

## ***MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS***

**Q: I'm willing to pay more in taxes for the convenience of a fully subsidized trash service. So why shouldn't the Town provide such a service?**

A: The 100% taxpayer subsidized service may indeed have appeal to some residents. But we are also trying to find a solution for households that do not need and can't afford the more expensive tax levy system that results. And all households, whether they care about expenses or not, will share in the health benefits of increased recycling.

**Q: The state of Massachusetts gave us a bad deal when they talked us into signing up for the NESWC incinerator contract. Is PAYT another big state program we are getting forced into?**

A: PAYT is just the opposite - it is a locally-designed program to get more local and household control over waste management costs. If we do nothing, and our trash output continues to climb, we run greater risk of being forced into unfavorable arrangements with huge waste processing monopolies.

**Q: How can PAYT help us in negotiating for a new contract to follow the NESWC contract?**

A: The less trash we have, the more flexibility we have in negotiating a new disposal contract. Incinerator operators want towns to sign up for a guaranteed annual tonnage (GAT) to guarantee that the incinerator has enough trash to operate profitably. If you refuse to agree to a GAT, you will probably be charged more per ton. We would like to demonstrate a reduction in our trash volume prior to beginning negotiations for a new contract. This ensures that we will not have to accept a GAT that is too high. It may also produce more competition in the bidding for our contract.

**Q: Why is it fairer to require trash generators to pay for trash services? Since taxpayers subsidize schools whether they have children in the schools or not, why shouldn't taxpayers subsidize trash collection even if they aren't generating much trash?**

A: Most taxpayers are willing to subsidize education because it is felt to be in the public interest. But generating more trash is not in the public interest - quite the opposite. Some taxpayers wish to reduce the subsidy they pay for waste generation that can injure their health and their environment. The Town has to choose which services it will subsidize, and set the level of subsidy to an appropriate level. Encouraging trash generation by providing a 100% subsidy is simply poor public policy. Cutting the trash subsidy to approximately 66% has many proven benefits.

**Q: Why is trash different from any other service that is fully subsidized?**

A: Each service is different, and a case-by-case analysis is required. Trash disposal is a service that causes health and environmental problems the more it is used.

It is one where individual decisions and habits have a large influence on the level of service and the costs of service. It is one where the alternative to full subsidy is proven and is successful. With PAYT, we can address the inherent inconsistency in current Town policy in which the Town encourages trash generation by fully subsidizing it and simultaneously pursues waste reduction education to encourage people not to take full advantage of the service.

**Q: Why shouldn't we help residents by providing them with unlimited free trash collection? Why not be generous?**

A: We cannot provide "free" collection because we have to use taxes to pay trash disposal expenses. When we tax people to give them unlimited services, we are not being generous - we are merely making a decision for them regarding how their income should be spent. If we provide them with a more expensive service than they really need, we have injured them, not helped them.