



CITY OF MANITOWOC

WISCONSIN, USA

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September 29, 2025

TO: Members of the Public Infrastructure Committee

FROM: Dan Koski, Director of Public Infrastructure
Greg Minikel, Engineering Division Manager
Eric Nycz, City Attorney

Re: Litter in the City; Cleanup Initiative

Issue Presented

City staff was approached by Alderperson Beeman to assess the feasibility and legality of creating additional guidelines for garbage and recycling collection within the city. Alderperson Beeman believes that a large amount the trash littering the streets and parks is directly related to uncovered trash and recycling receptacles on windy days. Alderperson Beeman's direct experience with picking up trash in his professional capacity with the Manitowoc School District allows him to speak directly and confidently on this topic.

The City Attorney Office confirmed that the City enjoys regulatory power in this area and worked with Department of Public Infrastructure ("DPI") to review how other jurisdictions approach this issue. The authors of this memo then met on three separate dates with Mike Pozorski, owner of Pozorski Hauling and Recycling; Dan Roddan and Brian Thome, representatives from Waste Management; and Jon Reisenbuechler and Craig Breit, from the Manitowoc County Recycling Center, to better understand the effect proposed regulation changes may have on the local entities involved in trash and recycling pickup.

Finally, DPI confirmed that this is a problem that costs taxpayers needlessly. During a span of approximately 90 days in 2025, DPI estimated that it spent over \$10,000.00 worth of man hours cleaning litter in streets and parks on days associated with strong winds. DPI opined that this is a preventable problem with a cost-effective solution.

Discussion

We reviewed trash and recycling ordinances in nine other cities in Wisconsin. All required that their collection receptacles have hinged lids. Hinged lids are superior to unhinged lids because they are always connected to the receptacle. Many ordinances specified the exact size of containers (Green Bay requires a 96-gallon tipper cart, for example) while other allow for multiple size options (Madison specifies 35, 65, or 95-gallon tipper carts). We have attached a depiction of these carts for reference.

A. Pozorski Hauling and Recycling

We spoke with Mr. Pozorski first. Pozorski Hauling and Recycling provides service to more than 90% of Manitowoc residences. He is passionate about the excellent sanitation service he provides. He is aware of the

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issue of material blowing into the streets from uncovered receptacles. His business uses 18-gallon recycling bins that are almost universally uncovered. He recently purchased 1,000 lids for these containers so that customers may purchase and use them, if they desire. The problem is that these lids are not hinged; the lids are separate from the container. Further, many residents place more material into the bins than can be handled when a lid is used; the bins often “overflow.”

Pozorski Hauling and Recycling uses a three-member team to collect trash and recycling. 45-gallon containers of trash (or smaller) are manually loaded into the truck. Recyclables are manually loaded and sorted curbside (pulp in one part of the truck, everything else in the other). Mr. Pozorski instructs his employees to collect any trash in the streets and to leave each property looking clean and orderly (lids on bins, straight, etc.). There is no question to his commitment to the city and its residents. Mr. Pozorski also provides excellent value for his customers, which likely explains his large market share of residential customers. The collection fees for Pozorski Hauling and Recycling are somewhere between 50%-33% of the fees charged by Waste Management.

If the City were to require hinged lids and proscribe larger receptacles, it is possible Pozorski Hauling and Recycling would have to make capital investments to automate their trucks, as larger bins mean heavier waste that likely make it untenable for manual collection.

B. Waste Management

Waste Management offers residents the option for a hinged 96- or 64-gallon trash container, and a 64-gallon hinged recycling container. Their services are automated and would be unaffected by an ordinance change requiring hinged lids. Currently, Waste Management provides services that are arguably in violation of our current code: MMC 13.030(3)b states in relevant part:

Commercial garbage haulers shall adopt and utilize a volume-based rate structure for the collection of solid waste from occupants of single-family and two- to four-unit residences. The rate structure shall provide a flat base charge for weekly nonrecyclable garbage **which is placed in a single container of 45 gallons or less**, except as may otherwise be permitted by the Streets Committee and the Department of Natural Resources.

(emphasis mine)

This section of the Code should be addressed regardless of how the discussion for hinged lids/lids/litter evolves.

In any event, Waste Management supports any effort the City would make towards remediating the litter issue.

C. County of Manitowoc

Staff from the County listened to our concerns regarding their facilities. They understood that there could be benefits if they updated their facility to support single-stream recycling efforts, but all they could do was listen and report back. We do not anticipate any movement from the County in the immediate future.



Recommendation

The cleanest and most cost-effective solution to the City's litter issue is to require hinged lids for all residential sanitary bins (trash and recycling). Allowing multiple sized bins would also be prudent, as the market clearly demands it. The Common Council will have to weigh the litter issue against what could result in an increase in operational costs that would be passed on to the consumer from their provider. The only other internal discussions we had focused on increasing customer awareness of this issue, but City Staff found it implausible that citizens are unaware that when they overfill a bin on a windy day trash will blow out of said bin.

Staff also believes that if the Common Council were to direct an ordinance change regarding hinged-lids, the effective date of the ordinance should not be immediate. Both providers and haulers would need time to come into compliance with that change.



