



Hazardous Waste Management Program

GOVERNMENTS WORKING TOGETHER FOR
A HEALTHIER AND CLEANER KING COUNTY



2024

ANNUAL

REPORT

A MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR



At the Hazardous Waste Management Program in King County, we focus on solving challenges that directly impact the health and safety of our community and environment.

Every challenge is an opportunity for us to innovate, learn, and make meaningful progress toward a sustainable future.

This Annual Report is more than a summary of what we've achieved — it's a reflection of our dedication to protecting the well-being of the people we serve and the environment we share.

In 2024, we made strides in many areas:

- We expanded safer disposal options for vulnerable communities.
- We integrated equity strategies into our services to better meet the diverse needs of our residents.
- We strengthened relationships with trusted community organizations.
- We broadened access with community events, mobile services, and increased outreach efforts.

As a result of these efforts, we prevented more than 4 million pounds of hazardous waste from polluting our environment, ensuring proper disposal and safe handling.

We're proud to have received national recognition, including the Environmental Protection Agency's Safer Choice Partner of the Year Award for the eighth year in a row. This honor reinforces our commitment to leading the way in hazardous waste management while staying deeply connected to the communities we serve.

Looking ahead, we are excited to continue building a cleaner, safer, and more sustainable region. By working together and embracing innovation, we'll continue to make meaningful changes that benefit all of us.

Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to protecting both people and the environment. It is a privilege to be part of this Program's remarkable journey.

MAYTHIA AIRHART

Director

Hazardous Waste Management Program

A MESSAGE FROM OUR COALITION PARTNERS

Dear friends and partners,

We are pleased to share the 2024 Annual Report with you. This report celebrates the outstanding work and important services the Hazardous Waste Management Program provides to residents and businesses in King County.

For over three decades, the Program has remained dedicated to safeguarding the health of our communities and the environment we hold dear. Together, we have reduced risks, improved lives, and sparked meaningful change across King County.

The work in this report impacts everyone in our region. As a unified Program, we have made tremendous progress protecting public health and the environment through a shared vision of making the Puget Sound region the cleanest in the country — one free of hazardous chemical exposure.

In 2024, we continued to focus on the most pressing challenges — implementing upstream policy changes to reduce human and environmental exposures, enhancing education on safer alternatives, and ensuring safe disposal and management of hazardous waste materials.

Central to our efforts is a commitment to racial equity — ensuring our services are reaching and serving communities who are most vulnerable to hazardous chemical exposure.

We are grateful for this strong partnership, as well as the dedicated staff and supporters who continue to make this work possible. Your commitment and passion inspire us every day, and together, we will continue to drive positive change for years to come.

Thank you for your continued support and collaboration.

Management Coordination Committee

King County Solid Waste Division
King County Water and Land Resources Division
Public Health - Seattle & King County
Seattle Public Utilities
Sound Cities Association



DYLAN ORR
Environmental Health Director
Public Health – Seattle & King County



MARIN BURNETT
Chief Administrative Officer
King County Department of
Natural Resources and Parks



SUSAN FIFE-FERRIS
Director of Solid Waste Planning
and Program Management
Seattle Public Utilities



JOSH BALDI
Director
King County Water and
Land Resources Division



JOHN BOYD
Councilmember, City of Kent
Sound Cities Association

ADVANCING POLICIES THAT SERVE PEOPLE

The Haz Waste Program’s mandate is to mitigate the harms of hazardous materials. When we examine how these materials impact King County’s residents and environment, we find the issues deeply interconnected, spanning entire systems of industry, commerce, ecology, and public health.

Despite the scale of the challenge, it drives us to sharpen our focus on creating system-wide impacts that enhance value for our ratepayers.

The Program takes a multifaceted approach. Our frontline staff deliver direct support to King County’s residents and small businesses, gaining invaluable firsthand insights from those we serve. We actively listen to community feedback, identifying the burdens and barriers that hinder their ability to safeguard their health and safety.

With this knowledge in hand, our behind-the-scenes team works diligently to develop solutions and advocate for policies that better serve the people of King County.

In recent years, these efforts have contributed to new laws that ensure producers and sellers share in the responsibility of how hazardous products are managed.

For example, a new Washington state ban on the sale of lead-contaminated cookware was the culmination of years of research, advocacy, and community engagement led by the Program.

Program staff, energized by the input and support of the people they serve, are inspired by the notion that the work they do can bring far-reaching benefits to King County and beyond.

The scope of our mission is wide, but so is our impact. When we push forward with the knowledge and wisdom of our community members, the Haz Waste Program’s value is immeasurable.

TESTIMONIAL

“I do not use many city services, but I really appreciate this one. It helps me to be environmentally responsible, and the service is always friendly.”

— King County resident



ENHANCING OUR SERVICES

The Haz Waste Program is dedicated to providing responsive customer service to residents and businesses across King County. By placing customers and communities at the heart of everything we do, we continuously work to enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of our services, ensuring they deliver lasting value.

Through in-person engagements and broad marketing campaigns, Program staff educate community members on proper storage and disposal methods and encourage safer alternatives at home.

New partnerships with regional housing authorities have helped them reduce hazardous product use, gain EnviroStars recognition, and improve resident safety in some of the County's largest multifamily communities. And innovative outreach efforts alongside community partners have brought increased awareness and engagement around preventing exposure to toxic chemicals.

For local businesses, the Program offers the guidance, expertise, and financial assistance they need to adopt practices that are safer for their employees, customers, and neighborhoods.

Our initiative to transition auto repair shops to safer degreasing methods has shown that protecting the environment and public health doesn't have to come at the expense of efficiency or lower costs. In fact, many businesses have found that safer methods are often more efficient and less costly than outdated processes.

Businesses and households alike can access our disposal facilities and Wastemobile events for convenient disposal year round. In 2024, we expanded our collection services, adding Wastemobile pop-ups at community events like the Maple Valley Earth Day Fair.

The Haz Waste Program remains steadfast in its mission to drive safer practices and responsible hazardous material management. With every new advancement in our services, we place our customers at the forefront, ensuring their needs and well-being guide our progress.

TESTIMONIAL

"It was just wonderful to have met you and to learn from you! Thank you for your time and all the goodies!"

— King County business customer



COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY

The Haz Waste Program believes equitable service is rooted in collaboration with the people and communities we serve. That’s why we work with local governments, small businesses, and community members to identify needs and address gaps in service.

Our Program builds strong partnerships and actively seeks new collaborators who offer fresh ideas and unique approaches. We’ve worked with community-based organizations like the Afghan Health Initiative, Mother Africa, and the Garden Hotline for years to broaden our impact. These partnerships continue to deliver real benefits for the communities we serve together.

Exciting new partnerships with groups such as Wa Na Wari, a community art collective serving a historically Black neighborhood, help organize memorable and impactful classes, workshops, and events for community members.

We use insights from our partnerships to shape our approach to direct engagement, ensuring that all communities, especially those historically underserved, have a voice and representation in our work. For example, Program staff employed Photovoice, a community-based participatory research method where community members use photography to explore hazardous waste issues in their environment and reflect on their needs. Innovative methods like Photovoice help amplify voices that might otherwise go unheard, ensuring our work aligns with the values and priorities of King County residents.

The Haz Waste Program is dedicated to eliminating racial disparities in exposure to hazardous materials. As we expand our network of community partners, we prioritize understanding who is disproportionately impacted and who remains underserved. By leveraging demographic studies and insights from our service metrics, we strive to develop innovative solutions that address inequities and foster meaningful change for all communities.

Our partnerships, built on trust and shared insights, enable us to design services that effectively address the diverse needs of all King County communities.

TESTIMONIAL

“Thank you for taking so much time to support our sustainability work!”

— King County community partner

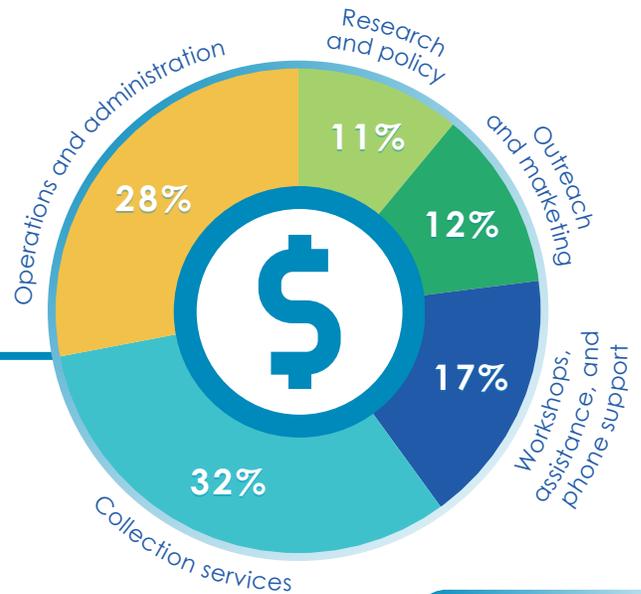


OUR IMPACT

Every dollar that funds our Program comes from King County ratepayers. Here is a by-the-numbers look at our impact in 2024.

\$20,089,386

dollars invested in reducing human and environmental exposure to hazardous products and waste



96,629

residents or businesses used a collection service

95,519
residents



1,110
businesses



4,006,000

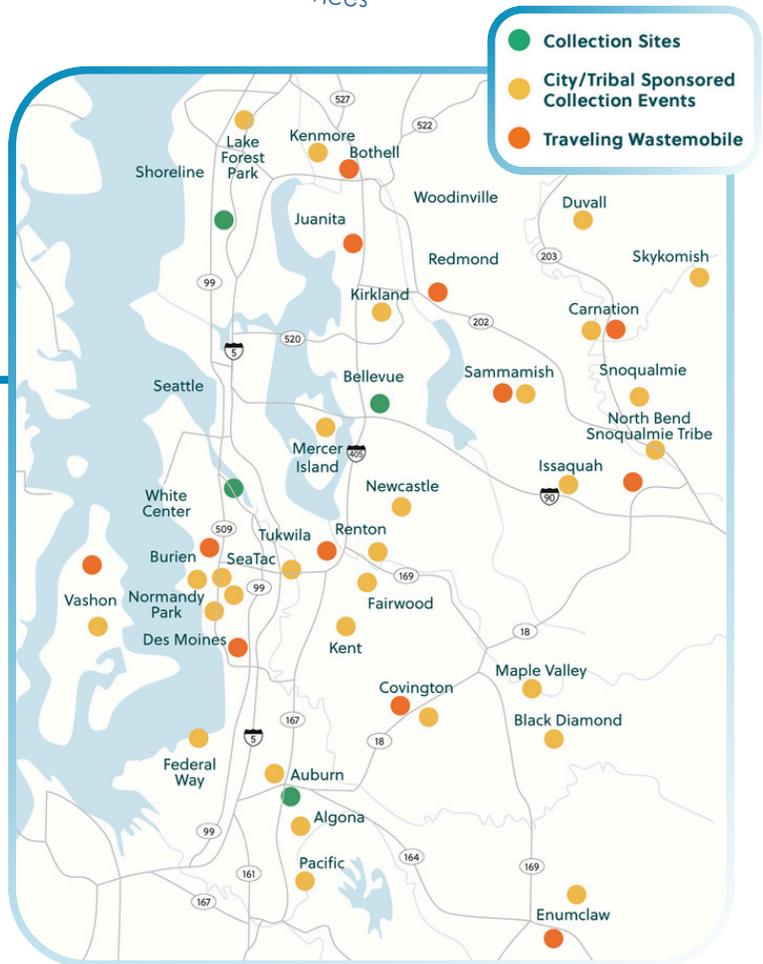
pounds of hazardous products diverted from improper storage or disposal

1,169,629

connections made through broad public outreach and digital marketing

16,564

residents or businesses called the help line, attended an outreach/education event, or received technical assistance



LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR WORK



Dive deeper into the topics and narratives discussed in this Annual Report.



Haz Waste Program wins 2024 EPA Safer Choice Partner of the Year Award

- <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/waste-services/hazardous-waste-program/news-events/news/2024-09-24-epa-safer-choice-partner-of-the-year-award>



Historic law to limit lead poisoning the result of community-centered initiative

- <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/waste-services/hazardous-waste-program/news-events/news/lead-in-cookware-law>



Building bridges: How the Haz Waste Program harnesses partnerships for greater impact

- <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/waste-services/hazardous-waste-program/news-events/news/mohamed-ali-profile>



Partnership with Seattle high school builds hazardous waste awareness for years to come

- <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/waste-services/hazardous-waste-program/news-events/news/2024-08-12-cleveland-high-school-collaboration>



How the Haz Waste Program helps King County businesses switch to safer degreasers

- <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/waste-services/hazardous-waste-program/news-events/news/2024-09-5-safer-degreasers>



Growing blue oyster mushrooms: Garden Hotline workshop teaches fungi fundamentals

- <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/waste-services/hazardous-waste-program/news-events/news/2024-10-01-garden-hotline-mushrooms>



From waste to art: Haz Waste workshops with sculptor Marita Dingus

- <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/waste-services/hazardous-waste-program/news-events/news/2025-03-06-haz-waste-workshops-marita-dingus>

News, events, updates, and more information can be found at kingcounty.gov/hazwaste.