



FACT SHEET: Pay-As-You-Throw and Illegal Dumping

Invariably, one of the first questions municipalities ask about pay-as-you-throw is its impact on the incidence of increased illegal dumping. Overall, PAYT does *not* lead to increased illegal dumping. A series of surveys and interviews with hundreds of communities conducted over the past two decades by SERA Inc. have found that the vast majority of communities that adopt PAYT do not report increased incidences of illegal dumping. Communities report that illegal dumping is a “perceived” barrier and not an actual barrier. Although many communities report that they thought illegal dumping would increase with PAYT only a small portion actually do see increases. Virtually all of the communities that report an increase of illegal dumping after implementing PAYT also report that illegal dumping returns to pre-PAYT levels within one to three months.

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SERA 2010 National Community Survey

Communities with PAYT programs in place were asked to rank illegal dumping before and after implementing PAYT on an A to F scale (where an A means that there is no incidence of illegal dumping and F means it is a huge problem). After implementation, none of the communities with PAYT reported that illegal dumping was a *huge problem* and those that reported it was a D decreased from 21% to 14% after implementing PAYT.

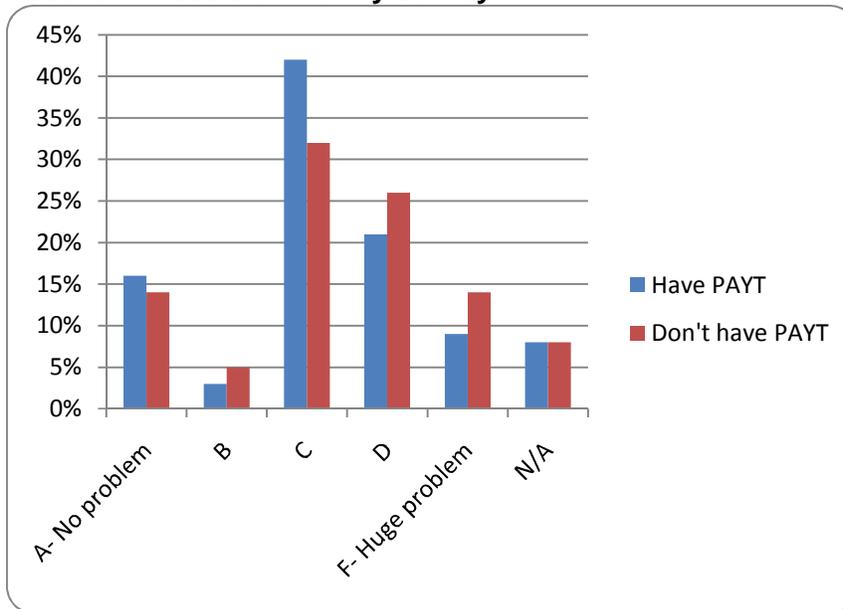
Results of 2010 Community Survey

Ranking	Before PAYT	After PAYT
A- No problem at all	0%	0%
B- Very slight issue	21%	43%
C- Medium problem	7%	7%
D- Large issue	21%	14%
F- Huge Problem	7%	0%
Don't know / wasn't there	43%	28%

SERA 2009 National Community Survey

In a 2009 survey SERA researchers asked communities to report whether or not they had PAYT and asked communities to rank illegal dumping. There was very little difference in the issue of illegal dumping between communities with and without PAYT. Slightly higher proportions of communities *without* PAYT reported that illegal dumping was a large or huge problem. The results of the 2009 community survey are displayed in the figure on the following page:

Results of 2009 Community Survey



SERA 1,000 Community Survey

SERA surveyed 1,000 communities across the US with pay-as-you-throw to uncover a wide range of metrics and data, including illegal dumping changes and impacts. The survey found that about 20% of the communities that adopted PAYT identified illegal dumping as an issue after implementation but that the problem was resolved after about 3 months. Several communities suggested doing visible enforcement if the problem did persist. The other 80% of communities surveyed reported that PAYT did not lead to increased incidences of illegal dumping.