

Abandoned items, recycling areas and the appeal to the Tar: the point about the waste collection in Varese

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Despite the fact that we have been talking about it for a long time, it will still take **several months** before the matter of the **new service manager of the waste collection in Varese will be defined from the point of view of the administrative law**.

The news of the commitment for trial before the Council of State is from a few days ago, which would bring an end to the matter between **the Acsm Agam** and the municipality about **the final date of the service contract for the company**: a date that it is fully expired for the municipality of Varese, given that it has announced a new contest, won by another company, while for Acsm Agam is far beyond in time.

After this matter was solved, however, **there is another appeal pending to the Tar**, that **between the company which won the new announcement and the same Acsm Agam**, which arrived in second place: this new matter will have to be defined indeed, that is **who the real winner is**, to finally have the new waste manager in Varese, able to work at full capacity and make new investments for this sector in great evolution.

For several months to come, then, **Acsm Agam Ambiente**, the company, which “inherited” Aspem, will still manage this thorny part of the daily life of the citizens of Varese.

Will it do it at full capacity? And how will it solve the problems emerging in these weeks? We asked the President of Acsm Agam Ambiente, **Fabrizio Mirabelli** from Varese.

“The hearing has been moved at the end of March, beginning of April, actually,” Mirabelli started. “And of course our service will not be interrupted in the meantime, because it is an essential service. Moreover, the company, which is provisionally at the first place in the announcement, would not even start, due to the situation of the appeals. So, we go on as always.”

Among washing machines, recycling areas and Christmas holidays: the problems solved in recent times

The reason of the conversation with the President Mirabelli is actually due to an increase of warnings to the newspaper about disruptions in the collection activity of Acsm Agam Ambiente. **From abandoned washing machines in the centre of Varese to the recycling areas full of rubbish bags** and neighbourhoods where there was a lack of regular collection: we tried to discuss with him the point of the situation.

“First of all, let’s start with this premise: if there are a dozen of warnings, even if contemporary, on 34,000 nuclear families, I consider that almost ordinary administration. We say that it is not that bad,” Mirabelli explained. “However, starting with the warnings of lacking collection during the Christmas holidays, I admit that, despite the fact that some more difficulties should be taken in account during the holidays, **there has been actually some extra mistakes this year, and of that, we apologized in advance and I will do it right now**. Among the warnings we realised something: **usually, the calendar**

of the exposition is barely taken into account and for certain materials like cardboard, plastic and glass that usually is every two weeks, **but also the way to do it:** indeed theoretically users should take out the rubbish containers and garbage bags the night before the collection, and not when it happens. If they don't do that, the municipality could fine them.”

According to the president but also through our checks on the warnings we established that nearly all the garbage bags were collected so **all the “Christmas misunderstandings” are more or less solved. But what about the washing machine in front of Mazzini School in Via Como, whose photo has been widely shot on social networks?**

“That was certainly a **legitimate exposure,**” explained the President of Acsm Agam Ambiente. “The collection of a bulky rubbish, if done at home, should be booked and the same bulky rubbish should be taken out on the day the operators have said they will collect it, not earlier. And, what's more, you pay a fee. The alternative is to load the bulky rubbish into a car and give it to the ecological platform free of charge.

Then there are those who invent a third hypothesis, that of **leaving it on the street: but I remind everyone that this is an illegitimate behaviour** and must be punished. In that street there are cameras, so it should be possible to easily find the guilty party. For our part, unfortunately we know these things only when people report them to us: so I urge everyone to do it, so that we can pass and solve the problem.”

On the other hand, how are recycling areas doing?

“There are ten recycling area installed in the city,” said Mirabelli. “And for these I personally went around to check them one by one with the operators. **Actually, two of them do not work:** and in **Biumo** we just took one of them off to send it for repair. We will take care of the second one too soon. **The other eight work, but they have other problems, but this time they depend on the users** and they are of two types: since they work with a card, sometimes it happens that those who do not have it handy, leave the bag nearby, which, obviously, is not an appropriate or civilized thing to do. Then there are those who have the card but does not properly separate the materials inside. In these cases, **the machine recognizes the wrong material and crashes: so, it sends the recycling area temporarily out of service.** This means that it has to be restored by the operator, which usually takes a couple of hours: but meanwhile, other users cannot use it, creating discomfort or additional bags piled up.

95% of the people who use them, has understood how they work, but that 5% is enough to create discomfort to everyone. Of course, the system with which they work is not up with our times, in which waste collection is very pushed. After all, they were **put in place 12 years ago.** In our offer to the municipality in the new announcement we proposed to go beyond the recycling areas system: but specific investments must be made, which must be diluted over time. So only the official contractor can do it.”

di Translated by Garone & Leuzzi (reviewed by Prof. Robert Clarke)