

# ***WHAT A WASTE!***

***St. Petersburg residents speak  
up about curbside recycling —  
Will the City listen??***



***A report prepared by  
Clean Water Action  
Clean Water Fund***

***February 21, 2008***

## Acknowledgements

The primary authors of this report were Kathy Aterno and Lauren Matchette. We wish to express our sincere thanks to volunteers Amy Kennedy and Anthony Olivieri for their assistance in researching and analyzing the information included in this report. We would also like to thank our Tampa community outreach staff, particularly Kyle Taylor and Stephanie Hyer, for the many hours they devoted to surveying residents of St. Petersburg. Special thanks to Jerry Berg (ghb624 on flickr.com) for the background cover photo. Finally, we would like to thank Clean Water Action's St. Petersburg members who took the time to candidly answer the survey and for their support for our program.

## About Clean Water Action

[www.CleanWaterAction.org](http://www.CleanWaterAction.org)

Clean Water Action (CWA) is a national 501(c)4 environmental organization with more than 1 million members nationwide and over 52,000 Florida members, 8,000 of whom reside within the City of St. Petersburg. CWA works for clean, safe and affordable water, prevention of health-threatening pollution, creation of environmentally safe jobs and businesses, and empowerment of people to make democracy work. CWA organizes strong grassroots groups, coalitions and campaigns to protect our environment, health, economic well being and community quality of life.

## About Clean Water Fund

[www.CleanWaterFund.org](http://www.CleanWaterFund.org)

Clean Water Fund (CWF) is a national 501(c)3 research and education organization promoting the public interest since 1978. CWF supports the public interest in protection of natural resources, with a special emphasis on water issues. CWF's programs build on and complement those of CWA. CWF's organizing has empowered citizen leaders, organizations and coalitions to improve environmental conditions in hundreds of communities and strengthen policies at all levels from the local to the national.

To get an electronic copy of the report, log on to [www.cleanwateraction.org/fl](http://www.cleanwateraction.org/fl).

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report, *What a Waste!*, was developed in response to our Clean Water Action members' concerns about the lack of curbside recycling in the City of St. Petersburg. The immediate question that came to mind was "Why?"

**Clean Water Action** felt this was a reasonable question that deserved an answer, but first wanted to get the pulse from more of our St. Petersburg members to determine whether they had similar questions, comments, or feelings about curbside recycling and about one of our primary pollution prevention campaigns centered on stormwater run-off.

So a simple, five-question member survey was designed in the fall of 2007, and with the assistance of Clean Water Action's professional outreach staff, we began the process of surveying door-to-door close to 3,000 of our members throughout the City.

### ***Clean Water Action's survey results found:***

- ***52% of our members currently recycle; 48% do not***
- ***96% of our members would participate in a curbside recycling program if it were offered; 3% would not***
- ***91% of our members would be willing to pay a monthly fee of between \$1-3 for curbside recycling; 46% would pay \$4-6; and 12.5% would pay between \$7-9***
- ***46% of our members do not know where stormwater run-off goes to***
- ***66% of our members would participate in a storm water drain education program***

In the process of the survey design, we also found out that the City of St. Petersburg conducted a survey in 2002 and in fact had a pilot curbside recycling program. The highlights and results of the City's survey and pilot project are included in this report, but it was never our intention to do a comprehensive analysis of the history and current practices of recycling in St. Petersburg.

We applaud St. Petersburg for receiving recognition in May 2007 as a "Green City" – so far the only city in the state – by the Florida Green Building Coalition. The city was recognized for its environmental initiatives in the areas of energy, water, air, land and waste. This award, while well-deserved in many areas, is somewhat tarnished in our minds because the city fails to offer a user-friendly, curbside recycling program.

While St. Petersburg offers many drop-off locations throughout the city for residents, it remains the largest city in Pinellas County and one of *three* municipalities in the County that does not provide residents with curbside recycling.

As simple as our questionnaire design and survey was, the recommendation emanating from this report is even simpler – ***City Officials: Please take to heart what St. Petersburg residents have been saying for a long time – establish a city-wide curbside recycling program. In addition, work with organizations like Clean Water Action to educate residents about the ways they can help prevent water pollution by knowing where stormwater run-off goes, what contaminants are going down those drains, and participating in a stenciling program.***

**“We try (to recycle), but it’s all in the carport.”  
- Clean Water Action member, zip code 33713**

We are mindful and appreciative of the wonderful things the City does to be environmentally sensitive, understand the financial and budget constraints the city faces as a local unit of government, and genuinely want to work with the City in moving forward to respond to the wishes of its residents.

We want to thank our St. Petersburg members for taking time out of their busy schedules to share their opinions. Hopefully, their voices will be heard by City officials.

When and only when the City has implemented curbside recycling, city officials will not only receive the accolades of St. Petersburg residents, but can truly call itself a “Green” and *Wasteless* city.

## **II. INTRODUCTION**

Frequently, members ask us questions and provide their opinions on local environmental issues. Clean Water Action also solicits member opinions based on the timeliness of an issue or a topic of frequent concern.

The lack of curbside recycling in St. Petersburg emerged as primary concern. This is an issue we have been hearing about from our members for years, and while we had a great interest in it we have never had the resources to devote to learning more. In the fall of 2007, we decided that it was time to dust this topic off the shelf and move forward.

**“We are from New York and recycling was something we HAD to do. Why not here?”  
- Clean Water Action member, zip code 33705**

Clean Water Action decided to conduct a special member survey around curbside recycling and stormwater management. As you will see later in this report, the sample size, methodology, timeframe and research may not conform in some academic, local government, or professional polling circles as meeting all the most rigorous scientific standards.

However, we maintain the credibility of our survey because our collection method exceeds standards accepted by professional surveyors. Our professional staff conducted door-to-door outreach and talked to real people in the community who took the time to complete the survey and give us additional thoughts on the subject. It was not just the normal 300-400 person survey sample size – we collected close to 3,000 surveys.


### III. SURVEY DESIGN

In our survey design, we sought to discover how people felt about curbside recycling and what they knew about stormwater issues in their community. We were mindful of the amount of time people would be willing to take to answer our survey and so designed it to be short and to the point.

The survey asked five questions (see Chart 1 for the sample survey). Three out of the five questions required a simple YES or NO answer. Two questions were slightly different. Survey question #3 asked: What fees per month would you be willing to pay for a curbside program? Possible answers were: \$1-3, \$4-6, and \$7-9 per month (residents could check all the boxes they wished). Question #4 asked: What happens to stormwater in your neighborhood? Again, we listed a few options from which members could choose.

Like many things in our daily lives, when one designs a project, it tends to generate more questions that necessitate more information and more research. As you will see later in this report, because of the questions raised by our members and information we obtained during our research, we expanded beyond this initial survey in order to answer some key questions. Did the City ever have a curbside recycling program? Are there curbside recycling programs in neighboring communities within the County?

**CHART 1 – Clean Water Action’s Survey**

	<h1 style="color: blue;">Clean Water Action</h1> <h2 style="color: blue;">Special Member Survey</h2>
<b>ST. PETERSBURG</b>	<b>FALL 2007</b>
<p><b><i>Thank you for taking the time to complete our quick member survey on recycling and stormwater in St. Petersburg.</i></b></p>	
<p>1.) Do you currently recycle?  <input type="checkbox"/> YES    <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>	
<p>2.) Would your household participate in a city-wide curbside recycling program?  <input type="checkbox"/> YES    <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>	
<p>3.) What fees per month would you be willing to pay for a curbside program? (Check all that apply)  <input type="checkbox"/> \$1-3    <input type="checkbox"/> \$4-6    <input type="checkbox"/> \$7-9</p>	
<p>4.) What happens to stormwater in your neighborhood?  <input type="checkbox"/> collects in a pond                      <input type="checkbox"/> goes to a water treatment plant  <input type="checkbox"/> goes into the Bay/Gulf                <input type="checkbox"/> don't know</p>	
<p>5) Would you participate in a storm drain education program? (e.g., stenciling your neighborhood drain, clean-up events)  <input type="checkbox"/> YES    <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>	
<p>Name _____ Email _____</p>	
<p>Street Address _____</p>	

## IV. METHODOLOGY

Clean Water Action's professional outreach staff went door-to-door to single family homes in St. Petersburg weekday evenings between 5-9 p.m. during the months of September – November 2007, totaling thirty days. Approximately 4-7 staff worked one zip code at a time.

The surveys were only completed by Clean Water Action members.<sup>1</sup> CWA obtained completed surveys from the following zip codes (all within the City of St. Petersburg): 33701-33705, 33707, 33710-33713. The sample is totally random based on which residents were home at the time of our visit, who became a member, and who would be willing to take the time to complete the short survey. In addition, CWA also sent an e-mail to its longstanding members asking them to participate in the survey. Less than 1% of the total surveys came as a result of the e-mail.

**“Curbside recycling should be mandatory in all highly populated areas. We need to take care of our environment, or it will not take care of us much longer.”**

**- Clean Water Action member, zip code 33710**

## V. CLEAN WATER ACTION'S 2007 SURVEY RESULTS

The results of our survey come from 2,911 total respondents. The results of our survey broken down by zip code can be viewed in Attachment A.

**"In the interests of the environment, providing this service is essential."**

**- Clean Water Action member, zip code 33710**

When offering feedback and explanations for their answers, we found that a majority of members cited inconvenience as their primary reason for not recycling at present. Others, like Betty Rink, 33710, cited disabilities as their reason for not recycling, saying “Curbside recycling would make it easier.”

It is clear to us from talking to thousands of St. Petersburg residents that curbside recycling is a greatly desired program that residents expect their city to provide.

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<sup>1</sup> Members are individuals that demonstrate agreement with Clean Water Action's program priorities by signing a support statement or providing financial support. Households were selected at random and members were added on the spot; Clean Water Action did not intentionally seek out existing members during door-to-door surveying.

## CHART 2 – Clean Water Action’s Survey Results

Question	Answer	Total	%
1. Do you currently recycle?	Yes	1,502	51.8%
	No	1,379	47.6%
	Other	18	0.6%
2. Would your household participate in a city-wide curbside recycling program?	Yes	2,750	96.2%
	No	95	3.3%
	Other	13	0.5%
3. What fees per month would you be willing to pay for a curbside program? (Check all that apply)*	\$1-3	2,618	90.7%
	\$4-6	1,319	45.7%
	\$7-9	362	12.5%
	Other	267	9.3%
4. What happens to stormwater in your neighborhood?	Collects in a pond	181	6.2%
	Goes into the Bay/Gulf	1,054	36.2%
	Goes to a water treatment plant	251	8.6%
	Don't know	1,335	45.8%
	Other	94	3.2%
5. Would you participate in a storm drain education program? (e.g. stenciling your neighborhood drain, clean-up events)	Yes	1,914	66.4%
	No	758	26.3%
	Other	211	7.3%

\*Members could choose multiple answers. Total and percentages reflect total responses for each answer.

## VI. 2002 CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG RECYCLING PREFERENCE SURVEY

In 2002, the City of St. Petersburg hired Research Data Services, Inc. to conduct a survey to evaluate residents’ desire for a curbside recycling program. Results of the survey were based on 384 completed telephone interviews during September 2002. A separate random sample of the survey’s non-respondents designated as the “control group survey” was conducted and compared to the results of the main survey. Although there is no mention of how large the group was or the demographics of the sample, comparisons showed no significant differences with responses between the randomly sampled and control groups.

Below is a summary of the results of St. Petersburg’s 2002 survey:<sup>2</sup>

- A majority of the resident target population (88.3%) would participate in a curbside recycling program.
- 40.7% of these households were willing to pay for the service.
- Overall, the average residents were willing to pay for curbside recycling was \$1.62. When restricted to the population willing to pay for the service, \$3.71 was the average amount at which curbside recycling becomes too expensive.
- Most St. Pete residents (66.1%) dispose of recyclables in their garbage.
- Of those who did recycle, newspapers, aluminum cans, plastic bottles, and glass were recycled most often.
- Among those who already recycled, 70.8% would discontinue using drop-off centers if curbside collection was available: 84.7% because it’s more convenient; 7.6% because they’ll be able to recycle more

**“We should have had this program a long time ago.”**  
**- Clean Water Action member, zip code 33710**

While it was not Clean Water Action’s intention to replicate St. Petersburg’s 2002 survey, we did observe several similarities in our results (see Chart 3 below). Although over five years have passed since the city completed its survey, Clean Water Action’s analysis reaffirms what residents expressed in 2002 - a majority want curbside recycling and would participate if it were provided.

**CHART 3 - Comparison of Results - Clean Water Action’s 2007 Survey and 2002 City of St. Petersburg Recycling Preference Survey**

	<b>Clean Water Action 2007 Survey</b>	<b>2002 City of St. Petersburg Survey</b>
<b>Residents who currently recycle</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Residents who would participate in curbside recycling program</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>88%</b>
<b>Willing to pay for service</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>41%</b>

<sup>2</sup> “2002 City of St. Petersburg Recycling Preference Survey” Prepared by Research Data Services, Inc. for the City of St. Petersburg; October 23, 2002.

## VII. CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG PILOT CURBSIDE RECYCLING PROGRAM

From 1990 to May 2002, the City of St. Petersburg piloted a curbside recycling program to determine whether or not it was feasible to create a citywide program. The program was initiated in three selected areas of the City - Harbor Isles/Tanglewood, Old Northeast, and West Side.

Harbor Isles/Tanglewood was provided with curbside pick-up for newspapers, cans, plastic, and yard waste; Old Northeast was given curbside pick-up for newspapers, cans and plastic; West Side was given curbside pick-up for yard waste. It should be noted that the City already had a recycling drop-off program in place. This pilot program differed in that it offered residents curbside pick-up.

According to the City of St. Petersburg's Sanitation Department<sup>3</sup>, in FY 1991 the total recycling program generated 21,598 tons, of which the pilot program collected 78 tons or .4% of total. In FY 2001 the recycling program generated 51,373 tons. The cost of supporting the FY 2001 recycling program was \$1,022,771, for which the City received a recycling grant of \$64,610.

**"I want curbside recycling because we take our recycling to another city in large quantities - let's save this neighborhood."**

**- Clean Water Action member, zip code 33710**

In this pilot program, yard waste was taken to a brush site to be recycled into mulch while newspapers, aluminum cans and plastic bottles were taken to a materials recovery facility to be separated and prepared for manufacturers. However, the only materials recovery facility in the area, Recycle America, closed in December 1991. As of January 28, 1992, only yard waste was allowed in recycling containers. Other materials were no longer recycled but were put in bags and taken to the Refuse to Energy Facility where they were incinerated.

Letters were sent to residents of Harbor Isles/Tanglewood, but according to the Sanitation Department, no notices were sent to Old Northeast or Westside. Therefore, residents in these areas continued placing their recyclables on the curb without knowing that they were no longer being recycled.

Less than five months later the St. Petersburg Sanitation Department discontinued the bag portion of curbside recycling and only picked up yard waste. Residents were encouraged to use drop-off centers for newspapers, plastic bottles, and aluminum cans. However, due to the lack of communication, many residents continued to operate under the assumption that they were being provided with curbside recycling, and continued to leave their

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<sup>3</sup> Memorandum dated June 4, 2002 from D. Lee Metzger, City Services Administrator, to Rick Baker, Mayor of City of St. Petersburg.

recyclables at the curb. It is unclear what happened to these recyclables, but it is implied in the Sanitation Department's memorandum that materials continued to be incinerated.

In a memorandum dated June 4, 2002 the St. Petersburg Sanitation Department suggested several problems in this pilot program. First, too many containers were contaminated with non-recyclable materials. Second, as the only materials recovery facility in the area closed, the St. Petersburg Sanitation Department no longer had a convenient location to bring newspaper, cans, and bottles. Additionally, there was not sufficient funding to cover the costs of operating this pilot program. As a result of these problems, the City decided to discontinue this pilot program in 2002.

**"It would be a good convenience for us to have recycle bins. We currently have to drive fairly long distances to recycle our plastic, newspapers, etc..."**

**– Clean Water Action member, zip code 33707**

At this time, letters were sent to residents in the three pilot areas informing them that curbside recycling would no longer be provided to them. The closing of the local materials recovery was cited as a main reason for ending the pilot program, yet the facility had been closed for over a decade.

There was limited information available through the city citing exactly why the program was unsuccessful. There may well be additional reasons we have not stated, but as we are not here to speculate, we have only provided the information we were able to easily obtain directly from the City of St. Petersburg.

## **VIII. TAKING A LOOK AT SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES**

In examining the absence of curbside recycling in St. Petersburg, we noticed that an overwhelming majority of surrounding municipalities have curbside recycling programs. Attachment B includes a table summarizing the services and costs of curbside and various recycling programs in surrounding municipalities.

St. Petersburg, the largest city in Pinellas County with a population a little over 249,000, is one of *only* three municipalities within the county that does not offer curbside recycling to residents.

Of the *twenty-one* municipalities that do offer curbside recycling, fourteen contract-out the service, five offer the service through the city, and one uses both.

In the municipalities that offer the program, residents pay anywhere from \$.90 to \$4.75 per month for curbside recycling. Some municipalities, like Indian Rocks Beach and Seminole, charge no fee at all. Others simply incorporate the cost into general solid waste or garbage collection fees for residents.

Perhaps the City of St. Petersburg can look to its neighbors for guidance in designing a curbside recycling program – or better yet – the communities should work together.

**CHART 4- Snapshot of Curbside Recycling in the 5 Largest Cities in Pinellas County**

	Population <sup>4</sup>	Offer curbside recycling?	Products for curbside	Monthly Cost
<b>St. Petersburg</b>	249,068	No	None	N/A
<b>Clearwater</b>	101,830	Yes	Aluminum cans, magazines, mixed paper, newspapers, phone books, plastic bottles, steel cans, yard waste	\$1.95
<b>Largo</b>	68,500	Yes	Aluminum cans, corrugated cardboard, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, phone books, plastic bottles, yard waste	Included in Regular Solid Waste Fee - \$17.65
<b>Pinellas Park</b>	46,642	Yes	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans	\$9.93 - includes garbage 2x weekly (\$9.34) and recycling 1x week (\$0.59)
<b>Dunedin</b>	35,234	Yes	Aluminum cans, glass (clear), magazines, mixed paper, newspapers, phone books, plastic bottles, steel cans, yard waste	\$2.79

**IX. CURRENT RECYCLING PROGRAMS IN ST. PETERSBURG**

In May 2007, St. Petersburg was designated the first and only city in the state to become a “Green City” by the Florida Green Building Coalition. St. Petersburg was recognized for its environmental initiatives, including one of the largest reclaimed water systems in the country, preservation of environmentally sensitive land and habitat restorations, water conservation education, and much more.<sup>5</sup>

There are many important initiatives the City has embarked on that make it worthy of this title. It is showing leadership in conservation and protection when many other cities remain stagnant. However, the award revealed a deficiency – the City was recognized for its recycling program and yard waste-to-mulch program. How can the City be recognized for its recycling program when, according to our sample survey, only half the residents currently recycle?

<sup>4</sup> Information taken from Pinellas County’s website January 2008 <http://www.pinellascounty.org/Municipalities.htm>

<sup>5</sup> City of St. Petersburg’s website - <http://www.stpete.org/green/index.shtm> January 2008

Currently, the City of St. Petersburg does provide residents with the opportunity to recycle through over 160 drop-off sites. The City has partnered with churches, schools, and other groups to share drop-off facilities, totaling 160 locations accepting various materials. According to the City of St. Petersburg's website, "the City's Sanitation Department disposes of 328,000 tons of refuse per year. The Department services 78,000 residential accounts totaling 8,112,000 pickups annually; in addition, they service 6,200 commercial accounts. This department provides recycling centers throughout the City and processes over 43,618 tons of recyclables at 5 brush sites annually, recycling 3,854 tons of newspapers, glass and other materials, and more than 42,184 tons of yard clippings into free mulch. Yard waste is collected at 5 brush sites and processed into mulch that is available at no charge for the residents of St. Petersburg."<sup>6</sup>

**In response to question "Do you currently recycle?"-  
"No, but I want to, so please give us curbside recycling."  
- Clean Water Action member, zip code 33710**

Back in 2004, the Pinellas County Utilities Department along with the Pinellas Partners in Recycling, a subcommittee of the County's Solid Waste Technical Management Committee, set up a program in all public schools where paper recycling bins and a collection service were provided at no cost. Last school year alone, the public schools recycled over 3.2 million pounds of paper. By educating and involving the children, their recycling efforts prevented a lot of waste and pollution, saved energy and landfill space, and saved money for the school district.<sup>7</sup>

But all these efforts to provide residents with opportunities to recycle simply can't be compared the effectiveness and convenience of curbside recycling programs. A young entrepreneur in St. Petersburg saw the city's lack of curbside recycling as an advantage and created his own curbside recycling business. Greg Foster is the founder of St. Pete Recycling Solutions, a monthly subscription service that provides curbside pick-up for clients. For \$15 a month, St. Pete Recycling Solutions will pick up two bins weekly. If the City can work with this business to create a partnership, then perhaps in pooling resources a program can be established that will benefit all sides and be more economically viable for residents.

## **X. STORMWATER RUN-OFF IN ST. PETERSBURG**

As part of our survey, we included two questions pertaining to stormwater run-off in the area, a high priority issue for Clean Water Action, in order to gauge residents' awareness of what happens to stormwater in their neighborhood. We found that a majority of residents do not know what happens to stormwater in their neighborhood (see Chart 5 below for results). Note that 46% of residents answered outright that they don't know. So what does all of this mean?

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<sup>6</sup> City of St. Petersburg's website - <http://www.stpete.org/sanitation/index.htm>. January 2008

<sup>7</sup> Pinellas County Utilities' website - <http://www.pinellascounty.org/utilities/recycle-school-paper.htm> January 2008

**CHART 5 - Survey Results - What happens to stormwater in your neighborhood?**

Question	Answer	Percentage of respondents who chose this answer
<b>What happens to stormwater in your neighborhood?</b>	<b>Collects in a pond</b>	6%
	<b>Goes into the Bay/Gulf</b>	36%
	<b>Goes to a water treatment plant</b>	9%
	<b>Don't know</b>	46%
	<b>Other</b>	3%

Stormwater run-off is a major carrier of non-point pollution sources such as trash, yard waste, and chemicals including oil, gasoline, fertilizers, pesticides, and coolants. When it rains, these pollutants are washed into storm drains and subsequently into local waterways, Tampa Bay, and the Gulf.

It was important for Clean Water Action to gauge residents' awareness of this process because in our experience, it is not widely understood that materials that enter storm drains can end up in local waterways. According to St. Petersburg's website, "**Stormwater is NOT directed to a treatment facility!** It drains directly into area creeks, rivers and eventually the Bay."<sup>8</sup> The City of St. Petersburg has been working to solve problems related to stormwater run-off, yet it is very difficult and costly to successfully block all materials from entering Tampa Bay and surrounding waters.

We want to encourage residents and businesses to think twice about the products they use and to think twice before disposing of or dumping fast food wrappers, water bottles, and other trash into the street, which then goes into area storm drains. It is also important to note that the problem is not just dumping things directly into a storm drain. Any litter dumped on the street or a sidewalk can be washed into a storm drain when it rains.

It is Clean Water Action's opinion that the issue of stormwater pollution prevention is of paramount importance. We feel there is a strong need to educate residents and businesses about what stormwater run-off is and its impact on our waterways.

In helping to address this important water pollution problem, Clean Water Fund, in cooperation with Save Our Canals, has created the Water and Coastal Area Restoration and Maintenance (WARM) project. WARM is a water quality and pollution prevention project that focuses specifically on the issue of stormwater run-off. WARM is a three-part initiative that seeks to prevent trash and harmful toxins from entering local waterways, educate the community and policy-makers about stormwater run-off, and promote practical methods of pollution prevention.

<sup>8</sup> City of St. Petersburg's website - <http://www.stpete.org/stormwaterrunoff.htm>. February 2008

**CHART 6 – Survey Results –  
Would you participate in a storm drain education program?**

Question	Answer	Percentage of respondents who chose this answer
<b>Would you participate in a storm drain education program? (e.g. stenciling your neighborhood drain, clean-up events)</b>	<b>Yes</b> <b>No</b> <b>Other</b>	66% 26% 7%

One of the ways WARM seeks to prevent pollution stemming from stormwater run-off is through the use of filtration baskets. These baskets are installed in storm drains and serve to block debris, chemicals, and other pollutants from passing through the storm drain and entering local waterways.

Through a pilot study in 2005-2006, WARM partner Save Our Canals gained direct experience with utilizing the stormwater filtration baskets by installing 39 baskets in select communities in Tampa. **In just nine months, the project successfully prevented over 1.5 tons of materials from entering local waterways.** Just imagine what could be done if the City or County governments made the investment of installing filtration baskets instead of having to clean-up the pollution after the fact?

WARM also encompasses an educational campaign where storm drains are stenciled with informative messages indicating where the drain leads. Storm drains would be personalized with messages in order to deter people from discarding litter, pet waste, grass clippings and other debris. It is often simple ignorance of this process that leads people to litter in storm drains.

Some neighborhoods and municipalities within Pinellas County have stenciled their drains, and according to Belleair Bluffs resident Jean Gross, it serves as a friendly yet effective reminder to be mindful of one's waste. St. Petersburg has also initiated such programs, working with local groups and providing the plaques to be placed on storm drains.

WARM also seeks to encourage community and business involvement in clean-up events. While beach clean-ups are popular, often less attention is paid to local waterways and their debris-lined shores. As mentioned earlier, these local waterways lead to the Bay and Gulf. It is effective and rewarding to see the immediate improvement of cleaning up a treasured waterway.

Our survey results show that many residents are willing to participate in such outreach programs, and it is Clean Water Action's wish to work with the City of St. Petersburg to expand its existing initiatives and continue community outreach for the betterment of our environment and local communities.

## XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

As simple as our questionnaire design and survey was, the recommendation emanating from this report is even simpler – ***City Officials: Please take to heart what St. Petersburg residents have been saying for a long time – establish a city-wide curbside recycling program. In addition, work with organizations like Clean Water Action to educate residents about the ways they can help prevent water pollution by knowing where stormwater run-off goes, what contaminants are going down those drains, and participating in a stenciling program.***

We are mindful and appreciative of the wonderful things the City does to be environmentally sensitive, understand the financial and budget constraints the City faces as a local unit of government, and genuinely want to work with the City in moving forward to respond to the wishes of its residents.

When and only when the City has implemented curbside recycling, officials will not only receive the accolades of St. Petersburg residents, but can truly be a “Green” and *Wasteless* city.

### **7 Reasons the City of St. Petersburg should adopt a curbside recycling program**

- If our survey data is a reflection of the city as a whole, then a majority of residents would use this program.
- 91% of residents in single family dwellings are willing to pay a small monthly fee to offset the City’s costs.
- It would reduce the carbon footprint of the people that currently drive their recyclables to drop-off sites.
- It would help reduce overall waste production in the City by removing a large percentage of the recyclable materials that residents currently throw away because of a lack of convenient, accessible alternative.
- It is quicker to put your recyclables at the curb then to drive them to a drop off facility – it saves time and money!
- It is possible that new jobs could be created in the area. According to the Institute for Local Self Reliance (ILSR), 15,000 tons of solid waste creates an average of one job if sent to a landfill, two jobs if incinerated, seven jobs if composted, and nine jobs if processed for recycling.
- Manufacturing products using recycled materials consumes much less energy than manufacturing products using virgin raw materials.

## ATTACHMENT A – CLEAN WATER ACTION’S 2007 SURVEY RESULTS

Question		Zip Code											
		Total 2911	%	33705 354	%	33704 410	%	33710 859	%	33712 251	%	33702 171	%
Do you currently recycle?	Yes	1502	51.8%	182	51.4%	216	53.9%	433	50.5%	130	51.8%	81	47.4%
	No	1379	47.6%	167	47.2%	185	46.1%	421	49.1%	121	48.2%	90	52.6%
	Other	18	0.6%	5	1.4%	0	0.0%	4	0.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2899</b>			354		401		858		251		171
Would your household participate in a city-wide curbside recycling program?	Yes	2750	96.2%	334	94.4%	393	95.9%	800	96.5%	225	97.4%	162	94.7%
	No	95	3.3%	16	4.5%	17	4.1%	24	2.9%	6	2.6%	8	4.7%
	Other	13	0.5%	4	1.1%	0	0.0%	5	0.6%	0	0.0%	1	0.6%
	<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2858</b>			354		410		829		231		171
What fees per month would you be willing to pay for a curbside program?*	\$1-3	1299	45.0%	155	43.8%	152	40.0%	396	46.3%	120	47.6%	77	45.0%
	\$4-6	957	33.2%	115	32.5%	149	39.2%	260	30.4%	91	36.1%	52	30.4%
	\$7-9	362	12.5%	60	16.9%	48	12.6%	84	9.8%	33	13.1%	24	14.0%
	Other	267	9.3%	24	6.8%	31	8.2%	116	13.6%	8	3.2%	18	10.5%
	<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2885</b>			354		380		856		252		171
What happens to stormwater in your neighborhood?	Pond	181	6.2%	8	2.3%	19	4.6%	60	7.0%	16	6.7%	5	2.9%
	Bay/Gulf	1054	36.2%	205	57.9%	175	42.7%	242	28.2%	106	44.4%	89	52.0%
	Treatment	251	8.6%	14	4.0%	17	4.1%	78	9.1%	25	10.5%	6	3.5%
	Don't know	1335	45.8%	119	33.6%	182	44.4%	453	52.9%	89	37.2%	64	37.4%
	Other	94	3.2%	8	2.3%	17	4.1%	24	2.8%	3	1.3%	7	4.1%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2915</b>			354		410		857		239		171	
Would you participate in a storm drain education program? (e.g., stenciling your neighborhood drain, clean-up events)	Yes	1914	66.4%	228	64.4%	262	63.9%	571	67.1%	163	67.1%	112	65.5%
	No	758	26.3%	93	26.3%	108	26.3%	224	26.3%	73	30.0%	48	28.1%
	Other	211	7.3%	33	9.3%	40	9.8%	56	6.6%	7	2.9%	11	6.4%
	<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2883</b>			354		410		851		243		171

\*Members could choose multiple answer. Data reflects the maximum amount members were willing to pay for service.

**ATTACHMENT A – CLEAN WATER ACTION’S 2007 SURVEY RESULTS**

Question		Zip Code									
		33703	%	33701	%	33713	%	33711	%	33707	%
		226		22		418		124		76	
Do you currently recycle?	Yes	124	55.1%	10	45.5%	216	51.8%	70	56.5%	40	52.6%
	No	98	43.6%	11	50.0%	197	47.2%	54	43.5%	35	46.1%
	Other	3	1.3%	1	4.5%	4	1.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.3%
	<b>Total Responses</b>	225		22		417		124		76	
Would your household participate in a city-wide curbside recycling program?	Yes	222	98.2%	20	100.0%	402	96.4%	121	97.6%	71	93.4%
	No	2	0.9%	0	0.0%	15	3.6%	3	2.4%	4	5.3%
	Other	2	0.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.3%
	<b>Total Responses</b>	226		20		417		124		76	
What fees per month would you be willing to pay for a curbside program? (Check all that apply)	\$1-3	95	40.1%	5	23.8%	201	48.2%	50	40.3%	48	65.8%
	\$4-6	91	38.4%	12	57.1%	134	32.1%	37	29.8%	16	21.9%
	\$7-9	35	14.8%	4	19.0%	47	11.3%	19	15.3%	8	11.0%
	Other	16	6.8%	0	0.0%	35	8.4%	18	14.5%	1	1.4%
	<b>Total Responses</b>	237		21		417		124		73	
What happens to stormwater in your neighborhood?	Pond	2	0.8%	0	0.0%	67	16.1%	1	0.8%	3	4.0%
	Bay/Gulf	109	44.3%	2	9.1%	58	13.9%	65	52.4%	3	4.0%
	Treatment	14	5.7%	12	54.5%	34	8.2%	15	12.1%	36	48.0%
	Don't know	112	45.5%	6	27.3%	240	57.6%	40	32.3%	30	40.0%
	Other	9	3.7%	2	9.1%	18	4.3%	3	2.4%	3	4.0%
<b>Total Responses</b>	246		22		417		124		75		
Would you participate in a storm drain education program? (e.g., stenciling your neighborhood drain, clean-up events)	Yes	150	68.2%	14	66.7%	273	65.5%	89	71.8%	52	72.2%
	No	52	23.6%	7	33.3%	108	25.9%	27	21.8%	18	25.0%
	Other	18	8.2%	0	0.0%	36	8.6%	8	6.5%	2	2.8%
	<b>Total Responses</b>	220		21		417		124		72	

## ATTACHMENT B – CURBSIDE RECYCLING IN SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES

Municipality	Curbside?	Products for Curbside	Cost?	Recycler?	Drop-off Centers?	Products for drop offs
<b>Belleair</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, magazines, mixed paper, newspapers, phone books, plastic bottles, steel cans	There is no fee for curbside recycling.	City of Clearwater	YES	Aluminum cans, magazines, corrugated cardboard, mixed paper, newspapers, phone books, plastic bottles, steel cans
<b>Belleair Beach</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans	\$78/3 months, which includes waste fees and regular pick up	Waste Management	NO	
<b>Belleair Bluffs</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans	\$31.44/3 months which includes garbage collection	Waste Management	NO	
<b>Belleair Shore</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans	Included in quarterly garbage fee	Waste Services	NO	
<b>Clearwater</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, magazines, mixed paper, newspapers, phone books, plastic bottles, steel cans, yard waste	\$1.95/month	City of Clearwater	YES	Aluminum cans, magazines, corrugated cardboard, mixed paper, newspapers, phone books, plastic bottles, steel cans
<b>Dunedin</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear), magazines, mixed paper, newspapers, phone books, plastic bottles, steel cans, yard recycling	\$2.79/month, \$5 for bin	City of Dunedin	YES	Aluminum cans, corrugated cardboard, magazines, mixed paper, newspapers, phone books, plastic bottles, steel cans
<b>Gulfport</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, newspapers, plastic bottles	\$1.50/month	City of Clearwater	NO	
<b>Indian Rocks Beach</b>	YES	Newspapers, yard waste	No fee	City of Clearwater	YES	Aluminum cans, newspapers, plastic bottles

**ATTACHMENT B – CURBSIDE RECYCLING IN SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES**

<b>Indian Shores</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, plastic bottles	(No response back)	Waste Services	NO	
<b>Kenneth City</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), magazines, mixed paper, newspapers, plastic bottles	(No response back)	Waste Management	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), magazines, mixed paper, newspapers, plastic bottles
<b>Largo</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, corrugated cardboard, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, phone books, plastic bottles, yard waste	Included in Regular Solid Waste Fee, \$17.65/month	City of Largo	YES (2)	Depends on site
<b>Madeira Beach</b>	NO		(stopped Jan '07; used to pay \$3.50/month)	Waste Services	YES	Aluminum cans, corrugated cardboard, newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans
<b>North Redington Beach</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear), newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans	\$.90/month	Waste Services	NO	
<b>Oldsmar</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, magazines, mixed paper, newspapers, phone books, plastic bottles, steel cans	Included in the overall cost of Residential Solid Waste Collection, \$12.70/month	Republic Waste Services	NO	
<b>Pinellas Park</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans	As of Oct. 1, the garbage rate is \$9.93 per month: includes garbage 2x-weekly collection \$9.34 and the recycling 1x/week \$0.59 cents.	Waste Management	YES	Yard waste recycling
<b>Redington Beach</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans, phone books	\$1.50/month	Waste Services	NO	

**ATTACHMENT B – CURBSIDE RECYCLING IN SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES**

<b>Redington Shores</b>	NO		X	Waste Services	YES	Aluminum cans, newspapers, plastic bottles
<b>Safety Harbor</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans	\$2.77/month	Waste Management	YES (2)	Depends on site
<b>Seminole</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans	Curbside Recycling is paid for by the City of Seminole for city residents	Waste Management	NO	
<b>South Pasadena</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans	\$31.44/3 months which includes garbage collection	Republic Waste Services	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans
<b>St. Pete Beach</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans	Curbside recycling cost is figured in as part of billing from Waste Services (customers choose whether to recycle or not)	Waste Services	NO	
<b>St. Petersburg</b>	NO		X	City of St. Petersburg	YES (19)	Depends on site
<b>Tarpon Springs</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans, yard waste	Part of the cost of curbside garbage collecting	Waste Management	YES	Depends on site
<b>Treasure Island</b>	YES	Aluminum cans, corrugated cardboard, glass (clear, brown, green), newspapers, plastic bottles, steel cans, yard waste	\$4.75/month	City of Treasure Island (yard waste) Waste Management (all other items)	NO	