

# Growth in Rural Customers and Recycling Program

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By now, you probably know that Midwest Area Refuse Solutions (MARS) is owned and operated by the City of Beatrice. But this department is operated unlike any other City department. MARS' entire budget is based on revenue created by the collection of garbage. Currently, MARS employs 12 full-time and 1 part-time employees and has a fleet of 12 garbage trucks and 3 roll-off trucks.



I believe our change to using ASLs, or Automated Side Loaders, in residential areas has been such a great change for Beatrice. The days of seeing unsightly bags lying in piles are gone. Now, as you drive down streets you see the same totes all in nice orderly lines down each side. I believe our town is also cleaner for this reason. Another benefit to ASLs is totes are all curbside, not in alleys. Repairing ruts in alleys caused by driving garbage trucks down muddy and snow-packed alleys was always a problem. From time to time, we hear from customers of children who will wait at the window to see their driver come by to wave at him. I take pride in hearing stories about the relationships our drivers create with customers. Customer service is our number one priority.

Currently, the villages of Filley, Pickrell, Plymouth, Daykin, Western, and Tobias have their residential and commercial garbage collected on weekly routes. Each week, our rural truck will cover over 2,000 square miles collecting from these cities and rural homes stretching from Crab Orchard to north of Firth, west along the northern Gage County line to Tobias, and south to Steele City before heading back to the landfill. Since April of 2021, MARS has been steadily growing our customer base with 229 new rural and 37 new commercial customers. County roads that are dusty, muddy, and snow-packed are nothing new for this crew.

With the rise of recycling, a local drop-off site was created for residential use only. Mixed recycling as well as residential cardboard is accepted. Businesses are not allowed to dispose of cardboard at this location as they dispose of such large amounts that they create problems for residential customers. Commercial cardboard dumpsters are available for these businesses' needs. MARS also provides a curbside collection of recyclables. Currently, MARS collects recycling from 315 residential and 47 commercial customers. Yard waste is also collected by curbside collection from 132 customers each Wednesday. This yard waste is collected and

deposited at the composting site next to the landfill where we use it to mix compost. Our compost is filled with nitrogen, which is quite beneficial to flowers and gardens, and also free to the public.

Jason Moore  
Sanitation Superintendent