

Recycling Enforcement & Data Collection: Arlington's Experience

Scott MacDonald

Bonnie Wilson

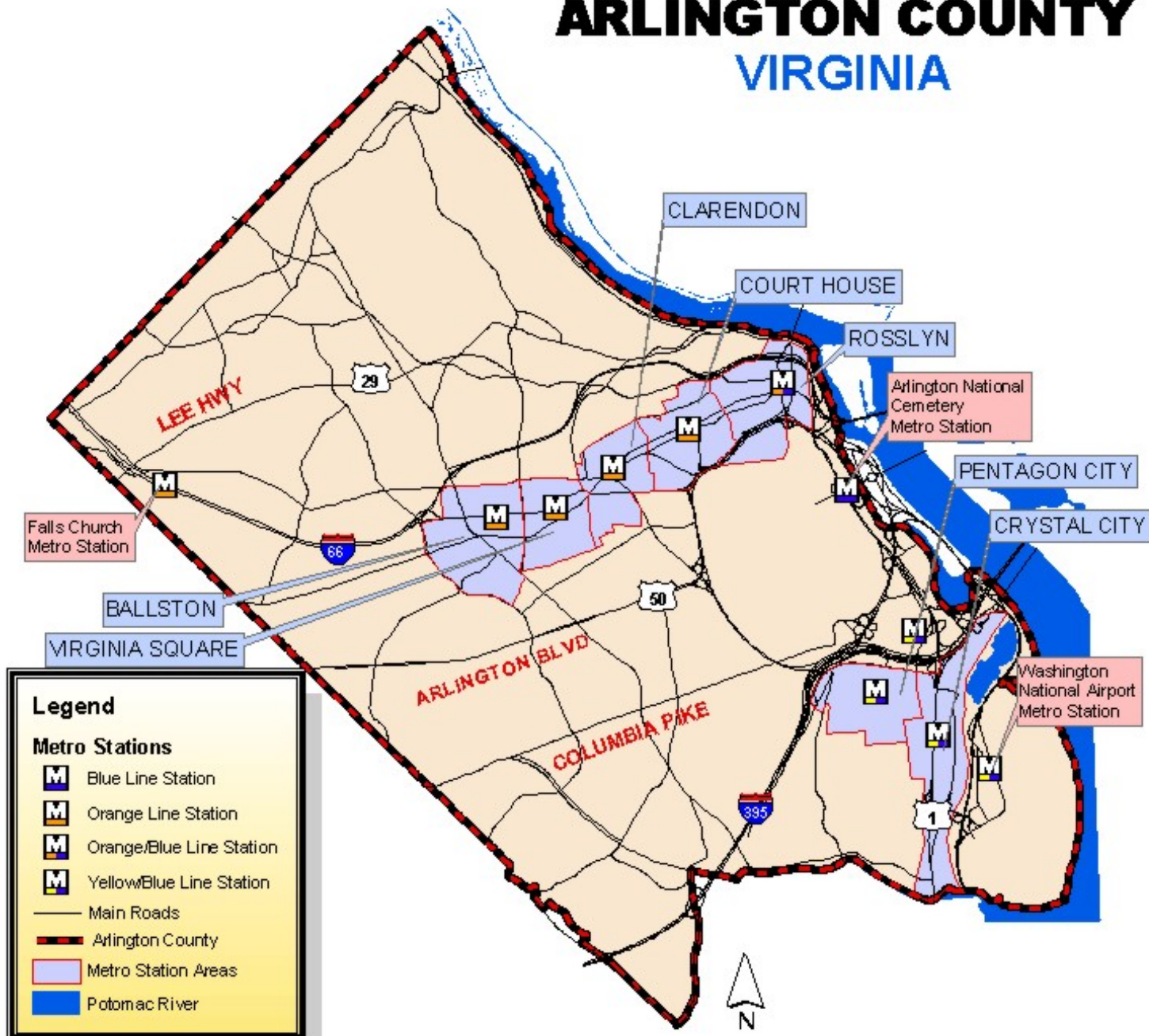
Arlington Virginia Solid Waste

February 3, 2005

Arlington Virginia

- 26 square mile urban county
- Population: 189,453 (2000)
 - Daytime employment: 206,200
- Households: 86,352
 - 45% apartments/condos
 - 37% single-family and duplex
 - 11% town homes
- Approximately 45 million square feet of commercial space
- Includes the Pentagon, Ft. Meyer, and Ronald Reagan National Airport

ARLINGTON COUNTY VIRGINIA



Program Resources

- Approximately 2.25 FTEs:
 - Program Manager
 - Codes Inspector
 - Administrative Assistant
- Approximate Annual Budget: \$125,000
 - Personnel: \$105,000
 - Does not include additional administrative support during 3-year cycle years
 - Non-Personnel: \$20,000
 - Higher during 3-year cycle years due to mailing expenses

Mandatory Recycling Program Overview

- Began in 1993—first plans filed in 1994
- Modified in 1995—annual to 3 year cycles
- Affected Parties:
 - Commercial
 - Apartments/condos
 - Single-family and duplex properties
 - Waste haulers
- Program includes material requirements, recycling plans, education, inspection, enforcement, and appeals process

Commercial Requirements

- Materials: 2 PRMs (paper, metals, glass, etc.) generated in the most quantities
- Recycling plan within 30 days of occupancy
 - Plans updated every 3 years
- Education—send sample education materials
- Program within 90 days of occupancy
- Exempts certain home-based businesses

Identification of Properties

- Certificate of Occupancy Permits:
 - Developer required to obtain prior to moving in.
 - Review CPHD weekly reports
 - Scrutinize
 - Compare with existing records
 - Field investigation
- Utility Billing System
- Real Estate Records

Apartment and Condo Requirements

- Materials: newspapers, glass, and cans
- Recycling plan within 30 days of occupancy
 - Plans updated every 3 years
- Education—type and location of containers
- Program within 90 days of occupancy

Waste Hauler Requirements

- Applies to all firms collecting recyclables in Arlington County
- Due February 1 for the previous calendar year
- Data used to complete Virginia Locality Recycling Rate Report (April 30)
- Approximately 150 reports sent out for CY 2004

Single-Family & Duplex Requirements

- Must participate in County refuse collection and recycling program
- Materials: newspapers, glass, and cans
- Codes Inspector:
 - Cart/bin set-out procedures
 - Improper preparation
 - Citizen contact

Recycling Implementation Plans

- 1,800 plans: 1,200 commercial and 600 apartments/condo plans
- Updated every 3 years (2003)
- Plan information:
 - Property contact information
 - # employees (business)
 - # units (apartments/condos)
 - Recyclable materials
 - Waste hauler information
 - Recycling education
- Plans may be faxed or e-mailed

Recycling Implementation Plans

- Plan data is entered into an Access-based relational database
- Compliance Database Functions:
 - Plan information
 - Compliance tracking
 - 90 day inspections
 - Active Notice of Violations
 - Active Order of Corrections
 - Contact log
 - Supports mailings

Inspections

- Random sample inspections
 - Quarterly
 - Inspection criteria
- Certificate of Occupancy inspections
 - Code applicability
- 90 day program follow-up inspections
- Complaint investigations

Outreach & Education

- County web site:
 - Requirements
 - Report forms
 - Education tools
- Citizen newsletter
- Utility bill
- Planned outreach
 - Window decals
 - Bus advertising

General Enforcement Process

- Letter/Phone Call
- Notice of Violation
 - 30 days to correct
- Phone call
- Order of Correction
 - 15 days to correct
- Enforcement Action:
 - Prior to 2005: courts
 - 2005 on: Treasure's Office

Appeal Process

- Written request of appeal must be received within 5 business days of NOV
- Hold hearing before County Manager or designee (Solid Waste Bureau Chief)
- Render decision within 15 days of the hearing

Compliance Tips

- Inspect sample of properties to determine level of compliance
- Inspection evaluation criteria needs to be simple
 - Plan on file? (Y/N)
 - Evidence of a program (Y/N)
 - How to handle self hauls
- Make use of certified mail
 - Reduces enforcement action time

Future Plans

- Update Refuse Code:
 - Civil penalties program—issuing tickets
 - Clarifying accessibility of recycling containers—must equal refuse containers
 - Tighten up education requirements
- Integrate database with other similar County records
 - Zoning's Certificate of Occupancy records

Most Common Issues

- Lack of on-site education regarding recycling programs
- Identifying a responsible party for recycling:
 - Tenant says landlord
 - Landlord says tenant
- Language barriers
 - Multi-family residents
 - Janitorial staff

For More Information:

Scott MacDonald
Arlington Virginia Solid Waste
4300 S. 29th Street
Arlington, VA 22206
(703) 228-6491
smacdonald@arlingtonva.us

Bonnie Wilson
Arlington Virginia Solid Waste
4300 S. 29th Street
Arlington, VA 22206
(703) 228-6491
bwilson@arlingtonva.us