

Case Study: City of Boston



"The solar trash receptacles have to go citywide. It will give us a more productive work force because you don't have to pick them up every day."

**Mayor Thomas
Menino**
Boston, Massachusetts

Boston Leads America's "Green" Revolution with Solar-Powered Trash Compactors

When a politician promises to "clean up," a city, they usually don't mean it literally. But that's just what Boston Mayor Thomas Menino did in 2006, launching a clean streets initiative coupled with an urban sustainability program that has, to date, yielded some dramatic results.

Boston, Massachusetts, population 574,000 (est.), is one of America's oldest and most historically significant cities. One of the founding sites of the American Revolution, Boston is a classic East Coast metropolis where commuters pack downtown sidewalks and families stroll freely through residential neighborhoods. This heavy reliance on old-fashioned foot traffic naturally brings with it high volumes of solid waste — waste that can quickly become litter if trash receptacles aren't convenient and serviced frequently.

In April 2006, Mayor Menino decided to address his city's growing litter problem by testing 50 solar-powered trash compactors at key locations. The BigBelly-powered compactors

**Paul Revere. John
Adams. And Solar-
Powered Trash
Compactors. Just a few
of the famous names
that have made Boston
a landmark city for
yesterday, today
and tomorrow.**

had significantly more capacity than standard trash cans, which reduced the potential for spillovers that could attract rats and other pests, and also lessened the number of weekly collections. And because they were

solar-powered, the compactors could be placed wherever they were needed without putting any additional strain on the city's power grid.

The pilot program proved so successful that the City has since ordered another 150 units.

Boston residents have reportedly been extremely enthusiastic about the solar-powered trash compactors. Many neighborhood leaders have specifically requested these units to help deal with local litter problems. To date, Boston has purchased and installed the compactors in the densely populated and historic North End, and in such high-profile neighborhoods as Back Bay, the South End, the Downtown Business District, Boston Common, the Fenway, Faneuil Hall, Dorchester and Mission Hill.