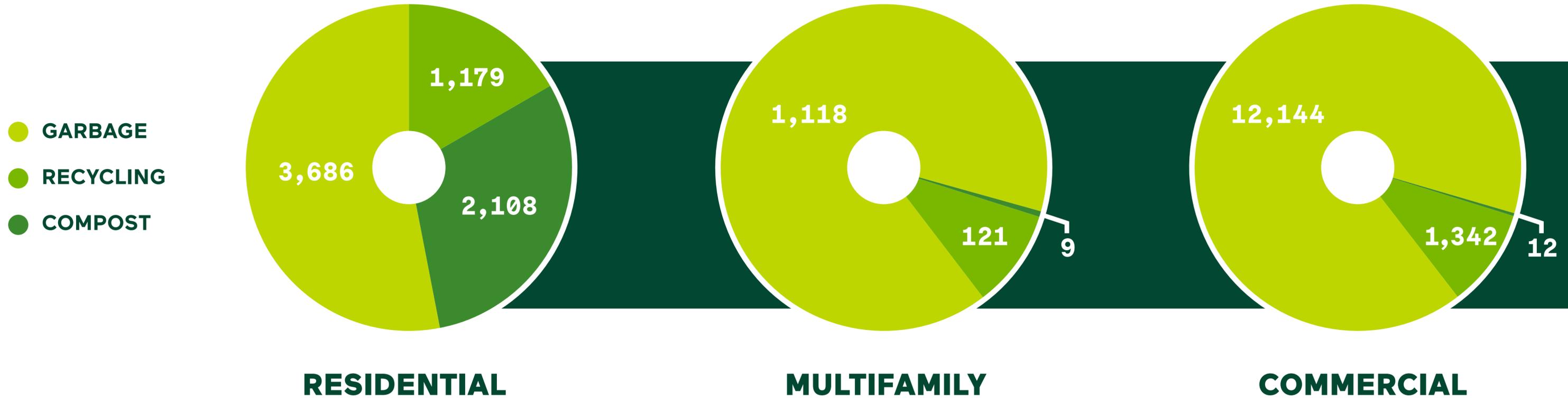
In the 2022 legislative session, WM helped shape bills that will reduce methane emissions from landfills.

We worked with stakeholders including Zero Waste Washington to pass legislation (SB 1799) that will increase collection and composting of organics, ensuring more food scraps and yard waste will be composted and not sent to landfills. WM also supported the landfill methane bill (HB 16330) as passed. The measure will improve the monitoring and capture of methane at landfills. (Most WM landfills have gas collection systems and yet we support continuous improvement across the industry.)

In addition, WM engaged proactively to educate about Extended Producer Responsibility and help draft the RENEW Act (SB 5697). The Act would have implemented a framework for product stewardship. It aimed to improve Washington's waste and recycling systems by holding packaging producers accountable for the waste they create. The Act died early in the session, but we are already working with other stakeholders on a version to be introduced in 2023.



# Arlington Waste Stream 2022 (in tons)



## Average Diversion Rates

The diversion rate is the percentage of total collected material that is not taken to a landfill, thus diverted for recycling, composting, reuse, and repurpose. Diverted material is typically delivered to a recycling or composting facility for processing.

COMMERCIAL	10.0%
MULTIFAMILY	10.4%
RESIDENTIAL	47.1%



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