

I was very interested to see the lead story in the latest issue of the county manager's newsletter, "Not Kicking the Trash Can Down the Road." It closes with an invitation to contact the legislature if we have ideas to consider.

I posit that the county would save money, and quite possibly even make money, by bringing our waste management in house.

We would eliminate the middleman and their markup.

We could revert to dual-stream recycling and educate people about how to source-separate properly so our loads would be far less contaminated, and thereby fetch a better price.

We could get our own baler—we could get financial help with that—and bale up our own source-separated recyclables.

We could install our own materials recovery facility to recover any additional marketable items—mixed paper, PET and HDPE plastics, metals, small appliances, and cardboard—that were missed in the recycling step.

And then we could run the residual waste through an anaerobic digester and chase it with aerobic composting. Together, these processes reduce the volume and greatly decrease any odors.

Then we would landfill these "stabilized residuals"—ultimately, in a regional landfill we share with neighboring counties.

These solutions would require significantly less time to be designed, built and put into operation than an incinerator, which is THE most expensive and polluting way to deal with trash.

Bringing our waste management in-house would save money and might even make money. It would create jobs. It would make us self-reliant. And it accords with the proximity principle: Waste should be managed as close as possible to where it's produced.

Rebekah Creshkoff
Town of Delaware