

About MARS

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Garbage has many names: trash, garbage, refuse, rubbish, or municipal solid waste (MSW). On average, a household of 4 that does not recycle creates roughly 50 pounds of garbage each week.

Midwest Area Refuse Solutions (MARS) became a reality on April 5th of this year when our first location was collected in a MARS truck. MARS was created by the City of Beatrice once it became apparent the City's previous hauler would not be continuing to provide collection services. The City's purchase of the previous hauler's assets was finalized on April 2, 2021.



From the moment we realized we were going to create MARS things have definitely been interesting. From contacting current customers, setting up routes for trucks, purchasing new equipment, and hiring employees to run equipment most of them had never been around. The last 6 months have been nothing short of exciting.

The decision for the City of Beatrice to have its curbside garbage picked up using an automated side loader (ASL) was an easy decision to make. Automated collection is more efficient, environmentally friendly, safer, and economical than manual collection. Research shows that the manual style of garbage collection can contribute to increased injury to workers. The automated collection system decreases the strain on the employee's body by allowing the truck to do the heavy lifting.

Running ASL trucks meant we would need compatible standardized collection carts. Using the 96-gallon waste carts also keeps the neighborhoods looking cleaner as you don't see bags of garbage in yards waiting to be picked up.

MARS also incorporates the use of roll-off containers into our collection system. We have multiple sizes (10, 15, 20, and 30 cubic yards) of containers to choose from to fit everyone's garbage and construction or demolition needs.

Since day one recycling has been a subject of much discussion. How do we collect from the roughly 375 curbside customers each week as well as collect and empty our recycling trailers

from the drop-off sites? We experienced our bumps along the way but we also learned as we went. We found that we could sub contract our curbside recycling out to a local contractor and by doing this, free up employees to retrieve our others trailers, sort, and bail material. Plastic material, metal, and paper are minimally sorted into boxes or bailed and loaded onto trailers and taken to our recycler in Lincoln. Each week two semi-trailers full of plastics, metals, and other mixed material are loaded onto trailers and hauled out. We pay \$98.00 per ton to have our mixed recyclables picked up.

Cardboard is picked up from businesses from around town as well as from our two roll-off containers at our recycling drop-off sites. Cardboard material is bailed and trucked to a mill once we have approximately 40,000 pounds of cardboard. Currently, we are paid to turn in bailed cardboard but there are times when there is a charge to have cardboard collected.

The City of Beatrice is very close to opening our new recycling area located just west of the City Auditorium near 3rd and Ella Street. This area will have two recycling trailers for mixed dry recyclables (plastics, cans, and papers) and two roll-off containers for corrugated cardboard in one location. This area is surrounded on three sides by a privacy fence and illuminated well for 24-hour use. Signage will be in place to provide helpful instructions. Cameras will also be in place to discourage contamination of recyclables with trash.

MARS prides itself on providing a low-cost and reliable curbside pickup of residential and commercial garbage to the citizens of Beatrice, rural residents, and many of the surrounding villages.

Jason Moore,
Sanitation Superintendent