

There Is No Longer a Windfall

You've probably heard the saying, "Do as I say, not as I do." For years, I've shared that there's a significant difference in pricing and service between the two sanitation companies serving our Town. Yet, for over 30 years, I stayed with the more expensive provider—out of habit, convenience, or maybe even loyalty. This month, I finally made the switch, and the result? I'm saving hundreds of dollars annually and receiving better service.

Previously, my recycling was only picked up every other week, and there were additional charges for bulk items. Despite barely filling my garbage tote, my recycling bin constantly overflowed. It was frustrating to manage all of that while paying nearly \$1,000 a year. That experience prompted me to take a closer look—and make the change.

I'm not here to endorse a specific company, but I encourage everyone to review their current service at least once a year. Pricing can vary not just by company, but by neighborhood and even age group. Being proactive can lead to real savings and better service.

Every time quarterly invoices go out, social media buzzes with questions about creating a Town-wide garbage district. When I first took office, we explored that idea. The Town solicited pricing for a single-hauler system, with costs included in residents' property tax bills. I supported this idea, especially since, at the time, large items like appliances often sat curbside for weeks. Back then, the proposal promised lower costs and improved service. Still, it was voted down—likely influenced by part-time residents and the roughly 4,000 households without any formal garbage service. Many of them share services with neighbors or transport waste on their own.

Fast forward to today: we asked the accounting firm Drescher & Malecki to evaluate whether a Town-wide district would still bring savings. The results were clear—it wouldn't. Unlike before, today's municipal contracts often include clauses allowing for fuel surcharges, rising dumping fees, and even early termination by the hauler. These cost adjustments, combined with inflation, eliminate most—if not all—of the financial benefits. Additionally, forming a district would likely push the Town over the state-mandated tax cap, resulting in penalties.

For all of these reasons, now is not the right time to move forward with a Town-wide garbage district. Should circumstances change in the future, I would fully support revisiting the idea. I'm grateful we took the time to conduct a thorough review, and I believe periodic evaluations like this are important as we continue to assess what's best for our community.

In the meantime, I'd like to thank our Highway Department, under the leadership of Superintendent James Dussing, for continuing to provide outstanding service. Beginning this week, they'll be conducting town-wide brush and leaf pickup, along with street sweeping. Few towns offer monthly brush collection like we do, and it's something we should all appreciate. Just a friendly reminder—please do not place debris directly in the road.

Thank you for being engaged residents and for your ongoing commitment to keeping our Town a clean, efficient, and welcoming place to live.