



Waste

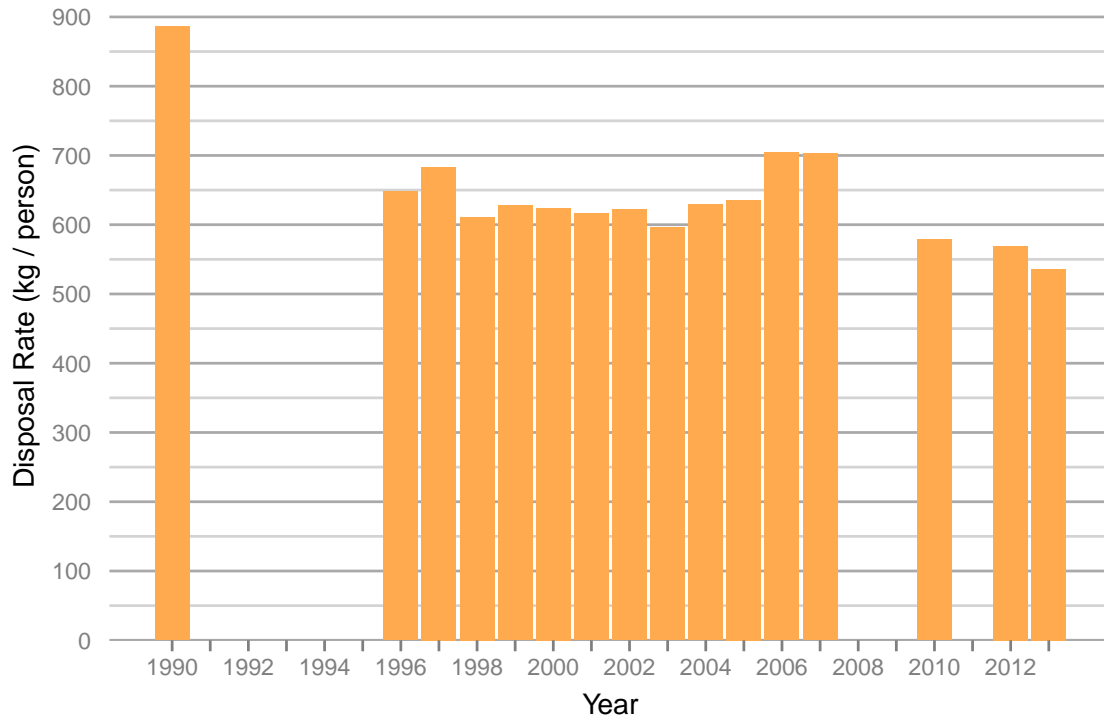
Municipal Solid Waste Disposal in B.C. (1990-2013)

This indicator reports the estimated amount of municipal solid waste disposed per person for each regional district and for British Columbia. Per-person disposal rate is an estimate of how many kilograms of solid waste one person sends to a landfill or other disposal site in a given year.

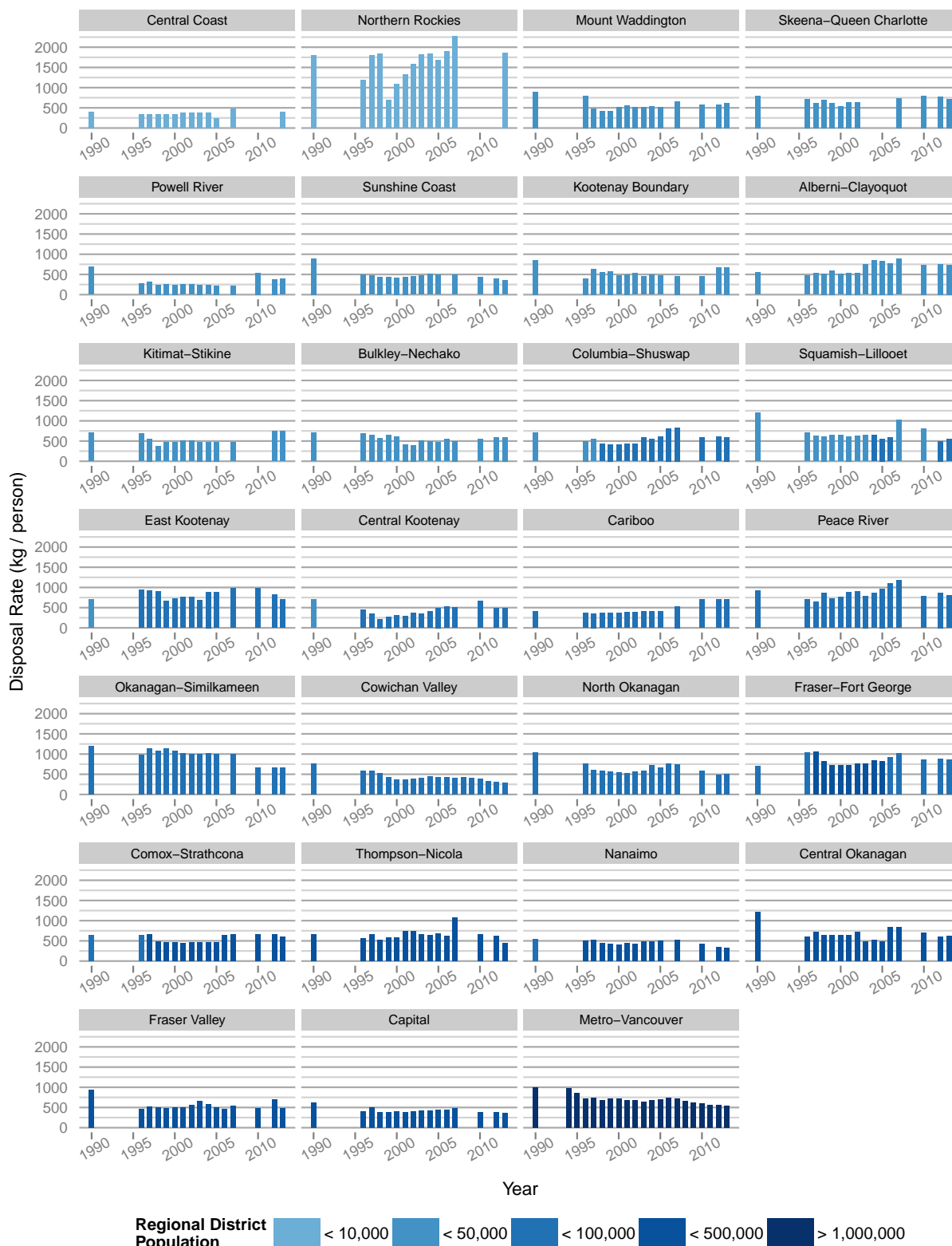
- [BC Stats](#) estimates that 2.9 million tonnes of solid waste were disposed of in B.C.'s landfills in 2010 and that disposal will increase by 17.5% by 2025 if current practices continue¹.
- This increasing waste disposal rate will put pressure on local government waste management budgets. Much of the waste disposed of could be reduced (by not generating it in the first place), repurposed, composted or recycled.
- Tracking waste disposal across B.C. is important as we work to reduce the amount of waste we create and avoid waste disposal where possible.
- British Columbia has set provincial waste disposal targets with a long-term goal of lowering the municipal solid waste disposal rate to 350 kg per person by 2020. The target disposal rate set for 2013 was 550 kg per person².
- In 2013 British Columbians disposed of an average of 536 kg of municipal solid waste per person.
- Variability in disposal rates from one region to the next is influenced by factors such as population density, distance to recycling markets, the role of various stewardship agencies operating in an area, and the capacity and infrastructure in place in a region. While disposal rate data don't tell the whole story, they are useful in setting the stage for continuous improvement in waste management in B.C.

The following charts show the per-person municipal solid waste disposal rate in British Columbia, and from all Regional Districts, from 1990-2013.

Municipal Solid Waste disposal rates in British Columbia, 1990–2013



Municipal Solid Waste disposal rates in B.C. Regional Districts, 1990–2013



Disposal rate comparisons:

- Nova Scotians have the lowest provincial disposal rate in Canada, disposing of 376 kg per person in the 2012-2013 fiscal year.
- *British Columbia has the second lowest provincial disposal rate in Canada³, disposing of 536 kg/person in 2013.*
- By 2025 daily global garbage generation could reach 6 million tonnes, enough to fill a line of garbage trucks 5,000 kilometres long every day.⁴.

Notes about disposal rates:

- 2013 disposal rates were provided by regional districts, or where data was missing, estimated by the Ministry of Environment based on available information.
- Disposal rates reported here include waste from the residential sector, institutional, commercial, and industrial sources as well as waste from construction, demolition and renovation activities. Disposal rates do not include hazardous, biomedical, or agricultural waste, motor vehicles or components, or contaminated soil. Waste that is reused or recycled is also not included.
- The composition of waste counted towards per capita disposal may vary between regional districts. Data comparability may also vary due to other factors such as regional district staff resources and use of weigh scales and landfill tipping fees.
- The 2013 Squamish-Lillooet Regional District per capita disposal rate accounts for tourist and visitor populations, which are significant for this area.
- Disposal rates for Comox Valley and Strathcona are reported as one as they handle their waste stream [together](#).
- Disposal rates cannot be directly compared between years because the data were collected using different methods. However, the data are useful in showing general patterns.

Regional districts that wish to update the waste disposal data reported above should contact the Environmental Standards Branch at eqb@victoria1.gov.bc.ca. Input from regional districts will also serve to inform future waste reporting methodology development.

References and Other Useful Links:

Find out where to recycle using the Recycling Council of British Columbia's Recyclepedia: <http://www.rcbc.bc.ca/>

Extended Producer Responsibility in B.C.: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/topic.page?id=BEBA70369C274C8FBA4FB42BE828A9EB&title=Product%20Stewardship>

Solid Waste Management Planning in B.C.: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/topic.page?id=CBCECCAABAA2401B9FB3B7CE63129709>

British Columbia's *Environmental Management Act*: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/main/ema.htm>

Waste Management in Canada; Statistics Canada (2012); see section 3.1, Municipal solid waste: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/16-201-x/16-201-x2012000-eng.pdf>

Waste Management Industry Survey: Business and Government Sectors; Statistics Canada (2013): <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/16f0023x/16f0023x2013001-eng.pdf>

¹BC Stats: Solid Waste Generation in British Columbia: 2010-2025 Forecast (report and fact sheet): <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/EnvironmentalStatistics/Analysis.aspx>

²British Columbia Ministry of Environment Service Plan 2015/16 - 2017/18 (February 2015): <http://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2015/sp/pdf/ministry/env.pdf>

³Disposal and diversion of waste, by province and territory (Waste disposal per capita); Statistics Canada (2010 and 2012 data years): <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/envir32b-eng.htm>

⁴Hoorweg, D., P. Bhada-Tata, C. Kennedy. 31 October 2013. Environment: Waste production must peak this century. *Nature* 502: 615-617. doi:10.1038/502615a <http://www.nature.com/news/environment-waste-production-must-peak-this-century-1.14032>

Data

*By accessing these datasets, you agree to the license associated with each file, as indicated below.

- Municipal solid waste disposal, 1990-2013: <http://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/bc-municipal-solid-waste-disposal-rates>.
 - License: B.C. OGL (<http://www.data.gov.bc.ca/local/dbc/docs/license/OGL-vbc2.0.pdf>).

Published and Available On-Line at Environmental Reporting BC (November 2015): http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/soe/indicators/sustainability/municipal_solid_waste.html