

The Year at a Glance



SECTION 2

This report provides an overview of the amount of solid waste generated, disposed of and recycled in South Carolina for fiscal year (FY) 2017 (July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017) as required by the S.C. Solid Waste Policy and Management Act of 1991 (Act) – S.C. Code of Laws §§ 44-96-60. This report defines and measures two specific types of solid waste – municipal solid waste (MSW) and total solid waste (TSW). (See page 2 for definitions.) As required by the Act, the focus of this report is on MSW (Section 44-96-50).

Recycling Rate for FY17	Waste Disposal Rate for FY17
28.7%	3.6 p/p/d*

*Pounds Per Person Per Day

Numbers, Changes & Trends

- **South Carolina's population grew from 4 million people in 2000 to 4.96 million in 2017** – a 24 percent increase. Despite that significant growth, South Carolinians disposed of only 199,790 additional tons of MSW in FY17 than in FY01.
- **Per capita disposal in South Carolina decreased a little more than 14 percent** – dropping from about 4.2 pounds in FY01 to 3.6 pounds in FY17.
- **On average, South Carolinians have disposed of 3.2 million tons of MSW and recycled 1.2 million tons of material** each FY since FY01.
- **Recycling is traditionally measured by weight not volume.** Given that, it is important to note that not only have the materials in the waste stream changed in the past 15 years (less paper and glass, more plastic and food waste), but so has their weight. Manufacturers wanting to lower costs (and save raw materials) strive to make their products as light as possible.

Estimated Lost Revenue

It is estimated that more than 774,000 tons of easily recyclable material – aluminum and steel cans, cardboard, paper, plastic and glass bottles – was disposed of in FY17.* Using the state's average tipping fee of \$38, it is projected that local governments spent more than \$29 million to dispose of this material. It also is estimated that more than \$76 million in potential revenue from the sale of this material was lost based on the average revenue received per ton as reported by local governments.

* The estimated amount of material disposed of that could have been recycled is calculated by using the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's most recent MSW generation rates to South Carolina's FY17 generation.

The Top 10 Takeaways for FY17

- 1** In FY17, the amount of MSW generated (recycled plus disposed of) was **4,621,183 tons**. Of that amount, 1,325,823 tons (28.7 percent) were recycled and 3,295,359 tons (71.3 percent) were disposed of in MSW landfills.
- 2** The amount of MSW reported as recycled increased **231,154 tons (21 percent)**.
- 3** The amount of MSW disposed of increased **81,767 tons (2.6 percent)**.
- 4** The state's per capita disposal remained the same at **3.6 pounds**.
- 5** On average, each South Carolinian recycled about **534 pounds** of MSW.
- 6** It was the **ninth consecutive FY (and 14th of the past 15 FYs)** that residents recycled more than **1 million tons of material**. More than 20 million tons of MSW have been recycled since FY01.
- 7** **Tonnages for six commodities increased – Glass, Metal, Paper, Plastic, Miscellaneous and Organics.**
- 8** **Twenty-three counties met the waste disposal goal of 3.25 pounds or less disposal per day.** While no counties met the recycling rate goal, four (Anderson, Berkeley, Horry and York) have recycling rates of 35 percent or greater.
- 9** **Residential recycling increased 76,279 tons – mostly due to a significant increase in the amount of Metal and Organics recovered.**
- 10** **Local governments reported spending more than \$337,388,152 on solid waste management in FY17.**

South Carolina Solid Waste by the Numbers



TABLE 2.2: S.C. MSW Recycled² by FY

FISCAL YEAR	RECYCLED IN TONS	RECYCLING RATE BY PERCENT	RECYCLED IN P/P/D
2013	1,371,960	31.5%	1.6
2014	1,263,495	29.2%	1.4
2015	1,101,190	26.5%	1.3
2016	1,094,569	25.4%	1.2
2017	1,325,823	28.7%	1.5

TABLE 2.4: S.C. MSW Disposed² of by FY

FISCAL YEAR	DISPOSED OF IN TONS	DISPOSED OF IN P/P/D
2013	2,985,852	3.5
2014	3,067,942	3.5
2015	3,058,388	3.5
2016	3,213,592	3.6
2017	3,295,360	3.6

TABLE 2.6: S.C. MSW Generated² by FY

FISCAL YEAR	GENERATED IN TONS	GENERATED IN P/P/D
2013	4,357,812	5.1
2014	4,331,437	5.0
2015	4,159,578	4.7
2016	4,308,161	4.8
2017	4,621,183	5.1

TABLE 2.1: S.C. Population

YEAR	POPULATION
2013	4,723,723
2014	4,774,839
2015	4,832,482
2016	4,896,146
2017¹	4,961,119

TABLE 2.3: S.C. TSW Recycled by FY

FISCAL YEAR	RECYCLED IN TONS	RECYCLING RATE BY PERCENT	RECYCLED IN P/P/D
2013	7,700,976	49.3%	8.9
2014	6,030,557	43.2%	6.9
2015	2,974,363	26.3%	3.4
2016	2,788,140	25.0%	3.1
2017	4,701,301	33.8%	5.2

TABLE 2.5: S.C. TSW Disposed of by FY

FISCAL YEAR	DISPOSED OF IN TONS	DISPOSED OF IN P/P/D
2013	7,906,522	9.2
2014	7,918,780	9.1
2015	8,317,621	9.4
2016	8,376,283	9.4
2017	9,383,681	10.4

TABLE 2.7: S.C. TSW Generated by FY

FISCAL YEAR	GENERATED IN TONS	GENERATED IN P/P/D
2013	15,607,497	18.1
2014	13,949,336	16.0
2015	11,291,984	12.8
2016	11,164,423	12.5
2017	14,082,662	15.6

NOTES:

1. The population data used in this report reflects the most recent estimate available from the U.S. Census Bureau.
2. See Table 6.9 on page 73 for a breakdown by county of MSW recycling, disposal and generation.
3. Rounding of numbers may affect some totals.

