

Talking trash — but also recycling

By Anne Knowles
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Carson City's garbage collector talked some trash on Wednesday, but recycling was the main topic of discussion.

Carson City recently awarded a 15-year trash collection contract to Waste Management of Nevada. Waste Management is the city's current contractor, but the new contract, starting in July, will offer new services and rates.

The new contract offers single-stream recycling — paper, plastic, and glass collected in a single container. Pick up will be every other week, alternating weeks with another new twice-monthly service, yard waste recycling.

Kendra Kostelecky, communications specialist, Waste Management, told attendees at the Carson City Chamber of Commerce's monthly luncheon in the Gold Dust West recycling has become more difficult, and expensive, in the last few years.

China, which took much of the world's recyclables,

started restricting items in 2017 and starting in 2020 will no longer take any plastic.

"That's why you're seeing smaller municipalities really struggling with recycling," said Kostelecky.

She said it's important to recycle the right items in the correct way so as not to contaminate the process.

Recyclables include plastic and glass bottles and containers, which shouldn't contain any liquid when disposed of; paper and cardboard, which can't include shredded paper; and clean tin and aluminum cans.

Items that can't be recycled include plastic bags, styro-foam products, diapers or pet waste, and electronics or batteries.

Residents, as part of their service, can receive up to three, wheeled containers — one for garbage, collected weekly, and one each for recyclables and yard waste.

Yard waste is essentially green waste — grass, leaves and small branches, or tumbleweeds — and not soil, rocks, pet waste or any

inorganic material.

"Anything that Mother Nature has produced in your yard except for a couple of things," said Cody Witt, Northern Nevada manager, Full Circle Soils & Compost.

The green waste will be turned into several composting products sold by Full Circle at Greenhouse Garden Center and elsewhere.

Starting in July, trash collection will be mandatory, unless residents provide receipts proving they hauled their garbage to the landfill.

That's common for cities as large as Carson City, and helps reduce rates, said Kostelecky.

"It is unusual to not have mandatory service in a community this large," she said. "It spreads out the cost and makes rates more affordable."

The new rates for most residents will be \$17.59 a month, and include garbage pickup and recycling as well as pickups of holiday trees and bulk waste, such as couches or mattresses, that can be scheduled four times a year.

Nevada more prepared for recession

By Geoff Dornan
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Three experts told the Northern Nevada Development Authority on Wednesday the state is in much better shape to handle a recession than when the great recession hit in 2007.

Bob Potts of the Governor's Office of Economic Development, Hassan Azam of the Reno Tahoe International Airport and John McGinness of the Atlantis hotel-casino addressed a crowd of almost 100 at the Casino Fandango.

They were joined by NNDA Executive Director Rob Hooper who pointed out the tourism industry is similar to the "canary in the coal mine."

"This sector is the first to feel an economic downturn," he said.

Potts, research director at GOED, said the key difference is the concerted efforts to diversify Nevada's economy over the past decade. He said that effort has been successful, especially in western Nevada, which he said is "seeing real diversification." And that means less reliance on casino resorts to support the economy.

Potts said most experts are predicting the national economy is going to slow down.

"But our economy is going to hold its own better than the national economy," he said.

Azam, who manages air service and cargo development at the airport, said the mix of passengers has also changed in the past six years, moving from heavy reliance on leisure passengers and more on business travelers. And business travelers, he said, are less likely to be impacted as heavily by an economic downturn

as vacationers who pull back travel and other things when money gets tighter. He said in the great recession, the Reno airport lost a third of its business and the heaviest impact was on leisure travelers.

"With more business growth, we expect to have a lower impact," he said.

McGinness made a similar analysis pointing out the number of people coming to Reno to gamble is decreasing. Among Atlantis customers, he said those there to gamble dropped from 49 percent in 2011 to 42 percent in 2015. While he said many more especially among younger customers are coming for other recreational experiences such as hiking, biking, visiting Tahoe and other such activities, there has also been an increase in the percentage of visitors there on business.

Azam said if and when another downturn hits, the airport's goal will be to "retain what we have — retention is the key."

To keep business, he said the airport authority is moving to upgrade and expand to deal with job and population growth by expanding terminals, parking and other facilities.

"We want to anticipate how the airport is going to accommodate that in the coming 20 years," he said.

Potts said the key for manufacturing and other businesses that make up NNDA's membership, is keeping an eye on the tourism, hospitality and leisure industry.

"It's increasingly important to realize how responsive leisure and hospitality is to trends and the economy," he said adding resorts can react immediately by changing room rates and other services.

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