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## Critics: City's new recycling plan could be improved



By Eric Halvorson (<http://wishtv.com/author/wisherichalvorson/>)

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INDIANAPOLIS (WISH) – It didn't take long for a new recycling proposal to attract critics.

On Monday afternoon, Mayor Greg Ballard's office revealed plans to boost the collection of recyclable waste in Indianapolis.

By lunch time on Tuesday, environmentalists offered objections to the idea. For example, Renee Sweany of Indiana Living Green had a newsletter arguing citywide curbside recycling would be better than the Mayor's idea.

Ballard spokesman Marc Lotter told 24-Hour News 8 the plan relies on Covanta, the company that runs the city's trash incinerator. It offers to build a plant to separate most recyclables from the rest of the garbage.

"And it's not going to cost taxpayers anything," Lotter said. "It's not going to cost people at home anything.

It's not going to cost the government anything.

Covanta is taking all the risks that they can get that material out of there. They can resell it. And make their money back."

Sweany said the Covanta system is known "as a Dirty MRF (Materials Recovery Facility). It's considered dirty because the quantity and quality of recyclable materials is drastically degraded."

She went on to say such a system is "nearly extinct" in the United States while "Clean MRF's (like the ones Republic and Ray's operate in Indianapolis) are proliferating across the country."

Sweany also criticized the new proposal because it does not include glass in what it would collect and recycle. "Glass is one resource that is infinitely recyclable and Indiana's large glass industry is desperate for more energy-saving recycled glass."

Lotter said, down the road, they hope to add technology that will include glass and other "organic material" in what is recycled. But, he said the program will start by collecting paper, plastics and metals.

Lotter said the Mayor will reveal the details of the recycling plan next week. And, he predicted the coming changes will boost the amount of recycled material by about 500 percent in Indianapolis.


Environmentalists such as Sweany disagree. "Sending all waste to a Dirty MRF will not result in more recycled material," she said. "Citywide recycling will result in more recycled material." And she contends "we have more options than ever before" to make such a service available.

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