



Implement ~~Save Money and Reduce Trash (SMART) Program~~ Unit-Based Pricing

Beginning in 2021, Sustainable CT has adopted a new numbering system for its actions. To translate between the new and prior numbering schemes, please visit our website to view a numbering translation guide.

Action Updates

This action has been revised for the **current certification cycle**. A version of this action from the prior program year is [available for comparison](#). Edits are highlighted in yellow. (Last updated 2021)

Objective

Reduce residential trash generation.

Note: Unit-based pricing, also known as “pay as you throw” and “save money and reduce trash (SMART)”, is a method of charging for trash disposal based on the amount disposed

Complementary Actions:

- [Report Materials Management Data and Reduce Waste](#)
- [Recycle Additional Materials and Compost Organics](#)
- [Develop A Food Waste Prevention Campaign or Food Scraps Recovery Campaign or Program](#)

What to Do

The more you do, the more points you earn.

1. Build a Unit-Based Pricing Task Force or use your Sustainability Team to facilitate the completion of the steps needed for ultimate Unit-Based Pricing program implementation. **(5 points)**

All elements must be completed and outlined in the worksheet provided to receive credit.

- a. Designate a person(s), agency(ies), or committee to lead the Unit-Based Pricing Task Force. Potential membership is outlined in the Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators section below, may begin with your existing Sustainability Team, and should include diverse stakeholders representing at least three different sectors (e.g., local elected officials, municipal staff, community stakeholders, etc.).
- b. Reach out to and meet with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection for partnership, guidance and support, which may include funding assistance.
- c. Complete the remainder of this worksheet 1 to guide the Unit-Based Pricing Task Force's initial efforts.

Submit: A list of members (including titles/professional affiliations) of the Unit-Based Pricing Task Force; the date of the most recent Unit-Based Pricing Task Force meeting; the contact information of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection liaison who is supporting your efforts to implement a Unit-Based Pricing program; and a completed Unit-Based Pricing Task Force worksheet 1.

Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Committee/Task Force/Position Creation" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

2. Conduct research, an analysis, and internal education regarding Unit-Based Pricing program adoption.. **(5 points)**

All elements must be completed to receive credit.

- a. Analyze municipal collection methods, hauler requirements, contract expiration dates, and the distance municipal waste is being hauled and cost structure for collection.
- b. Calculate the projected cost savings or new municipal revenue you would gain as a result of implementing a Unit-Based Pricing program.
- c. Research how other municipalities have implemented Unit-Based Pricing, including a visit to at least one municipality with a Unit-Based Pricing program. Using residential solid waste generation per capita as a benchmark, compare Unit-Based Pricing to other waste reduction strategies, such as education programs, reward programs, and overflow programs.
- d. Educate elected officials in small groups to explore internal support for Unit-Based Pricing.

Submit: A completed Unit-Based Pricing program worksheet 2, inclusive of the required elements above.

Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Outreach, Education, Programs, Campaigns, Recognition/Designation in External Program, and Funding" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

3. By municipal resolution, ordinance, or another implementation mechanism, adopt a Unit-Based Pricing program consistent with the following framework: **(20 points)**
 - Has a linear or near-linear rate structure for disposal (collection can be a flat fee)
 - Uses a bag, a tag, or variable-sized carts;
 - Has cart pricing that increases significantly with size, to incentivize waste reduction.

Additional Notes:

- For a program at a community transfer station, collection must occur by the bag (not weight) with an initial bag size of no larger than 15-30 gallons.
- Any curbside variable sized cart program must offer a small unit size option of no larger than 15-30 gallons, in addition to at least two larger sizes offered, and ideally should utilize monthly or quarterly billing to incentivize waste reduction.
- Any curbside bag (including bag in a cart) program must offer a small unit size option of no larger than 15-30 gallons, in addition to larger sizes offered.
- An overflow program that charges residents for "extra" trash is not considered a Unit-Based Pricing rate structure.

You may mandate a Unit-Based Pricing rate structure for residential subscription haulers through their permitting process. Unit-Based Pricing is an effective pathway to achieving reductions in residential solid waste generation per capita, eligible for points under Sustainable CT Action Report Materials Management Data and Reduce Waste.

Submit: Documentation showing the implementation of Unit-Based Pricing. Documentation may be a resolution or ordinance formally adopted by your governing body, meeting minutes or a letter from your chief elected official or legislative body.

Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Outreach, Education, Programs, Campaigns, Recognition/Designation in External Program, and Funding" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

Timeframe for Credit

Actions can either be "New" or considered for "Rolling Credit."

New Action Credit. Any action completed within the past three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification) is eligible for potential certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of

expiration, you may not claim *New Action Credit* for items that previously received credit.

Rolling Credit. For any action older than three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification), you must demonstrate ongoing, currently relevant, and meaningful impact in your community to be considered for certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you must apply for *Rolling Credit* for any item that previously received credit, even if it was completed within the past three years.

View the "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for detailed submission requirements.

Engaging Partners

Sustainable CT encourages regional collaboration and other forms of partnership. For every action, please complete the "partners" box in your submission, indicating the name(s) of any municipalities and/or organizations you partnered with (if any) and a brief description of your municipality's role. For additional information, please see the Partners Guidance Document.

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

SMART **Unit-Based Pricing** Task Force Members suggested by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection SMART **Unit-Based Pricing** guidebook include elected officials, one or members of the public works department, or recycling coordinator, local haulers, local business representatives, community organizations and members of the public. [Additional information.](#)

Why This Matters

Waste-to-energy facilities contribute to climate change by emitting greenhouse gases. Reducing, reusing, repurposing, recycling, and composting keep items out of these facilities. Comparison studies show that SMART **Unit-Based Pricing** towns recycle more and dispose of less waste than neighboring communities.

A key to making SMART **Unit-Based Pricing** work is providing opportunities for people to do something with their trash other than throwing it out. Waste reduction programs, reuse facilities, expansion of curbside collection services, and yard and other organic waste composting programs are complementary activities that enhance the impact of SMART **Unit-Based Pricing** (See the [Recycle Additional Materials and Compost Organics](#) and the [Develop A Food Waste Reduction Campaign](#) Actions.)

Benefits

When you implement SMART **Unit-Based Pricing**, your town will be measurably reducing waste generation. This Action produces environmental benefits, greenhouse gas reductions, improved community health and wellness, municipal and residential cost savings, and potentially enhanced economic well-being.

For a complete list of funding opportunities, implementation resources, and success stories specific to this action, please visit the full Action write-up on the [Sustainable CT Actions webpage.](#)