



To our Partners at the City of Issaquah,

2020 was a year defined by a series of unprecedented events set against a backdrop of the worst pandemic the world has seen in more than a century. Despite overwhelming challenges, this past year has also been marked by communities coming together in countless ways – large and small, heroic and mundane – to support one another.

As one of the City of Issaquah's essential service providers, Recology King County's frontline employee-owners and support staff have been honored to play a role in the community's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Early this past year Recology quickly made significant, fundamental changes to our business and field operation that allowed for continuity of service to be provided throughout the Governor's "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" economic shutdown and later phased reopening. During this time our frontline workers were cheered on by housebound children and families, received notes of gratitude placed on recycle carts, and were recipients of countless acts of appreciation as they continued to provide essential collection services to Issaquah residents and businesses.

Despite the many challenges brought by COVID-19, in 2020 Recology continued to make progress on regional sustainability goals and our company's vision of achieving "a world without waste." In partnership with Issaquah businesses and residents, Recology diverted 7,921 tons of recyclable materials from the landfill through our curbside recycling programs.

Prior to COVID-19, Recology's Outreach and Education team hosted more than 102 community members at our Education Center and provided tours of our Material Recovery Facility where attendees learned about the recycling process. After the COVID-19 outbreak, the Education and Outreach team quickly pivoted to providing virtual outreach programs to maintain engaged community involvement.

We are grateful for our partnership with the City of Issaquah and look forward to a brighter 2021.

Sincerely,

Kevin Kelly
General Manager



Operating During a Global Pandemic

In 2020 Recology made significant operational and administrative adjustments in response to COVID-19 that allowed our team to continue safely serving City of Issaquah customers. Over the course of one week in March, more than 30 Recology customer service, finance, and administrative staff transitioned to remote work. Additional laptops, headsets, and IT equipment were quickly procured to set up these employees for success. Customer Service call software, Shortel, was reconfigured to allow staff to respond to calls from remote locations. The transition was not without challenges, as Recology Customer Service continued to operate through the transition and during the testing and implementation of new systems. Home internet bandwidth capacity challenges, resulting from new demands on regional infrastructure, contributed to connectivity issues for many of our employees.

Customer Service and administrative employees will continue to work remotely until at least July 2021, or until new return-to-work recommendations are published by public health agencies. In 2021, Recology will continue to invest in and prioritize IT projects to improve remote Customer Service performance, such as transitioning to a cloud-based phone system and implementing new software to improve call and email response time.

Over 250 Recology drivers and other frontline employees worked without interruption through this period of uncertainty. In March, Recology modified driver processes to minimize contact with others and decrease the risk of exposure. Pre-route team huddles were replaced with drivers reporting directly to their trucks in the morning. Virtual messages via onboard tablets, printed flyers, and radio messages replaced in-person communication. An outdoor checkout system was created for employees to submit paperwork while limiting contact. Signage was quickly developed and installed throughout the truck yard and facilities communicating new mask requirements and social distancing procedures.

As Recology rushed to acquire additional inventories of personal protective equipment for our frontline workers, so did countless other organizations, resulting in a temporary disruption in global supply chains. During this time, Recology was able to acquire and distribute reusable cotton masks. Bleach and water solutions were procured for disinfecting high touch areas. Bags of soap and expandable paper towels were provided to drivers when hand sanitizer was not readily available. Innovation is a trait Recology employs daily,



Social distancing placards were distributed to Recology route drivers



but it became especially valuable in the early days of the pandemic and throughout a continuously changing environment as the pandemic wore on.

The Changing Waste Stream

As workers and students across King County transitioned to working and learning remotely, many commercial buildings were left vacant while household occupancy reached an all-time high. At the same time, consumer behavior shifted quickly to online shopping. The combined impact resulted in a dramatic shift in the composition and volume of the commercial and residential waste streams. Across all Recology King County's service areas, commercial tonnage decreased an average of 18% while residential tonnage increased 17% year-over-year. You can read more on 2020 waste generation trends in the appendices of this report.

With more residents reliant on online shopping for basic needs, the demand for the collection of excess amounts of cardboard and packaging materials increased. To address emerging needs, Recology reallocated resources where possible to support the shift in volume to the residential sector. New safety messages were developed and distributed to increase awareness of emerging safety concerns and operational needs associated with the collection of extra materials. To help customers properly prepare excess volumes of cardboard for collection, an outreach campaign was quickly developed and distributed via social media and direct mailing.

Public Outreach & Community Engagement

Striving to achieve "a world without waste," Recology has historically offered a full range of in-person public education programs and services with the goal of achieving maximum diversion of waste from the landfill. When COVID-19 restrictions halted in-person outreach, Recology's Outreach and Education team rapidly transitioned to offer virtual presentations, workshops, and increased social media content to support Issaquah residents in their waste reduction and recycling efforts. Reimagined virtual programs were well received, with over 30 residents logging on to attend a Recycling 101 workshop hosted in partnership with the City of Issaquah and the Kiwanis Club of Issaquah.



A Waste Zero Specialist virtually educates customers on proper recycling techniques.

At the start of 2020, the Outreach and Education team visited schools, businesses, multi-family complexes, and community groups to provide education on waste reduction and highlight opportunities to increase recycling rates. For example, Recology partnered with Costco's Green Team to provide education about waste reduction and sustainable packaging. Staff received a recycling facility tour and were provided resources, such as educational signage for garbage, recycling and compost containers. You can read more about our 2020 public outreach and community engagement achievements in the appendices of this report.

In 2021, Recology will continue to focus on enhancing our virtual education and outreach programs as well as reducing recycling contamination at commercial and multi-family properties. A video

resource library currently under development will include a virtual tour of Recology's South Seattle recycling facility. Transcreated versions of educational videos will help reach a broader and more diverse audience.

We look forward to another year of partnership with the City of Issaquah as we continue our path to waste zero.



Appendices

Appendix A.	Subscription Level by Commodity
Appendix B.	Service Levels by Service Type and Frequency
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Appendix U.	Recology Store Special Items Drop Off
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