

ReCollect

CUSTOMER STORY | City of Buckeye, Arizona

Nestled just west of Phoenix is the growing City of Buckeye, AZ. There, over the last two decades or so, the population has increased by more than 67,000 people, from some 6,500 people to about 74,300, making it number one in the U.S. for population growth.

The City's Environmental Services, a division of its Public Works Department, provides contract management for residential solid waste collection, information and inspections for solid waste storage safety, general pollution prevention, recycling, and environmental health. The City offers free household hazardous waste drop off, as well as quarterly bulky-trash collection and recycling through Republic Services.

With digital tools for solid waste from ReCollect, in addition to the educational components Republic Services provides through its contract, the City is well on its way to encouraging its residents to recycle more and become great recyclers, while providing them with timely information they need to know in order to do so.

Since the City employed ReCollect's tools in 2017, Buckeye residents have:



Searched for 15,802 materials through ReCollect's Waste Wizard to learn what items go where.



Created more than 1,500 Collection Calendar reminders through the calendar tool, which delivers information about collection dates via email, text message, voice calls and more.

"With ReCollect's metrics, I know how many people are looking up their schedule, what they are searching. It gives me the ability to understand time savings"



Pinpointing obstacles, planning for success

The City of Buckeye faces many challenges that easily could get in the way of their recycling success, including the fact that there is a lot of landfill space in Arizona, a state where landfill tipping fees also are low. But during a time when many cities in Arizona are moving away from recycling altogether, Buckeye is doubling down on its commitment to communicate with and educate its residents about the benefits of recycling — and how to do it properly. “Despite the market’s ebb and flow,” said Public Works Environmental Manager Robert van den Akker, “Buckeye is committed to educating the public on proper recycling.”



The audience the City needs to reach is ever changing. The population is growing quickly in Buckeye, and some 2,500 new homes are built there every year to house all of the incoming people. In fact, between 30 and 40 percent of the City’s total population are new each year.



250,030
Homes



40%
New population churn every year

A large percentage of homes in the area are rental properties, which may pose a disconnect between City services and residents, as often times landlords and property owners are the people in direct contact with the City and its services, and not necessarily the residents who live inside the homes.

Furthermore, a large portion of the people in Buckeye are temporary residents, such as vacationers or snowbirds. The latter of the two make up some 30 percent of the population. These residents may be unaware of how recycling works in general, let alone how it works locally in Buckeye.

These problematic factors present a number of challenges, including a high volume of calls to the call center, more waste in landfills, recycling contamination and more. Teaching residents about the broader values of recycling can be difficult, never mind trying to convey the basics of what can and cannot be recycled, even if folks already want to recycle.



High volume
of calls



Waste in
landfills



Recycling
contamination



Teaching
residents

There’s “so much wishcycling going on due to an influx of people coming in who don’t realize the City handles recycling differently,” van den Akker said.

“When customers don’t know to care, they won’t care.”

A confluence of factors such as these make recycling education difficult, so to supplement Republic's contracted work, Buckeye's Environmental Services division looks to digital tools from ReCollect to educate residents about its services and their environmental benefits, which helps residents recycle correctly and empowers them to find the information they need on their own.

Small changes add up to big results

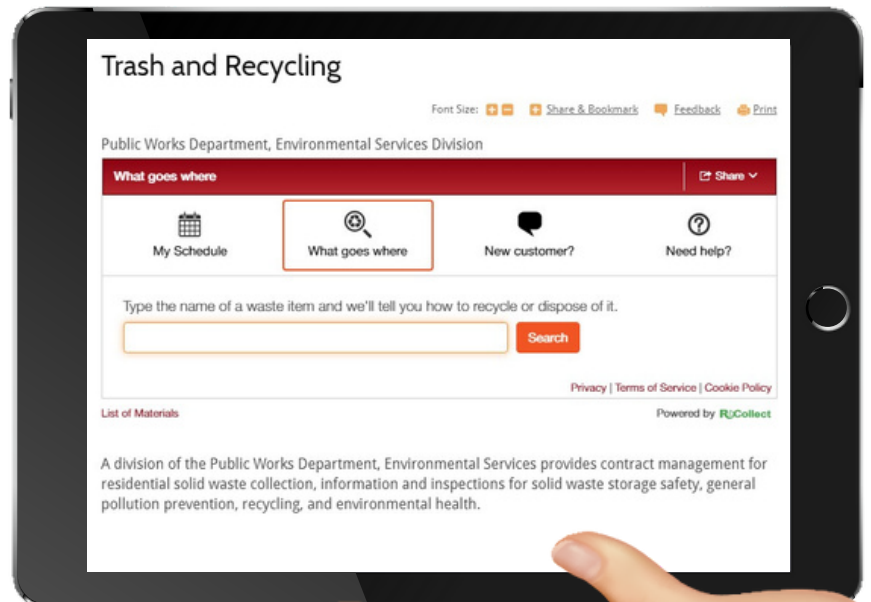
To help the City reach its goals, it employed ReCollect's Waste Wizard and Calendar Tools, and City officials definitely are seeing the difference. Since establishing the tools, Buckeye has saved its customer service representatives more than 500 hours worth of call time. Van den Akker said some eight or 10 customer service representatives are on the phone all day, spending five to seven minutes on each phone call. The City is always trying to decrease that time while continuing to listen and respond to customer issues, and anything the City can do to help its residents, without having to field high volumes of calls to do so, is a huge benefit.

"With ReCollect's metrics, I know how many people are looking up their schedule, what they are searching. It gives me the ability to see the time savings," van den Akker said. Since the City began using the tools in 2017, Buckeye residents have searched for some 15,802 materials in the Waste Wizard directory without having to

call a customer service representative or comb through online lists.

Now that customers are turning to the digital tools rather than calling in, "we've saved a lot of time," van den Akker said.

"Hundreds of hours in savings. This puts a lot of value in the (ReCollect) products themselves."



In addition to free household waste drop off, the City offers quarterly bulky-trash collection and recycling through Republic Services. With ReCollect's Collection Calendar tool, "people can look up bulk trash collection (and set up) notifications in advance," van den Akker said. This is especially handy when residents are new in town or only in town over the winter months and are having to get the hang of new recycling rules and a new pick-up schedule.

Through the tool, residents have created more than 1,500 Collection Calendar reminders so they never miss a collection day or have to make a call. "We receive (fewer) phone calls for bulky trash" collection, now, van den Akker said.

Not only do ReCollect's tools benefit Buckeye's residents, but the city itself. With ReCollect, from the front end to the back end, Buckeye has found it easy to work with us. "Many (competitors) have response time delays, and difficulty understanding our needs."

"Everything has been really simple and easy. Working (with) providers is usually challenging."



No matter the challenges it faces, the City of Buckeye is committed to educating its customers about recycling, and with its perseverance — and a little help from ReCollect — it will continue to reach its goals.

About ReCollect

ReCollect Systems is a technology company specializing in digital solutions for the waste management sector.

With a focus on meeting and surpassing the expectations of residents, ReCollect has the proven experience to deliver digital products that also meet the needs of waste managers, communicators, IT specialists and governmental officials.

Launched in 2009, today ReCollect is used by millions of residents across North America. From small villages to large urban centres, from municipal services to private haulers, ReCollect is ready to make your waste management programs more efficient and successful.

ReCollect

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