



TOWN OF GREENWICH

Office of the First Selectman
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Five Common Myths About Pay As You Throw (PAYT)

Why are we doing this now? The FY21 Budget presented many challenges to our Town, including significant increases in waste removal and recycling costs. To mitigate the impact, the First Selectman's FY21 Budget includes a Pay As You Throw (PAYT) system for waste management.

Myth 1: I'm paying for something that used to be free.

Fact: Trash removal has never been free - waste disposal is very expensive and is currently paid by taxes. Removing waste from Greenwich cost taxpayers about \$5million/year. With the new recycling removal expense in FY21, that will rise to about \$6million per year. Unlike other utilities, residents and businesses currently have no control over their waste costs and subsidize high-waste producers and people that don't recycle.

Myth 2: I'm paying twice for the same thing!

Fact: Bag fees are used to offset the taxes needed for waste disposal – reducing the burden on taxpayers. PAYT shifts disposal costs to users and gives residents & businesses more personal control.

Myth 3: This will cause illegal dumping so that people won't have to buy bags.

Fact: There is no evidence to support this claim. According to CT DEEP, compliance is usually successful within the first 6 weeks of a new program. Illegal dumping is still illegal and Towns report the same experience with or without PAYT.

Myth 4: There must be a better way to manage waste disposal expenses. We should study this more thoroughly and try other solutions first.

Fact: The State of Connecticut, as well as other states and cities around the country, have worked for decades to find programs that increase recycling and reduce waste. According to CT DEEP and MassDEP, Pay As You Throw is the single most effective way to reduce trash while also saving money.

Myth 5: This will impact my private hauler – and that will cost me more money.

Fact: Because of the new expense for recycling removal, the Town has to do something to prevent a tax increase in excess of 3%. PAYT is the option that has no major impact on private haulers. Trash collection continues as it does now, the only change is the bag that your garbage goes in. Unlike other options, this allows private haulers to continue operations as they do today and allows residents that bring trash direct to Holly Hill to still do so.