



KENT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 28, 2015

Darwin Baas, Director

616.632.7919

Kristen Wieland, Community Relations Coordinator

616.632.7923

Reduce, Reuse Still Saves the Bottom Line

Grand Rapids, MI – For decades, several dumps turned into landfills collected trash with little understanding of what it could mean to the environment. Today, with environmental regulation and engineered design we manage waste safely and responsibly. Residents in Kent County will begin to evenly share the fiscal responsibility of managing historic landfills beginning in 2016.

The Kent County Solid Waste Surcharge was approved in 2015 by County Commissioners. Residents will pay exactly \$1.68 per year for the one ton of trash each household is expected to dispose of in 2016. Commercial customers, who typically generate significantly more trash, will pay \$1.68 per ton. Many trash hauling companies are sending informational letters and will add the surcharge to customers' bills as "Kent County Solid Waste Surcharge" or "County Surcharge", or provide the information on their website.

The funds will enable Kent County to monitor and maintain three closed landfills for 30 or more years, as required by state law. The now-closed landfills, in Kentwood, Sparta and Rockford, were opened and operated and, in most cases, ceased operation before monitoring and cleanup funds were required to be set aside to pay for long-term care of these facilities. Additionally, it will help pay for the operations for proper disposal of household chemicals such as pesticides, paints, cleaners, automotive care, used oil and other hazardous wastes.

Information on the Kent County Solid Waste Surcharge can be found at

www.accesskent.com/WasteOrdinance.

###