

WASTE CONNECTIONS, INC.

Form 424B3

February 28, 2012

Table of Contents

Filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3)
Registration No. 333-179724

The information in this prospectus supplement is not complete and may be changed. This prospectus supplement is not an offer to sell these securities, and we are not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

SUBJECT TO COMPLETION, DATED FEBRUARY 27, 2012

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT TO PROSPECTUS DATED FEBRUARY 27, 2012

12,000,000 Shares

Common Stock

We are offering 12,000,000 shares of common stock.

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol WCN . On February 24, 2012, the closing price of our common stock on the New York Stock Exchange was \$31.94 per share.

Investing in our common shares involves risks. See Risk Factors referenced on page S-4.

We are selling to the underwriter the shares of common stock at a price of \$ per share, resulting in aggregate net proceeds to us of approximately \$ million before expenses.

Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC may offer the shares of common stock from time to time for sale to purchasers in one or more transactions directly or through agents, or through brokers in brokerage transactions on the New York Stock Exchange, or to dealers in negotiated transactions or in a combination of such methods of sale, at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed, or at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to such prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices. See Underwriting.

Delivery of the shares will be made on or about February , 2012.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed on the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

Morgan Stanley

The date of this prospectus supplement is February , 2012

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Prospectus supplement

<u>About this prospectus supplement</u>	S-ii
<u>Prospectus supplement summary</u>	S-1
<u>The offering</u>	S-3
<u>Summary consolidated financial data</u>	S-4
<u>Risk factors</u>	S-5
<u>Forward-looking statements</u>	S-6
<u>Use of proceeds</u>	S-8
<u>Capitalization</u>	S-9
<u>Material United States federal income tax consequences to non-United States holders of our common stock</u>	S-10
<u>Underwriting</u>	S-14

Prospectus

<u>About this prospectus</u>	1
<u>Risk factors</u>	1
<u>Forward-looking statements</u>	1
<u>Waste Connections, Inc.</u>	4
<u>Use of proceeds</u>	5
<u>Ratios of earnings to fixed charges</u>	5
<u>General description of securities</u>	6
<u>Description of debt securities</u>	6
<u>Description of capital stock</u>	13
<u>Description of securities warrants</u>	15
<u>Description of rights to purchase shares of common or preferred stock</u>	16
<u>Description of units</u>	17
<u>Global Securities</u>	18
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	20
<u>Legal matters</u>	21
<u>Experts</u>	21
<u>Incorporation of certain information by reference</u>	23
<u>Where you can find more information</u>	24

Table of Contents

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. We have not, and the underwriter has not, authorized anyone else to provide you with different or additional information. You must not rely upon any information or representation not contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. We are not, and the underwriter is not, making an offer of these securities or soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer is not permitted. You should not assume that the information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is accurate on any date subsequent to the date set forth on the front of this prospectus supplement or the date of incorporation by reference, even though this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is delivered or securities are sold on a later date.

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This document is in two parts. The first part is this prospectus supplement, which describes the terms of the offering of common stock and also adds to and updates information contained in the accompanying prospectus as well as the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. The second part, the accompanying prospectus, gives more general information about securities we may offer from time to time, some of which does not apply to the common stock we are offering. To the extent any inconsistency or conflict exists between the information included in this prospectus supplement and the information included in the accompanying prospectus, the information included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement updates and supersedes the information in the accompanying prospectus. This prospectus supplement incorporates by reference important business and financial information about us that is not included in or delivered with this prospectus supplement.

Unless otherwise indicated or unless the context requires otherwise, all references in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus to we , us or our mean Waste Connections, Inc. and our consolidated subsidiaries, except where it is made clear that the terms mean Waste Connections, Inc. only.

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY

This summary highlights selected information about us. It may not contain all the information that may be important to you in deciding whether to invest in our common stock. You should read this entire prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, together with the information incorporated by reference, including the financial data and related notes, before making an investment decision.

Waste Connections, Inc.

Our company

Waste Connections, Inc. is an integrated solid waste services company that provides solid waste collection, transfer, disposal and recycling services in mostly exclusive and secondary markets in the U.S. In addition, we provide intermodal services for the rail haul movement of cargo and solid waste containers in the Pacific Northwest through a network of seven intermodal facilities. We also treat and dispose of non-hazardous waste that is generated in the exploration and production of oil and natural gas primarily at a facility in Southwest Louisiana. As of December 31, 2011, we served more than two million residential, commercial and industrial customers from a network of operations in 29 states: Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. As of December 31, 2011, we owned or operated a network of 140 solid waste collection operations, 58 transfer stations, seven intermodal facilities, 39 recycling operations, 46 active landfills, and one exploration and production waste treatment and disposal facility.

We are a leading provider of solid waste services in most of our markets. We have focused on exclusive and secondary markets because we believe that those areas offer:

opportunities to enter into exclusive arrangements;

more competitive barriers to entry;

less competition from larger solid waste services companies;

projected economic and population growth rates that will contribute to the growth of our business; and

a number of independent solid waste services companies suitable for acquisition.

Our senior management team has extensive experience in operating, acquiring and integrating solid waste services businesses, and we intend to continue to focus our efforts on balancing internal and acquisition-based growth. We anticipate that a part of our future growth will come from acquiring additional solid waste collection, transfer and disposal businesses and, therefore, we expect that additional acquisitions could continue to affect period-to-period comparisons of our operating results.

Recent developments

On August 23, 2011, the Company announced that it had entered into agreements to acquire the operations of Alaska Pacific Environmental Services Anchorage, LLC and Alaska Green Waste Solutions, LLC (together, Alaska Waste). Alaska Waste provides solid waste collection, recycling and composting services in Anchorage, the Mat-Su Valley, Fairbanks, the Kenai Peninsula and Kodiak Island. The transaction remains subject to closing conditions, including receipt of certain consents. Closing is expected to occur on March 1, 2012. We may use borrowings under our senior revolving credit facility to pay the purchase price of the Alaska Waste acquisition.

Table of Contents

On February 13, 2012, the Compensation Committee of our Board of Directors approved and adopted a Separation Benefits Plan and Employment Agreement with our chief executive officer, providing him with certain severance and change in control benefits, and a Separation Benefits Plan and related participation letter agreements under which eligible executives may receive certain separation benefits and change in control payments. At the time these plans and letter agreements were entered into, our Compensation Committee made one-time equity grants to certain of our executive officers, including our chief executive officer. As disclosed in our Current Report on Form 8-K dated February 8, 2012, and as communicated in our earnings conference call on that date, we expect to incur a one-time non-cash equity based compensation expense of approximately \$3.6 million in the quarter ending March 31, 2012 in connection with these equity grants.

Corporate Information

Waste Connections, Inc. is a Delaware corporation organized in 1997. Our executive offices are located at Waterway Plaza Two, 10001 Woodloch Forest Drive, Suite 400, The Woodlands, TX 77380. Our telephone number is (832) 442-2200.

Table of Contents

THE OFFERING

<p>Issuer</p> <p>Common Stock Offered by Us</p> <p>Common Stock to be</p> <p>Outstanding after this Offering</p> <p>Use of Proceeds</p> <p>Listing</p> <p>Risk Factors</p>	<p>Waste Connections, Inc., a Delaware corporation. 12,000,000 shares</p> <p>123,237,169 shares⁽¹⁾</p> <p>We estimate that the net proceeds from this offering will be approximately \$ _____, after deducting underwriting discounts and estimated offering expenses payable by us. We intend to use the net proceeds to repay the unhedged portion of the outstanding borrowings under our senior revolving credit facility and to use any remaining net proceeds for general corporate purposes, which may include acquisitions of additional assets or businesses, the repayment of other indebtedness, capital expenditures and increasing our working capital. Pending the application of the net proceeds, we may invest the proceeds in short-term, interest-bearing instruments or other investment-grade securities. We have used borrowings under our senior revolving credit facility for general corporate purposes, including the acquisition of additional assets or businesses. We may use borrowings under our revolving credit facility to pay the purchase price of the Alaska Waste acquisition. Pursuant to interest rate swap agreements outstanding as of the date of this prospectus supplement, we intend to maintain a minimum balance of \$325 million on our revolving credit facility.</p> <p>Our common stock is listed on the NYSE under the symbol WCN . An investment in our common stock involves various risks, and prospective investors should carefully consider the matters referenced under the caption entitled Risk Factors beginning on page S-4 of this prospectus supplement and page 1 of the accompanying prospectus.</p>
---	--

⁽¹⁾ Based on the number of shares outstanding as of February 23, 2012. Excludes 2,292,319 shares of common stock underlying awards outstanding as of February 23, 2012 granted under our stock option, incentive, warrant and compensation plans and 3,352,060 shares of common stock reserved and available for future issuance as of February 23, 2012 under our stock option, incentive, warrant and compensation plans.

Table of Contents**SUMMARY CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL DATA**

The following table sets forth our summary consolidated financial and operating data. You should read the following summary consolidated financial data in conjunction with the consolidated financial statements and notes thereto and Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations, included in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement.

The summary consolidated balance sheet information as of December 31, 2009, 2010 and 2011 and the summary consolidated statement of income information for the years ended December 31, 2009, 2010 and 2011 have been derived from our historical consolidated financial statements audited by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, our independent registered public accounting firm.

	Year ended December 31,		
	2009	2010	2011
	(Dollars in thousands, except share and per share amounts)		
STATEMENTS OF INCOME DATA:			
Revenues	\$ 1,191,393	\$ 1,319,757	\$ 1,505,366
Operating expenses:			
Cost of operations	692,415	749,487	857,580
Selling, general and administrative	138,026	149,860	161,967
Depreciation and amortization	130,758	147,456	167,100
Loss (gain) on disposal of assets	(481)	571	1,657
Operating income	230,675	272,383	317,062
Interest expense, net	(47,748)	(39,544)	(43,990)
Loss on extinguishment of debt		(10,193)	
Other income (expense), net	(7,551)	2,830	57
Income before income tax provision and noncontrolling interest in subsidiaries	175,376	225,476	273,129
Noncontrolling interest in subsidiaries	(986)	(1,038)	(932)
Income from operations before income taxes	174,390	224,438	272,197
Income tax provision	(64,565)	(89,334)	(106,958)
Net income	\$ 109,825	\$ 135,104	\$ 165,239
SHARE DATA:			
Basic earnings per common share:			
Net income per common share	\$ 0.92	\$ 1.17	\$ 1.47
Diluted earnings per common share:			
Net income per common share	\$ 0.91	\$ 1.16	\$ 1.45
Weighted Average Common Shares Outstanding			
Basic ⁽¹⁾	119,119,601	115,646,173	112,720,444
Diluted ⁽¹⁾	120,506,162	116,894,204	113,583,486
Cash dividends per common share		\$ 0.075	\$ 0.315
		As of December 31,	
	2009	2010	2011
BALANCE SHEET DATA:			
Cash and equivalents	\$ 9,639	\$ 9,873	\$ 12,643
Property and equipment, net	1308,392	1,337,476	1,450,469
Total assets	2,820,448	2,915,984	3,328,005
Long-term debt	867,554	909,978	1,172,758

Edgar Filing: WASTE CONNECTIONS, INC. - Form 424B3

Total stockholders equity	1,357,036	1,370,418	1,399,687
---------------------------	-----------	-----------	-----------

(1) Shares have been adjusted to reflect our three-for-two split of our common stock, in the form of a 50% stock dividend, effective as of November 12, 2010.

S-4

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

An investment in our common stock involves various material risks. You should carefully consider the risk factors incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement to our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, as well as all of the other information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, before deciding to invest in our common stock. Additional risks and uncertainties not currently known to us or that we currently deem to be immaterial may also materially adversely affect our business, prospects, financial condition, results of operations and cash flows.

S-5

Table of Contents

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Certain statements included and incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are forward-looking in nature, including, without limitation, statements regarding our financial position, business strategy, acquisition plans and growth objectives. These statements can be identified by the use of forward-looking terminology such as believes, expects, may, will, should, or anticipates, negative thereof or comparable terminology, or by discussions of strategy.

Our business and operations are subject to a variety of risks and uncertainties and, consequently, actual results may differ materially from those projected by any forward-looking statements. Factors that could cause actual results to differ from those projected include, but are not limited to, the following:

our acquisitions may not be successful, resulting in changes in strategy, operating losses or a loss on sale of the business acquired;

a portion of our growth and future financial performance depends on our ability to integrate acquired businesses into our organization and operations;

competition for acquisition candidates, consolidation within the waste industry and economic and market conditions may limit our ability to grow through acquisitions;

we may be unable to compete effectively with larger and better capitalized companies, companies with lower return expectations, and governmental service providers;

we may lose contracts through competitive bidding, early termination or governmental action;

price increases may not be adequate to offset the impact of increased costs or may cause us to lose volume;

economic downturns adversely affect operating results;

our results are vulnerable to economic conditions and seasonal factors affecting the regions in which we operate;

we may be subject in the normal course of business to judicial, administrative or other third party proceedings that could interrupt or limit our operations, require expensive remediation, result in adverse judgments, settlements or fines and create negative publicity;

increases in the price of fuel may adversely affect our business and reduce our operating margins;

increases in labor and disposal and related transportation costs could impact our financial results;

efforts by labor unions could divert management attention and adversely affect operating results;

Edgar Filing: WASTE CONNECTIONS, INC. - Form 424B3

we could face significant withdrawal liability if we withdraw from participation in one or more underfunded multiemployer pension plans in which we participate;

increases in insurance costs and the amount that we self-insure for various risks could reduce our operating margins and reported earnings;

our indebtedness could adversely affect our financial condition; we may incur substantially more debt in the future;

each business that we acquire or have acquired may have liabilities or risks that we fail or are unable to discover, including environmental liabilities;

liabilities for environmental damage may adversely affect our financial condition, business and earnings;

our accruals for our landfill site closure and post-closure costs may be inadequate;

the financial soundness of our customers could affect our business and operating results;

Table of Contents

we depend significantly on the services of the members of our senior, regional and district management team, and the departure of any of those persons could cause our operating results to suffer;

our decentralized decision-making structure could allow local managers to make decisions that adversely affect our operating results;

we may incur charges related to capitalized expenditures of landfill development projects, which would decrease our earnings;

because we depend on railroads for our intermodal operations, our operating results and financial condition are likely to be adversely affected by any reduction or deterioration in rail service;

our financial results are based upon estimates and assumptions that may differ from actual results;

the adoption of new accounting standards or interpretations could adversely affect our financial results;

pending or future litigation or governmental proceedings could result in material adverse consequences, including judgments or settlements;

if we are not able to develop and protect intellectual property, or if a competitor develops or obtains exclusive rights to a breakthrough technology, our financial results may suffer;

fluctuations in prices for recycled commodities that we sell and rebates we offer to customers may cause our revenues and operating results to decline;

our financial and operating performance may be affected by the inability to renew landfill operating permits, obtain new landfills and expand existing ones;

future changes in laws or renewed enforcement of laws regulating the flow of solid waste in interstate commerce could adversely affect our operating results;

extensive and evolving environmental, health, safety and employment laws and regulations may restrict our operations and growth and increase our costs;

climate change regulations may adversely affect operating results;

extensive regulations that govern the design, operation and closure of landfills may restrict our landfill operations or increase our costs of operating landfills;

alternatives to landfill disposal may cause our revenues and operating results to decline; and

unusually adverse weather conditions may interfere with our operations, harming our operating results.

S-7

Table of Contents

USE OF PROCEEDS

We expect to receive net proceeds from this offering of approximately \$ million after deducting underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated transaction expenses payable by us of approximately \$500,000. We intend to use the net proceeds to repay the unhedged portion of the outstanding borrowings under our revolving credit facility, which outstanding borrowings were approximately \$519.0 million as of December 31, 2011, and to use any remaining net proceeds for general corporate purposes, which may include acquisitions of additional assets or businesses, the repayment of other indebtedness, capital expenditures and increasing our working capital. Pending the application of the net proceeds, we may invest the proceeds in short-term, interest-bearing instruments or other investment-grade securities. We have used borrowings under our senior revolving credit facility for general corporate purposes, including the acquisition of additional assets or businesses. We may use borrowings under our revolving credit facility to pay the purchase price of the Alaska Waste acquisition. Pursuant to interest rate swap agreements outstanding as of the date of this prospectus supplement, we intend to maintain a minimum balance of \$325 million on our revolving credit facility. Our revolving credit facility matures in July 2016. Borrowings under the credit facility bear interest, at our option, at either the base rate plus the applicable base rate margin on base rate loans, or the LIBOR rate plus the applicable LIBOR margin on LIBOR loans. As of December 31, 2011, the average interest rate under the revolving credit facility was 1.68%.

We are generally engaged in various stages of negotiations for a number of acquisitions, dispositions and other transactions, some of which may be significant, that may include, but are not limited to, potentially large acquisitions in connection with the divestiture of assets or businesses by other solid waste services companies. We cannot assure you that we will be successful in completing or integrating any acquisitions. See Risk Factors in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011 for a discussion of risks related to acquisitions.

Table of Contents**CAPITALIZATION**

The following table sets forth our cash and equivalents and capitalization as of December 31, 2011:

on an actual basis; and

on an as adjusted basis to reflect the sale of the common stock in this offering and the use of the net proceeds therefrom, as described under "Use of Proceeds".

	As of December 31, 2011	
	Actual	Actual As adjusted
	(Dollars in thousands)	
Cash and equivalents	\$ 12,643	\$ (1) ⁽¹⁾
Debt:		
Senior revolving credit facility	\$ 519,000	\$ (1) ⁽¹⁾
2015 Notes, bearing interest at 6.22%	175,000	175,000
2016 Notes, bearing interest at 3.30%	100,000	100,000
2018 Notes, bearing interest at 4.00%	50,000	50,000
2019 Notes, bearing interest at 5.25%	175,000	175,000
2021 Notes, bearing interest at 4.64%	100,000	100,000
California tax-exempt bonds	38,460	38,460
Notes payable to sellers in connection with acquisitions	18,356	18,356
Notes payable to third parties	2,841	2,841
Total debt	\$ 1,178,657	\$
Noncontrolling interest in subsidiaries	4,777	4,777
Stockholders' equity:		
Preferred stock, \$0.01 par value per share, 7,500,000 shares authorized and none issued and outstanding	\$	\$
Common stock, \$0.01 par value per share; 250,000,000 shares authorized; 110,907,782 shares issued and outstanding (actual); 122,907,782 shares issued and outstanding (as adjusted)	1,109	
Additional paid-in capital, net of estimated issuance costs	408,721	
Retained earnings	988,560	988,560
Accumulated other comprehensive loss	(3,480)	(3,480)
Total stockholders' equity	\$ 1,399,687	\$
Total capitalization	\$ 2,578,344	\$

⁽¹⁾ We may use borrowings under our revolving credit facility to pay the purchase price of the Alaska Waste acquisition. Pursuant to interest rate swap agreements outstanding as of the date of this prospectus supplement, we intend to maintain a minimum balance of \$325 million on our revolving credit facility.

Table of Contents

MATERIAL UNITED STATES FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES TO NON- UNITED STATES HOLDERS OF OUR COMMON STOCK

The following is a summary of certain material United States federal income tax consequences to non-U.S. holders (as defined below) of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our common stock issued pursuant to this offering. This discussion is not a complete analysis of all of the potential United States federal income tax consequences relating thereto, nor does it address any estate and gift tax consequences or any tax consequences arising under any state, local or foreign tax laws, or any other United States federal tax laws. This discussion is based on the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the Code, Treasury Regulations promulgated thereunder, judicial decisions, and published rulings and administrative pronouncements of the Internal Revenue Service, or IRS, all as in effect as of the date of this offering. These authorities may change, possibly retroactively, resulting in United States federal income tax consequences different from those discussed below. No ruling has been or will be sought from the IRS with respect to the matters discussed below, and there can be no assurance that the IRS will not take a contrary position regarding the tax consequences of the acquisition, ownership or disposition of our common stock, or that any such contrary position would not be sustained by a court.

This discussion is limited to non-U.S. holders who purchase our common stock issued pursuant to this offering and who hold our common stock as a capital asset within the meaning of Section 1221 of the Code (generally, property held for investment). This discussion does not address all of the United States federal income tax consequences that may be relevant to a particular holder in light of such holder's particular circumstances. This discussion also does not consider any specific facts or circumstances that may be relevant to holders subject to special rules under the United States federal income tax laws, including, without limitation, U.S. expatriates, partnerships or other pass-through entities or investors in pass-through entities, real estate investment trusts, controlled foreign corporations, passive foreign investment companies, corporations that accumulate earnings to avoid United States federal income tax, financial institutions, insurance companies, brokers, dealers or traders in securities, commodities or currencies, tax exempt organizations, tax-qualified retirement plans, persons subject to the alternative minimum tax, and persons holding our common stock as part of a hedging or conversion transaction or straddle, or a constructive sale, or other risk reduction strategy.

If a partnership or other entity treated as a partnership for United States federal income tax purposes holds our common stock, the tax treatment of a partner in such a partnership generally will depend on the status of the particular partner and the activities of the partnership. Partners of partnerships holding our common stock should consult their tax advisors as to the specific tax consequences to them of holding our common stock indirectly through ownership of their partnership interests.

PROSPECTIVE INVESTORS ARE URGED TO CONSULT THEIR TAX ADVISORS REGARDING THE PARTICULAR UNITED STATES FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES TO THEM OF ACQUIRING, OWNING AND DISPOSING OF OUR COMMON STOCK, AS WELL AS ANY TAX CONSEQUENCES ARISING UNDER ANY STATE, LOCAL OR FOREIGN TAX LAWS AND ANY OTHER UNITED STATES FEDERAL TAX LAWS.

Definition of non-U.S. holder

For purposes of this discussion, a non-U.S. holder is any beneficial owner of our common stock that is not a U.S. person or a partnership (or other entity or arrangement treated as a partnership) for United States federal income tax purposes. A U.S. person is any of the following:

an individual who is a citizen or resident of the United States;

a corporation (or other entity treated as a corporation for United States federal income tax purposes) created or organized under the laws of the United States, any state thereof or the District of Columbia;

an estate the income of which is subject to United States federal income tax regardless of its source; or

Table of Contents

a trust (1) whose administration is subject to the primary supervision of a United States court and which has one or more United States persons who have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust, or (2) that has a valid election in effect under applicable Treasury Regulations to be treated as a U.S. person.

Distributions on our common stock

If we make cash or other property distributions on our common stock, such distributions will constitute dividends for United States federal income tax purposes to the extent paid from our current or accumulated earnings and profits, as determined under United States federal income tax principles. Amounts not treated as dividends for United States federal income tax purposes will constitute a return of capital and will first be applied against and reduce a non-U.S. holder's adjusted tax basis in the common stock, but not below zero. Any excess will be treated as capital gain realized on the sale or other disposition of the common stock and will be treated as described under Gain on Disposition of Our Common Stock below.

Dividends paid to a non-U.S. holder of our common stock that are not effectively connected with the holder's conduct of a trade or business in the United States generally will be subject to United States federal withholding tax at a rate of 30% of the gross amount of the dividends, or such lower rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty. To receive the benefit of a reduced treaty rate, a non-U.S. holder must furnish to us or our paying agent a valid IRS Form W-8BEN (or applicable successor form) certifying such holder's qualification for the reduced rate. If the non-U.S. holder holds the stock through a financial institution or other agent acting on the non-U.S. holder's behalf, the non-U.S. holder will be required to provide appropriate documentation to the agent, who then will be required to provide certification to us or our paying agent, either directly or through other intermediaries. Non-U.S. holders that do not timely provide us or our paying agent with the required certification, but which qualify for a reduced treaty rate, may obtain a refund of any excess amounts withheld by timely filing an appropriate claim for refund with the IRS.

Dividends paid on our common stock that are effectively connected with a non-U.S. holder's conduct of a trade or business in the United States (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, are attributable to a permanent establishment maintained by the non-U.S. holder in the United States) will be exempt from United States federal withholding tax. To claim the exemption, the non-U.S. holder must timely furnish to us or our paying agent a properly executed IRS Form W-8ECI (or applicable successor form).

A non-U.S. holder who claims the benefit of an applicable income tax treaty or who treats a dividend as exempt from United States federal withholding as effectively connected income generally will be required to satisfy applicable certification and other requirements prior to the distribution date. Non-U.S. holders should consult their tax advisors regarding their entitlement to benefits under a relevant income tax treaty.

Any dividends paid on our common stock that are effectively connected with a non-U.S. holder's United States trade or business (and if required by an applicable income tax treaty, attributable to a permanent establishment maintained by the non-U.S. holder in the United States) generally will be subject to United States federal income tax on a net income basis at the regular graduated United States federal income tax rates in much the same manner as if such holder were a resident of the United States, unless an applicable income tax treaty provides otherwise. A non-U.S. holder that is a foreign corporation also may be subject to a branch profits tax equal to 30% (or such lower rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty) of all or a portion of its effectively connected earnings and profits for the taxable year. Non-U.S. holders are urged to consult any applicable income tax treaties that may provide for different rules.

Table of Contents

Gain on disposition of our common stock

A non-U.S. holder generally will not be subject to United States federal income tax on any gain realized upon the sale or other disposition of our common stock, unless:

the gain is effectively connected with the non-U.S. holder's conduct of a trade or business in the United States (and if required by an applicable income tax treaty, attributable to a permanent establishment maintained by the non-U.S. holder in the United States);

the non-U.S. holder is a nonresident alien individual present in the United States for 183 days or more during the taxable year of the disposition, and certain other requirements are met; or

our common stock constitutes a United States real property interest by reason of our status as a United States real property holding corporation, or USRPHC, for United States federal income tax purposes at any time within the shorter of the five-year period preceding the disposition or the non-U.S. holder's holding period for our common stock.

Unless an applicable income tax treaty provides otherwise, gain described in the first bullet point above will be subject to United States federal income tax on a net income basis at the regular graduated United States federal income tax rates in much the same manner as if such holder were a resident of the United States. A non-U.S. holder that is a foreign corporation also may be subject to a branch profits tax equal to 30% (or such lower rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty) of all or a portion of its effectively connected earnings and profits for the taxable year. Non-U.S. holders are urged to consult any applicable income tax treaties that may provide for different rules.

Gain recognized by a non-U.S. holder described in the second bullet point above will be subject to United States federal income tax at a flat 30% rate (or such lower rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty), but may be offset by United States source capital losses (even though the individual is not considered a resident of the United States).

We believe we are not currently and do not anticipate becoming a USRPHC for United States federal income tax purposes. However, because the determination of whether we are a USRPHC depends on the fair market value of our United States real property interests relative to the fair market value of our other trade or business assets and our foreign real property interests, there can be no assurance that we are not currently or will not become a USRPHC in the future. Even if we are or become a USRPHC, as long as our common stock is regularly traded on an established securities market, such common stock will be treated as a United States real property interest with respect to a particular non-U.S. holder only if such non-U.S. holder actually or constructively held more than 5% of such regularly traded common stock during the applicable period. If this exception does not apply to a particular non-U.S. holder, gain described in the third bullet point above generally will be taxed in the same manner as gain described in the first bullet point above, except that the branch profits tax generally will not apply. Non-U.S. holders should consult with their tax advisors regarding whether any applicable income tax treaties may provide for different rules.

Information reporting and backup withholding

We must report annually to the IRS and to each non-U.S. holder the amount of distributions on our common stock paid to such holder and the amount of any tax withheld with respect to those distributions. These information reporting requirements apply even if no withholding was required because the distributions were effectively connected with the holder's conduct of a United States trade or business, or withholding was reduced or eliminated by an applicable income tax treaty. This information also may be made available under a specific treaty or agreement with the tax authorities in the country in which the non-U.S. holder resides or is established. Backup withholding generally will not apply to distribution payments to a non-U.S. holder of our common stock provided the non-U.S. holder furnishes to us or our paying agent the required certification as to its non-U.S. status, such as by providing a valid IRS Form W-8BEN or IRS Form W-8ECI, or certain other requirements are met. Notwithstanding the foregoing, backup withholding may apply if either we or our paying agent has actual knowledge, or reason to know, that the holder is a U.S. person that is not an exempt recipient for purposes of the U.S. backup withholding rules.

Table of Contents

Payments of the proceeds from a disposition by a non-U.S. holder of our common stock made by or through a foreign office of a broker generally will not be subject to information reporting or backup withholding. However, information reporting (but not backup withholding) will apply to those payments if the broker does not have documentary evidence that the beneficial owner is a non-U.S. holder, an exemption is not otherwise established, and the broker is:

a U.S. person;

a controlled foreign corporation for United States federal income tax purposes;

a foreign person 50% or more of whose gross income is effectively connected with a United States trade or business for a specified three-year period; or

a foreign partnership if at any time during its tax year (1) one or more of its partners are U.S. persons who hold in the aggregate more than 50% of the income or capital interest in such partnership, or (2) it is engaged in the conduct of a United States trade or business.

Payment of the proceeds from a non-U.S. holder's disposition of our common stock made by or through the United States office of a broker generally will be subject to information reporting and backup withholding unless the non-U.S. holder certifies as to its non-U.S. holder status under penalties of perjury, such as by providing a valid IRS Form W-8BEN or IRS Form W-8ECI, or otherwise establishes an exemption from information reporting and backup withholding.

Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules may be allowed as a refund or a credit against a non-U.S. holder's United States federal income tax liability, provided the required information is timely furnished to the IRS.

Foreign Accounts

Withholding taxes may apply to certain types of payments made to foreign financial institutions (as specially defined in the Code) and certain other non-U.S. entities. Specifically, a 30% withholding tax may be imposed on dividends on, and gross proceeds from the sale or other disposition of, our common stock paid to a foreign financial institution or to a non-financial foreign entity, unless (i) the foreign financial institution undertakes certain diligence and reporting, (ii) the non-financial foreign entity either certifies it does not have any substantial U.S. owners or furnishes identifying information regarding each substantial U.S. owner or (iii) the foreign financial institution or non-financial foreign entity otherwise qualifies for an exemption from these rules. If the payee is a foreign financial institution and is subject to the diligence and reporting requirements in clause (i) above, it must enter into an agreement with the U.S. Treasury requiring, among other things, that it undertake to identify accounts held by certain U.S. persons or U.S.-owned foreign entities, annually report certain information about such accounts, and withhold 30% on payments to non-compliant foreign financial institutions and certain other account holders.

Although these rules currently apply to applicable payments made after December 31, 2012, the IRS has issued Proposed Treasury Regulations providing that the withholding provisions described above will generally apply to payments of dividends on our common stock made on or after January 1, 2014 and to payments of gross proceeds from a sale or other disposition of stock on or after January 1, 2015.

The Proposed Treasury Regulations described above will not be effective until they are issued in their final form, and as of the date of this prospectus, it is not possible to determine whether the proposed regulations will be finalized in their current form or at all. Prospective investors should consult their tax advisors regarding these withholding provisions.

Table of Contents

UNDERWRITING

Subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the underwriting agreement to be dated on or about February 27, 2012, between us and Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC, as the underwriter, we have agreed to sell 12,000,000 shares to the underwriter and the underwriter has agreed to purchase 12,000,000 shares from us.

The underwriting agreement provides that the obligations of the underwriter are subject to certain conditions precedent such as the receipt by the underwriter of officers' certificates and legal opinions and approval of certain legal matters by their counsel. The underwriting agreement provides that the underwriter will purchase all of the shares if any of them are purchased. We have agreed to indemnify the underwriter and certain of their controlling persons against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act"), and to contribute to payments that the underwriter may be required to make in respect of those liabilities.

The underwriter has advised us that it currently intends to make a market in the common shares. However, the underwriter is not obligated to do so and may discontinue any market-making activities at any time without notice. No assurance can be given as to the liquidity of the trading market for the common shares.

The underwriter may receive from purchasers of the shares normal brokerage commissions in amounts agreed with such purchasers. The underwriter proposes to offer the shares of common stock from time to time for sale in one or more transactions on the New York Stock Exchange, in the over-the-counter market, through negotiated transactions or otherwise at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices, subject to receipt and acceptance by it and subject to its right to reject any order in whole or in part. In connection with the sale of the shares of common stock offered hereby, the underwriter may be deemed to have received compensation in the form of underwriting discounts. The underwriter may affect such transactions by selling shares of common stock to or through dealers, and such dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriter and/or purchasers of shares of common stock for whom they may act as agents or to whom they may sell as principal.

The underwriter is purchasing the common shares from us at \$ _____ per share (representing approximately \$ _____ million aggregate net proceeds to us, before we deduct our estimated expenses of approximately \$500,000.

We have agreed that we will not offer, pledge, announce the intention to sell, sell, contract to sell, sell any option or contract to purchase, purchase any option or contract to sell, grant any option, right or warrant to purchase or otherwise transfer or dispose of, directly or indirectly, any shares of common stock or any securities convertible into or exchangeable for common stock or enter into any swap or other agreement that transfers, in whole or in part, any of the economic consequences of ownership of the common stock, whether any such transaction is to be settled by delivery of common stock or such other securities, in cash or otherwise, without the prior written consent of the underwriter, for a period of 75 days after the date of this prospectus supplement. The foregoing restrictions do not apply to, among other things, our ability to:

grant in the ordinary course of business employee or director stock options;

issue equity compensation awards pursuant to any stock option, stock bonus or other stock plan or employee benefit plan, dividend reinvestment plan or warrants existing as of the date hereof; or

file a registration statement on Form S-8 relating to the offering of securities in accordance with the terms of a stock plan in effect on the date of this prospectus supplement.

In addition, our directors and certain of our executive officers have entered into lock up agreements with the underwriter pursuant to which each of these persons for a period of 60 days after the date of this prospectus supplement, may not, without the prior written consent of the underwriter:

offer, pledge, announce the intention to sell, sell, contract to sell, sell any option or contract to purchase, purchase any option or contract to sell, grant any option, right or warrant to purchase, or

Table of Contents

otherwise transfer or dispose of, directly or indirectly, any shares of our common stock or any securities convertible into or exercisable or exchangeable for common stock (including, without limitation, common stock which may be deemed to be beneficially owned by such directors and executive officers in accordance with the rules and regulations of the SEC and securities which may be issued upon exercise of a stock option or warrant); or

enter into any swap or other agreement that transfers, in whole or in part, any of the economic consequences of ownership of the common stock,

whether any such transaction described above is to be settled by delivery of common stock or such other securities, in cash or otherwise; provided, however, that each such officer or director, along with certain other officers and directors of the Company, may sell in the aggregate up to 200,000 shares of common stock, with such number of shares permitted to be sold by such officer or director pursuant to this proviso to be determined by the Company in its sole discretion.

With respect to our directors and executive officers, the foregoing restrictions do not apply to:

transfers of shares of common stock as a bona fide gift or gifts;

transfers of shares of common stock to any trust, limited partnership or other entity for the direct or indirect benefit of our directors, executive officers or their immediate family members or spouses, provided that any such transfer shall not involve a disposition for value; and

transfers of shares of common stock to any third party granted an interest in the will of such person or under the laws of descent, provided that in each of the last three bullets above, the recipient of such gift, transfer or distribution agrees to be bound in writing by the restrictions set forth above.

We have agreed to indemnify the underwriter against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act.

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol WCN .

In connection with this offering, the underwriter may engage in stabilizing transactions, which involves making bids for, purchasing and selling shares of common stock in the open market for the purpose of preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of the common stock while this offering is in progress. These stabilizing transactions may include making short sales of the common stock, which involves the sale by the underwriter of a greater number of shares of common stock than it is required to purchase in this offering, and purchasing shares of common stock on the open market to cover positions created by short sales. The underwriter has advised us that, pursuant to Regulation M of the Securities Act, it may also engage in other activities that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the common stock, including the imposition of penalty bids. This means that if the underwriter purchases common stock in the open market in stabilizing transactions or to cover short sales, it may be required to repay the underwriting discount that it received.

These activities may have the effect of raising or maintaining the market price of the common stock or preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of the common stock, and, as a result, the price of the common stock may be higher than the price that otherwise might exist in the open market. If the underwriter commences these activities, they may discontinue them at any time. The underwriter may carry out these transactions on the New York Stock Exchange, in the over the counter market or otherwise.

The underwriter and its affiliates have provided in the past to us and our affiliates and may provide from time to time in the future certain commercial banking, financial advisory, investment banking and other services for us and such affiliates in the ordinary course of their business, for which they have received and may continue to receive customary fees and commissions. In addition, from time to time, the underwriter and its affiliates may effect transactions for their own account or the account of customers, and hold on behalf of themselves or their customers, long or short positions in our debt or equity securities or loans, and may do so in the future.

Table of Contents

Selling restrictions

In relation to each Member State of the European Economic Area which has implemented the Prospectus Directive (each, a Relevant Member State) an offer to the public of any shares which are the subject of the offering contemplated by this prospectus supplement may not be made in that Relevant Member State, except that an offer to the public in that Relevant Member State of any shares may be made at any time under the following exemptions under the Prospectus Directive, if they have been implemented in that Relevant Member State:

- (a) to any legal entity which is a qualified investor as defined in the Prospectus Directive;
- (b) to fewer than 100 or, if the Relevant Member State has implemented the relevant provision of the 2010 PD Amending Directive, 150, natural or legal persons (other than qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive), as permitted under the Prospectus Directive, subject to obtaining the prior consent of the representatives for any such offer; or
- (c) in any other circumstances falling within Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive, provided that no such offer of shares shall result in a requirement for the publication by us or any underwriter of a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive.

For the purposes of this provision, the expression an offer to the public in relation to any shares in any Relevant Member State means the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information on the terms of the offer and any shares to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase any shares, as the same may be varied in that Member State by any measure implementing the Prospectus Directive in that Member State, the expression Prospectus Directive means Directive 2003/71/EC (and amendments thereto, including the 2010 PD Amending Directive, to the extent implemented in the Relevant Member State), and includes any relevant implementing measure in the Relevant Member State, and the expression 2010 PD Amending Directive means Directive 2010/73/EU.

The underwriter has represented and agreed that:

- (a) it has only communicated or caused to be communicated and will only communicate or cause to be communicated an invitation or inducement to engage in investment activity (within the meaning of Section 21 of the Financial Services and Markets Act, or FSMA) received by it in connection with the issue or sale of the shares in circumstances in which Section 21(1) of the FSMA does not apply to us; and
- (b) it has complied and will comply with all applicable provisions of the FSMA with respect to anything done by it in relation to the shares in, from or otherwise involving the United Kingdom.

We have not and will not register with the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority (FINMA) as a foreign collective investment scheme pursuant to Article 119 of the Federal Act on Collective Investment Scheme of 23 June 2006, as amended (CISA), and accordingly the shares of common stock being offered pursuant to this prospectus supplement have not and will not be approved, and may not be licenseable, with FINMA. Therefore, the shares of common stock have not been authorized for distribution by FINMA as a foreign collective investment scheme pursuant to Article 119 CISA and the shares of common stock offered hereby may not be offered to the public (as this term is defined in Article 3 CISA) in or from Switzerland. The shares of common stock may solely be offered to qualified investors, as this term is defined in Article 10 CISA, and in the circumstances set out in Article 3 of the Ordinance on Collective Investment Scheme of 22 November 2006, as amended (CISO), such that there is no public offer. Investors, however, do not benefit from protection under CISA or CISO or supervision by FINMA. This prospectus supplement and any other materials relating to the shares of common stock are strictly personal and confidential to each offeree and do not constitute an offer to any other person. This prospectus supplement may only be used by those qualified investors to whom it has been handed out in connection with the offer described herein and may neither directly or indirectly be distributed or made available to any person or entity other than its recipients. It may not be used in connection with any other offer and shall in particular not be copied and/or distributed to the public in Switzerland or from Switzerland.

Table of Contents

This prospectus supplement does not constitute an issue prospectus as that term is understood pursuant to Article 652a and/or 1156 of the Swiss Federal Code of Obligations. We have not applied for a listing of the shares of common stock on the SIX Swiss Exchange or any other regulated securities market in Switzerland, and consequently, the information presented in this prospectus supplement does not necessarily comply with the information standards set out in the listing rules of the SIX Swiss Exchange and corresponding prospectus schemes annexed to the listing rules of the SIX Swiss Exchange.

This prospectus supplement relates to an Exempt Offer in accordance with the Offered Securities Rules of the Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA). This prospectus supplement is intended for distribution only to persons of a type specified in the Offered Securities Rules of the DFSA. It must not be delivered to, or relied on by, any other person. The DFSA has no responsibility for reviewing or verifying any documents in connection with Exempt Offers. The DFSA has not approved this prospectus supplement nor taken steps to verify the information set forth herein and has no responsibility for the prospectus supplement. The shares of common stock to which this prospectus supplement relates may be illiquid and/or subject to restrictions on its resale. Prospective purchasers of the shares of common stock offered should conduct their own due diligence on the shares. If you do not understand the contents of this prospectus supplement you should consult an authorized financial advisor.

The shares of common stock may not be offered or sold in Hong Kong by means of any document other than (i) in circumstances which do not constitute an offer to the public within the meaning of the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32, Laws of Hong Kong), or (ii) to professional investors within the meaning of the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap. 571, Laws of Hong Kong) and any rules made thereunder, or (iii) in other circumstances which do not result in the document being a prospectus within the meaning of the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32, Laws of Hong Kong) and no advertisement, invitation or document relating to the shares may be issued or may be in the possession of any person for the purpose of issue (in each case whether in Hong Kong or elsewhere), which is directed at, or the contents of which are likely to be accessed or read by, the public in Hong Kong (except if permitted to do so under the laws of Hong Kong) other than with respect to shares which are or are intended to be disposed of only to persons outside Hong Kong or only to professional investors within the meaning of the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap. 571, Laws of Hong Kong) and any rules made thereunder.

The shares of common stock have not been and will not be registered under the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law of Japan (the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law) and the underwriter has agreed that it will not offer or sell any securities, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to, or for the benefit of, any resident of Japan (which term as used herein means any person resident in Japan, including any corporation or other entity organized under the laws of Japan), or to others for re-offering or resale, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to a resident of Japan, except pursuant to an exemption from the registration requirements of, and otherwise in compliance with, the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law and any other applicable laws, regulations and ministerial guidelines of Japan.

This prospectus supplement has not been registered as a prospectus with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Accordingly, this prospectus supplement and any other document or material in connection with the offer or sale, or invitation for subscription or purchase, of the shares may not be circulated or distributed, nor may the shares be offered or sold, or be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, whether directly or indirectly, to persons in Singapore other than (i) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the Securities and Futures Act, Chapter 289 of Singapore (the SFA), (ii) to a relevant person pursuant to Section 275(1), or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A), and in accordance with the conditions specified in Section 275 of the SFA or (iii) otherwise pursuant to, and in accordance with the conditions of, any other applicable provision of the SFA, in each case subject to compliance with conditions set forth in the SFA.

Table of Contents

Where the shares are subscribed or purchased under Section 275 of the SFA by a relevant person which is:

a corporation (which is not an accredited investor (as defined in Section 4A of the SFA)) the sole business of which is to hold investments and the entire share capital of which is owned by one or more individuals, each of whom is an accredited investor; or

a trust (where the trustee is not an accredited investor) whose sole purpose is to hold investments and each beneficiary of the trust is an individual who is an accredited investor,
shares, debentures and units of shares and debentures of that corporation or the beneficiaries' rights and interest (howsoever described) in that trust shall not be transferred within six months after that corporation or that trust has acquired the shares pursuant to an offer made under Section 275 of the SFA except:

to an institutional investor (for corporations, under Section 274 of the SFA) or to a relevant person defined in Section 275(2) of the SFA, or to any person pursuant to an offer that is made on terms that such shares, debentures and units of shares and debentures of that corporation or such rights and interest in that trust are acquired at a consideration of not less than \$200,000 (or its equivalent in a foreign currency) for each transaction, whether such amount is to be paid for in cash or by exchange of securities or other assets, and further for corporations, in accordance with the conditions specified in Section 275 of the SFA;

where no consideration is or will be given for the transfer; or

where the transfer is by operation of law.

Table of Contents

VALIDITY OF THE SECURITIES

Certain legal matters in connection with this offering, including the validity of the issuance of the shares of common stock offered by this prospectus supplement, will be passed upon for us by Latham & Watkins LLP, San Francisco, California. Certain legal matters in connection with this offering will be passed upon for the underwriter by Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP, New York, New York.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements, financial statement schedule and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting (which is included in Management's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting) incorporated in this prospectus supplement by reference to the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011 have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

S-19

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS

Waste Connections, Inc.

Debt Securities

Common Stock

Preferred Stock

Warrants

Stockholder Rights

Units

We may from time to time offer, in one or more classes or series, separately or together, and in amounts, at prices and on terms to be set forth in one or more supplements to this prospectus, the following securities:

debt securities, which may consist of debentures, notes, or other types of debt,

shares of our common stock,

shares of our preferred stock,

warrants to purchase shares of our common stock or preferred stock,

rights issuable to our stockholders to purchase shares of our common stock or preferred stock, to purchase warrants exercisable for shares of our common stock or preferred stock, or to purchase units consisting of two or more of the foregoing, and

units consisting of two or more of the foregoing.

We refer to the debt securities, common stock, preferred stock, warrants, rights, and units registered hereunder collectively as the securities in this prospectus. The specific terms of each series or class of the securities will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement and will include, where applicable:

Edgar Filing: WASTE CONNECTIONS, INC. - Form 424B3

in the case of debt securities, the specific title, aggregate principal amount, currency, form (which may be certificated or global), authorized denominations, maturity, rate (or manner of calculating the rate) and time of payment of interest, terms for redemption at our option or repayment at the holder's option, terms for sinking payments, terms for conversion into shares of our common stock or preferred stock, covenants, and any initial public offering price,

in the case of preferred stock, the specific designation, preferences, conversion and other rights, voting powers, restrictions, limitations as to transferability, dividends and other distributions, and terms and conditions of redemption and any initial public offering price,

in the case of warrants or rights, the duration, offering price, exercise price, and detachability, and

in the case of units, the constituent securities comprising the units, the offering price, and detachability.

You should read this prospectus and any prospectus supplement carefully before you invest in any of our securities.

The securities may be offered directly by us or by any selling security holder, through agents designated from time to time by us or to or through underwriters or dealers. If any agents, dealers, or underwriters are involved in the sale of any of the securities, their names, and any applicable purchase price, fee, commission, or discount arrangement between or among them will be set forth, or will be calculable from the information set forth, in the applicable prospectus supplement. See the sections entitled [Plan of Distribution](#) and [About This Prospectus](#) for more information. No securities may be sold without delivery of this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement describing the method and terms of the offering of such series of securities.

Our common stock currently trades on the New York Stock Exchange, or NYSE, under the symbol [WCN](#). On February 24, 2012, the last reported sale price of our common stock was \$31.94 per share.

INVESTING IN THE SECURITIES INVOLVES RISK. SEE [RISK FACTORS](#) REFERENCED ON PAGE 1.

This prospectus may not be used to offer or sell any securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is February 27, 2012.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<u>ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS</u>	1
<u>RISK FACTORS</u>	1
<u>FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS</u>	1
<u>WASTE CONNECTIONS, INC.</u>	4
<u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u>	5
<u>RATIOS OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES</u>	5
<u>GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES</u>	6
<u>DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES</u>	6
<u>DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK</u>	13
<u>DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES WARRANTS</u>	15
<u>DESCRIPTION OF RIGHTS TO PURCHASE SHARES OF COMMON OR PREFERRED STOCK</u>	16
<u>DESCRIPTION OF UNITS</u>	17
<u>GLOBAL SECURITIES</u>	18
<u>PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION</u>	20
<u>LEGAL MATTERS</u>	21
<u>EXPERTS</u>	21
<u>INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN INFORMATION BY REFERENCE</u>	23
<u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u>	24

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement. We have not authorized anyone else to provide you with different or additional information. We are offering to sell the securities and seeking offers to buy the securities only in jurisdictions where offers and sales are permitted.

We have not authorized any dealer or other person to give any information or to make any representation other than those contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any accompanying supplement to this prospectus. You must not rely upon any information or representation not contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or any accompanying supplement to this prospectus. This prospectus and any accompanying supplement to this prospectus do not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any securities other than the registered securities to which they relate, nor do this prospectus and any accompanying supplement to this prospectus constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy securities in any jurisdiction to any person to whom it is unlawful to make such offer or solicitation in such jurisdiction. You should not assume that the information contained in this prospectus and any accompanying supplement to this prospectus is accurate on any date subsequent to the date set forth on the front of the document or that any information we have incorporated by reference is correct on any date subsequent to the date of the document incorporated by reference, even though this prospectus and any accompanying supplement to this prospectus is delivered or securities are sold on a later date.

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of an automatic shelf registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, as a well-known seasoned issuer as defined in Rule 405 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act, using a shelf registration process. Under this shelf registration process, we may sell the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings. This prospectus sets forth certain terms of the securities that we may offer.

Each time we offer securities, we will attach a prospectus supplement to this prospectus. The prospectus supplement will contain the specific description of the terms of the offering. The prospectus supplement will supersede this prospectus to the extent it contains information that is different from, or that conflicts with, the information contained in this prospectus.

It is important for you to read and consider all information contained in this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement in making your investment decision. You should also read and consider the information contained in the documents identified under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information** in this prospectus.

Unless otherwise indicated or unless the context requires otherwise, all references in this prospectus to **we**, **us**, or **our** mean Waste Connections, Inc. and our consolidated subsidiaries, except where it is made clear that the terms mean Waste Connections, Inc. only.

RISK FACTORS

You should carefully consider any specific risks set forth or referenced under the caption **Risk Factors** in the applicable prospectus supplement and under the caption **Risk Factors** in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, incorporated into this prospectus by reference, as updated by our subsequent filings under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act. You should consider carefully those risk factors together with all of the other information included and incorporated by reference in this prospectus before you decide to purchase our securities.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Certain statements included and incorporated by reference in this prospectus are forward-looking in nature, including, without limitation, statements regarding our financial position, business strategy, acquisition plans and growth objectives. These statements can be identified by the use of forward-looking terminology such as **believes**, **expects**, **may**, **will**, **should**, or **anticipates**, or the negative thereof or comparable terminology, or by discussions of strategy.

Our business and operations are subject to a variety of risks and uncertainties and, consequently, actual results may differ materially from those projected by any forward-looking statements. Factors that could cause actual results to differ from those projected include, but are not limited to, the following:

our acquisitions may not be successful, resulting in changes in strategy, operating losses or a loss on sale of the business acquired;

a portion of our growth and future financial performance depends on our ability to integrate acquired businesses into our organization and operations;

competition for acquisition candidates, consolidation within the waste industry and economic and market conditions may limit our ability to grow through acquisitions;

Table of Contents

we may be unable to compete effectively with larger and better capitalized companies, companies with lower return expectations, and governmental service providers;

we may lose contracts through competitive bidding, early termination or governmental action;

price increases may not be adequate to offset the impact of increased costs or may cause us to lose volume;

economic downturns adversely affect operating results;

our results are vulnerable to economic conditions and seasonal factors affecting the regions in which we operate;

we may be subject in the normal course of business to judicial, administrative or other third party proceedings that could interrupt or limit our operations, require expensive remediation, result in adverse judgments, settlements or fines and create negative publicity;

increases in the price of fuel may adversely affect our business and reduce our operating margins;

increases in labor and disposal and related transportation costs could impact our financial results;

efforts by labor unions could divert management attention and adversely affect operating results;

we could face significant withdrawal liability if we withdraw from participation in one or more underfunded multiemployer pension plans in which we participate;

increases in insurance costs and the amount that we self-insure for various risks could reduce our operating margins and reported earnings;

our indebtedness could adversely affect our financial condition; we may incur substantially more debt in the future;

each business that we acquire or have acquired may have liabilities or risks that we fail or are unable to discover, including environmental liabilities;

liabilities for environmental damage may adversely affect our financial condition, business and earnings;

our accruals for our landfill site closure and post-closure costs may be inadequate;

the financial soundness of our customers could affect our business and operating results;

Edgar Filing: WASTE CONNECTIONS, INC. - Form 424B3

we depend significantly on the services of the members of our senior, regional and district management team, and the departure of any of those persons could cause our operating results to suffer;

our decentralized decision-making structure could allow local managers to make decisions that adversely affect our operating results;

we may incur charges related to capitalized expenditures of landfill development projects, which would decrease our earnings;

because we depend on railroads for our intermodal operations, our operating results and financial condition are likely to be adversely affected by any reduction or deterioration in rail service;

our financial results are based upon estimates and assumptions that may differ from actual results;

the adoption of new accounting standards or interpretations could adversely affect our financial results;

pending or future litigation or governmental proceedings could result in material adverse consequences, including judgments or settlements;

if we are not able to develop and protect intellectual property, or if a competitor develops or obtains exclusive rights to a breakthrough technology, our financial results may suffer;

Table of Contents

fluctuations in prices for recycled commodities that we sell and rebates we offer to customers may cause our revenues and operating results to decline;

our financial and operating performance may be affected by the inability to renew landfill operating permits, obtain new landfills and expand existing ones;

future changes in laws or renewed enforcement of laws regulating the flow of solid waste in interstate commerce could adversely affect our operating results;

extensive and evolving environmental, health, safety and employment laws and regulations may restrict our operations and growth and increase our costs;

climate change regulations may adversely affect operating results;

extensive regulations that govern the design, operation and closure of landfills may restrict our landfill operations or increase our costs of operating landfills;

alternatives to landfill disposal may cause our revenues and operating results to decline; and

unusually adverse weather conditions may interfere with our operations, harming our operating results.

Other risks, uncertainties, and factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those projected are described in this prospectus and are described from time to time in reports we file with the SEC, including under the headings Risk Factors, Business and Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and under the heading Risk Factors and Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations in subsequent quarterly reports on Form 10-Q. There may be additional risks of which we are not presently aware or that we currently believe are immaterial which could have an adverse impact on our business. We make no commitment to revise or update any forward-looking statements in order to reflect events or circumstances that may change.

Table of Contents

WASTE CONNECTIONS, INC.

We are an integrated solid waste services company that provides solid waste collection, transfer, disposal and recycling services in mostly exclusive and secondary markets. In addition, we also provide intermodal services for the rail haul movement of cargo and solid waste containers in the Pacific Northwest through a network of intermodal facilities. We also treat and dispose of non-hazardous waste that is generated in the exploration and production of oil and natural gas primarily at a facility in Southwest Louisiana. We seek to avoid highly competitive, large urban markets and instead target markets where we can provide either solid waste services under exclusive arrangements, or markets where we can be integrated and attain high market share. In markets where waste collection services are provided under exclusive arrangements, or where waste disposal is municipally funded or available at multiple municipal sources, we believe that controlling the waste stream by providing collection services under exclusive arrangements is often more important to our growth and profitability than owning or operating landfills.

We were incorporated in the State of Delaware on September 9, 1997. Our executive offices are located at Waterway Plaza Two, 10001 Woodloch Forest Drive, Suite 400, The Woodlands, TX 77380. Our telephone number is (832) 442-2200. Our website is www.wasteconnections.com. The information provided on our website is not incorporated into and does not form a part of this prospectus.

Our common stock is traded on The New York Stock Exchange under the symbol **WCN**. For additional information concerning our company, please see the sections titled **Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference** and **Where You Can Find More Information** of this prospectus.

Table of Contents**USE OF PROCEEDS**

We intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of the securities offered by us under this prospectus for general corporate purposes, including repaying, redeeming or repurchasing debt, acquisitions of additional assets or businesses, capital expenditures and increasing our working capital. When a particular series of securities is offered, the prospectus supplement relating thereto will set forth our intended use for the net proceeds we receive from the sale of the securities. Pending the application of the net proceeds, we may invest the proceeds in short-term, interest-bearing instruments or other investment-grade securities. We will not receive any of the proceeds from the sale of the securities offered by any selling security holder.

RATIOS OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

Our ratio of earnings to fixed charges for each of the previous five years ended December 31 was as follows:

	Fiscal Year Ended December 31,				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges	5.0	4.8	4.3	6.2	6.9

For purposes of the ratio of earnings to fixed charges, earnings represent pre-tax earnings plus fixed charges less capitalized interest plus current period amortization of capitalized interest, and fixed charges represent interest on debt, capitalized interest and the interest portion of rental expense on operating leases.

For all periods presented in the table above, we had no preferred stock outstanding.

Table of Contents

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES

The following is a brief description of the material terms of our securities that may be offered under this prospectus. This description does not purport to be complete and is subject in all respects to applicable Delaware law and to the provisions of our charter and bylaws, including any amendments or supplements thereto, copies of which are on file with the SEC as described under [Where You Can Find More Information](#) and are incorporated by reference herein.

We, directly or through agents, dealers, or underwriters designated from time to time, may offer, issue, and sell, together or separately:

debt securities, which may consist of debentures, notes, or other types of debt,

shares of our common stock,

shares of our preferred stock,

warrants to purchase shares of our common stock or preferred stock,

rights issuable to our stockholders to purchase shares of our common stock or preferred stock, to purchase warrants exercisable for shares of our common stock or preferred stock, or to purchase units consisting of two or more of the foregoing, and

units consisting of two or more of the foregoing.

We may issue the debt securities as exchangeable for or convertible into shares of common stock, preferred stock, or other securities. The preferred stock may also be exchangeable for and/or convertible into shares of common stock, another series of preferred stock, or other securities. The debt securities, the preferred stock, the common stock, the warrants, the rights, and the units are collectively referred to in this prospectus as the securities. When a particular series of securities is offered, a supplement to this prospectus will be delivered with this prospectus, which will set forth the terms of the offering and sale of the offered securities.

Our amended and restated certificate of incorporation provides that we have authority to issue up to 257,500,000 shares of stock, par value \$0.01 per share, 250,000,000 shares of which is currently classified as common stock and 7,500,000 shares of which is currently classified as preferred stock. Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange, and we intend to so list any additional shares of our common stock which are issued and sold hereunder. We may elect to list any future class or series of our securities issued hereunder on an exchange, but we are not obligated to do so.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

The following description, together with the additional information we include in any applicable prospectus supplement, summarizes certain general terms and provisions of the debt securities that we may offer under this prospectus. When we offer to sell a particular series of debt securities, we will describe the specific terms of the series in a supplement to this prospectus. We will also indicate in the supplement to what extent the general terms and provisions described in this prospectus apply to a particular series of debt securities.

We may issue debt securities either separately, or together with, or upon the conversion or exercise of or in exchange for, other securities described in this prospectus. Debt securities may be our senior, senior subordinated or subordinated obligations and, unless otherwise specified in a supplement to this prospectus, the debt securities will be our direct, unsecured obligations and may be issued in one or more series.

The debt securities will be issued under an indenture between us and U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee. We have summarized select portions of the indenture below. The summary is not complete. The form of the indenture has been filed as an exhibit to the registration statement and you should read the indenture for

Table of Contents

provisions that may be important to you. In the summary below, we have included references to the section numbers of the indenture so that you can easily locate these provisions. Capitalized terms used in the summary and not defined herein have the meanings specified in the indenture.

As used in this section only, Waste Connections, we, our or us refer to Waste Connections, Inc. excluding our subsidiaries, unless expressly stated or the context otherwise requires.

General

The terms of each series of debt securities will be established by or pursuant to a resolution of our board of directors and set forth or determined in the manner provided in a resolution of our board of directors, in an officer's certificate or by a supplemental indenture. (Section 2.2) The particular terms of each series of debt securities will be described in a prospectus supplement relating to such series (including any pricing supplement or term sheet).

We can issue an unlimited amount of debt securities under the indenture that may be in one or more series with the same or various maturities, at par, at a premium, or at a discount. (Section 2.1) We will set forth in a prospectus supplement (including any pricing supplement or term sheet) relating to any series of debt securities being offered, the aggregate principal amount and the following terms of the debt securities, if applicable:

the title and ranking of the debt securities (including the terms of any subordination provisions);

the price or prices (expressed as a percentage of the principal amount) at which we will sell the debt securities;

any limit on the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities;

the date or dates on which the principal of the securities of the series is payable;

the rate or rates (which may be fixed or variable) per annum or the method used to determine the rate or rates (including any commodity, commodity index, stock exchange index or financial index) at which the debt securities will bear interest, the date or dates from which interest will accrue, the date or dates on which interest will commence and be payable and any regular record date for the interest payable on any interest payment date;

the place or places where principal of, and interest, if any, on the debt securities will be payable (and the method of such payment), where the securities of such series may be surrendered for registration of transfer or exchange, and where notices and demands to us in respect of the debt securities may be delivered;

the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which and the terms and conditions upon which we may redeem the debt securities;

any obligation we have to redeem or purchase the debt securities pursuant to any sinking fund or analogous provisions or at the option of a holder of debt securities and the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which and in the terms and conditions upon which securities of the series shall be redeemed or purchased, in whole or in part, pursuant to such obligation;

the dates on which and the price or prices at which we will repurchase debt securities at the option of the holders of debt securities and other detailed terms and provisions of these repurchase obligations;

the denominations in which the debt securities will be issued, if other than denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof;

whether the debt securities will be issued in the form of certificated debt securities or global debt securities;

Table of Contents

the portion of principal amount of the debt securities payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity date, if other than the principal amount;

the currency of denomination of the debt securities, which may be United States Dollars or any foreign currency, and if such currency of denomination is a composite currency, the agency or organization, if any, responsible for overseeing such composite currency;

the designation of the currency, currencies or currency units in which payment of principal of, premium and interest on the debt securities will be made;

if payments of principal of, premium or interest on the debt securities will be made in one or more currencies or currency units other than that or those in which the debt securities are denominated, the manner in which the exchange rate with respect to these payments will be determined;

the manner in which the amounts of payment of principal of, premium, if any, or interest on the debt securities will be determined, if these amounts may be determined by reference to an index based on a currency or currencies other than that in which the debt securities are denominated or designated to be payable or by reference to a commodity, commodity index, stock exchange index or financial index;

any provisions relating to any security provided for the debt securities;

any addition to, deletion of or change in the Events of Default described in this prospectus or in the indenture with respect to the debt securities and any change in the acceleration provisions described in this prospectus or in the indenture with respect to the debt securities;

any addition to, deletion of or change in the covenants described in this prospectus or in the indenture with respect to the debt securities;

any depositaries, interest rate calculation agents, exchange rate calculation agents or other agents with respect to the debt securities;

the provisions, if any, relating to conversion or exchange of any securities of such series, including if applicable, the conversion or exchange price and period, provisions as to whether conversion or exchange will be mandatory, the events requiring an adjustment of the conversion or exchange price and provisions affecting conversion or exchange; and

any other terms of the debt securities, which may supplement, modify or delete any provision of the indenture as it applies to that series, including any terms that may be required under applicable law or regulations or advisable in connection with the marketing of the securities. (Section 2.2)

We may issue debt securities that provide for an amount less than their stated principal amount to be due and payable upon declaration of acceleration of their maturity pursuant to the terms of the indenture. We will provide you with information on the federal income tax considerations and other special considerations applicable to any of these debt securities in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If we denominate the purchase price of any of the debt securities in a foreign currency or currencies or a foreign currency unit or units, or if the principal of and any premium and interest on any series of debt securities is payable in a foreign currency or currencies or a foreign currency unit or units, we will provide you with information on the restrictions, elections, general tax considerations, specific terms and other information

Edgar Filing: WASTE CONNECTIONS, INC. - Form 424B3

with respect to that issue of debt securities and such foreign currency or currencies or foreign currency unit or units in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Transfer and Exchange

Each debt security will be represented by either one or more global securities registered in the name of The Depository Trust Company, or the Depository, or a nominee of the Depository (we will refer to any debt security represented by a global debt security as a book-entry debt security), or a certificate issued in definitive

Table of Contents

registered form (we will refer to any debt security represented by a certificated security as a certificated debt security) as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Except as set forth under the heading Global Debt Securities and Book-Entry System below, book-entry debt securities will not be issuable in certificated form.

Certificated Debt Securities. You may transfer or exchange certificated debt securities at any office we maintain for this purpose in accordance with the terms of the indenture. (Section 2.4) No service charge will be made for any transfer or exchange of certificated debt securities, but we may require payment of a sum sufficient to cover any tax or other governmental charge payable in connection with a transfer or exchange. (Section 2.7)

You may effect the transfer of certificated debt securities and the right to receive the principal of, premium and interest on certificated debt securities only by surrendering the certificate representing those certificated debt securities and either reissuance by us or the trustee of the certificate to the new holder or the issuance by us or the trustee of a new certificate to the new holder.

Global Debt Securities and Book-Entry System. Each global debt security representing book-entry debt securities will be deposited with, or on behalf of, the Depository, and registered in the name of the Depository or a nominee of the Depository. Please see Global Securities.

Covenants

We will set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement any restrictive covenants applicable to any issue of debt securities. (Article IV)

No Protection In the Event of a Change of Control

Unless we state otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, the debt securities will not contain any provisions which may afford holders of the debt securities protection in the event we have a change in control or in the event of a highly leveraged transaction (whether or not such transaction results in a change in control) which could adversely affect holders of debt securities.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

We may not consolidate with or merge with or into, or convey, transfer or lease all or substantially all of our properties and assets to any person (a successor person) unless:

we are the surviving corporation or the successor person (if other than Waste Connections) is a corporation organized and validly existing under the laws of any U.S. domestic jurisdiction and expressly assumes our obligations on the debt securities and under the indenture; and

immediately after giving effect to the transaction, no Default or Event of Default, shall have occurred and be continuing;

Notwithstanding the above, any of our subsidiaries may consolidate with, merge into or transfer all or part of its properties to us. (Section 5.1)

Events of Default

Event of Default means with respect to any series of debt securities, any of the following:

default in the payment of any interest upon any debt security of that series when it becomes due and payable, and continuance of such default for a period of 30 days (unless the entire amount of the payment is deposited by us with the trustee or with a paying agent prior to the expiration of the 30-day period);

Table of Contents

default in the payment of principal of any security of that series at its maturity;

default in the performance or breach of any other covenant or warranty by us in the indenture (other than a covenant or warranty that has been included in the indenture solely for the benefit of a series of debt securities other than that series), which default continues uncured for a period of 60 days after we receive written notice from the trustee or Waste Connections and the trustee receive written notice from the holders of not less than 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series as provided in the indenture;

certain voluntary or involuntary events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization of Waste Connections; or

any other Event of Default provided with respect to debt securities of that series that is described in the applicable prospectus supplement. (Section 6.1)

No Event of Default with respect to a particular series of debt securities (except as to certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization) necessarily constitutes an Event of Default with respect to any other series of debt securities. (Section 6.1) The occurrence of certain Events of Default or an acceleration under the indenture may constitute an event of default under certain indebtedness of ours or our subsidiaries outstanding from time to time.

If an Event of Default with respect to debt securities of any series at the time outstanding occurs and is continuing, then the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may, by a notice in writing to us (and to the trustee if given by the holders), declare to be due and payable immediately the principal of (or, if the debt securities of that series are discount securities, that portion of the principal amount as may be specified in the terms of that series) and accrued and unpaid interest, if any, on all debt securities of that series. In the case of an Event of Default resulting from certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization, the principal (or such specified amount) of and accrued and unpaid interest, if any, on all outstanding debt securities will become and be immediately due and payable without any declaration or other act on the part of the trustee or any holder of outstanding debt securities. At any time after a declaration of acceleration with respect to debt securities of any series has been made, but before a judgment or decree for payment of the money due has been obtained by the trustee, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may rescind and annul the acceleration if all Events of Default, other than the non-payment of accelerated principal and interest, if any, with respect to debt securities of that series, have been cured or waived as provided in the indenture. (Section 6.2) We refer you to the prospectus supplement relating to any series of debt securities that are discount securities for the particular provisions relating to acceleration of a portion of the principal amount of such discount securities upon the occurrence of an Event of Default.

The indenture provides that the trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under the indenture unless the trustee receives indemnity satisfactory to it against any cost, liability or expense which might be incurred by it in exercising such right of power. (Section 7.1(e)) Subject to certain rights of the trustee, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee or exercising any trust or power conferred on the trustee with respect to the debt securities of that series. (Section 6.12)

No holder of any debt security of any series will have any right to institute any proceeding, judicial or otherwise, with respect to the indenture or for the appointment of a receiver or trustee, or for any remedy under the indenture, unless:

that holder has previously given to the trustee written notice of a continuing Event of Default with respect to debt securities of that series; and

Table of Contents

the holders of not less than 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series have made written request, and offered reasonable indemnity or security, to the trustee to institute the proceeding as trustee, and the trustee has not received from the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series a direction inconsistent with that request and has failed to institute the proceeding within 60 days. (Section 6.7)

Notwithstanding any other provision in the indenture, the holder of any debt security will have an absolute and unconditional right to receive payment of the principal of, premium and any interest on that debt security on or after the due dates expressed in that debt security and to institute suit for the enforcement of payment. (Section 6.8)

The indenture requires us, within 120 days after the end of our fiscal year, to furnish to the trustee a statement as to compliance with the indenture. (Section 4.3) If a Default or Event of Default occurs and is continuing with respect to the securities of any series and if it is known to a responsible officer of the trustee, the trustee shall mail to each Securityholder of the securities of that series notice of a Default or Event of Default within 90 days after it occurs. The indenture provides that the trustee may withhold notice to the holders of debt securities of any series of any Default or Event of Default (except in payment on any debt securities of that series) with respect to debt securities of that series if the trustee determines in good faith that withholding notice is in the interest of the holders of those debt securities. (Section 7.5)

Modification and Waiver

We and the trustee may modify and amend the indenture or the debt securities of any series without the consent of any holder of any debt security:

to cure any ambiguity, defect or inconsistency;

to comply with covenants in the indenture described above under the heading Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets ;

to provide for uncertificated securities in addition to or in place of certificated securities;

to make any change that does not adversely affect the rights of any holder of debt securities;

to provide for the issuance of and establish the form and terms and conditions of debt securities of any series as permitted by the indenture;

to effect the appointment of a successor trustee with respect to the debt securities of any series and to add to or change any of the provisions of the indenture to provide for or facilitate administration by more than one trustee; or

to comply with requirements of the SEC in order to effect or maintain the qualification of the indenture under the Trust Indenture Act. (Section 9.1)

We may also modify and amend the indenture with the consent of the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of each series affected by the modifications or amendments. We may not make any modification or amendment without the consent of the holders of each affected debt security then outstanding if that amendment will:

reduce the amount of debt securities whose holders must consent to an amendment, supplement or waiver;

Edgar Filing: WASTE CONNECTIONS, INC. - Form 424B3

reduce the rate of or extend the time for payment of interest (including default interest) on any debt security;

reduce the principal of or premium on or change the fixed maturity of any debt security or reduce the amount of, or postpone the date fixed for, the payment of any sinking fund or analogous obligation with respect to any series of debt securities;

Table of Contents

reduce the principal amount of discount securities payable upon acceleration of maturity;

waive a default in the payment of the principal of, premium or interest on any debt security (except a rescission of acceleration of the debt securities of any series by the holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal amount of the then outstanding debt securities of that series and a waiver of the payment default that resulted from such acceleration);

make the principal of or premium or interest on any debt security payable in currency other than that stated in the debt security;

make any change to certain provisions of the indenture relating to, among other things, the right of holders of debt securities to receive payment of the principal of, premium and interest on those debt securities and to institute suit for the enforcement of any such payment and to waivers or amendments; or

waive a redemption payment with respect to any debt security. (Section 9.3)

Except for certain specified provisions, the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may on behalf of the holders of all debt securities of that series waive our compliance with provisions of the indenture. (Section 9.2) The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may on behalf of the holders of all the debt securities of such series waive any past default under the indenture with respect to that series and its consequences, except a default in the payment of the principal of, premium or any interest on any debt security of that series; provided, however, that the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may rescind an acceleration and its consequences, including any related payment default that resulted from the acceleration. (Section 6.13)

Defeasance of Debt Securities and Certain Covenants in Certain Circumstances

Legal Defeasance. The indenture provides that, unless otherwise provided by the terms of the applicable series of debt securities, we may be discharged from any and all obligations in respect of the debt securities of any series (subject to certain exceptions). We will be so discharged upon the deposit with the trustee, in trust, of money and/or U.S. government obligations or, in the case of debt securities denominated in a single currency other than U.S. Dollars, government obligations of the government that issued or caused to be issued such currency, that, through the payment of interest and principal in accordance with their terms, will provide money in an amount sufficient in the opinion of a nationally recognized firm of independent public accountants or investment bank to pay and discharge each installment of principal, premium and interest on and any mandatory sinking fund payments in respect of the debt securities of that series on the stated maturity of those payments in accordance with the terms of the indenture and those debt securities.

This discharge may occur only if, among other things, we have delivered to the trustee an opinion of counsel stating that we have received from, or there has been published by, the United States Internal Revenue Service a ruling or, since the date of execution of the indenture, there has been a change in the applicable United States federal income tax law, in either case to the effect that, and based thereon such opinion shall confirm that, the holders of the debt securities of that series will not recognize income, gain or loss for United States federal income tax purposes as a result of the deposit, defeasance and discharge and will be subject to United States federal income tax on the same amounts and in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if the deposit, defeasance and discharge had not occurred. (Section 8.3)

Defeasance of Certain Covenants. The indenture provides that, unless otherwise provided by the terms of the applicable series of debt securities, upon compliance with certain conditions:

we may omit to comply with the covenant described under the heading Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets and certain other covenants set forth in the indenture, as well as any additional covenants which may be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement; and

any omission to comply with those covenants will not constitute a Default or an Event of Default with respect to the debt securities of that series (covenant defeasance).

Table of Contents

The conditions include:

depositing with the trustee money and/or U.S. government obligations or, in the case of debt securities denominated in a single currency other than U.S. Dollars, government obligations of the government that issued or caused to be issued such currency, that, through the payment of interest and principal in accordance with their terms, will provide money in an amount sufficient in the opinion of a nationally recognized firm of independent public accountants or investment bank to pay and discharge each installment of principal of, premium and interest on and any mandatory sinking fund payments in respect of the debt securities of that series on the stated maturity of those payments in accordance with the terms of the indenture and those debt securities; and

delivering to the trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that the holders of the debt securities of that series will not recognize income, gain or loss for United States federal income tax purposes as a result of the deposit and related covenant defeasance and will be subject to United States federal income tax on the same amounts and in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if the deposit and related covenant defeasance had not occurred. (Section 8.4)

Covenant Defeasance and Events of Default. In the event we exercise our option to effect covenant defeasance with respect to any series of debt securities and the debt securities of that series are declared due and payable because of the occurrence of any Event of Default, the amount of money and/or U.S. government obligations or foreign government obligations on deposit with the trustee will be sufficient to pay amounts due on the debt securities of that series at the time of their stated maturity but may not be sufficient to pay amounts due on the debt securities of that series at the time of the acceleration resulting from the Event of Default. However, we shall remain liable for those payments. (Section 8.4).

Governing Law

The indenture and the debt securities, including any claim or controversy arising out of or relating to the indenture or the securities, will be governed by the laws of the State of New York without regard to conflict of law principles that would result in the application of any law other than the laws of the State of New York. (Section 10.10)

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

The following description of our capital stock is not complete and may not contain all the information you should consider before investing in our common stock or any of our securities. This description is summarized from, and qualified in its entirety by reference to, our amended and restated certificate of incorporation, as amended, which has been publicly filed with the SEC. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#).

Our authorized capital stock consists of:

250,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.01 per share; and

7,500,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.01 per share.

The only equity securities currently outstanding are shares of common stock.

Common Stock

As of December 31, 2011, there were 110,907,782 shares of our common stock outstanding held of record by 80 holders.

The holders of our common stock are entitled to one vote per share held on all matters submitted to a vote of our stockholders. Cumulative voting for the election of directors is not permitted. Holders of our common stock

Table of Contents

are entitled to receive pro rata dividends when, as and if declared by our board of directors out of any funds that we can legally use to pay dividends. We may pay dividends in cash, stock or other property. In some cases, holders of common stock may not receive dividends until we have satisfied our obligations to any holders of our preferred stock. If we liquidate, dissolve or wind up our business, holders of our common stock are entitled to share ratably in all assets remaining after payment of liabilities and the liquidation preferences of any outstanding shares of our preferred stock.

Holders of our common stock have no preemptive rights to subscribe for additional shares of our stock or other securities of ours, except as we may provide by amending our certificate of incorporation. The common stock has no conversion rights and is not redeemable. There are no sinking fund provisions applicable to our common stock. There is no restriction on our purchase of shares of our common stock except for regulatory limits. All outstanding shares of our common stock are fully paid and non-assessable.

Preferred Stock

We may, by resolution of our board of directors, and without any further vote or action by our stockholders, authorize and issue, subject to limitations prescribed by law, up to an aggregate of 7,500,000 shares of preferred stock, in one or more series. The board of directors determines the rights, privileges and limitations of preferred stock, including dividend rights, voting rights, conversion privileges, redemption rights, liquidation rights and/or sinking fund rights. Preferred stock may be issued in the future in connection with acquisitions, financings or other matters that the board of directors believes appropriate. No shares of preferred stock are outstanding and we presently have no plans to issue shares of preferred stock.

One effect of having preferred stock authorized is that the board of directors alone may be able to authorize the issuance of preferred stock in ways that render more difficult or discourage an attempt to obtain control of Waste Connections by a tender offer, proxy contest, merger or otherwise, and thereby protect the continuity of our management. The issuance of shares of preferred stock may adversely affect the voting and other rights of holders of common stock. For example, preferred stock may rank prior to the common stock as to dividend rights, liquidation preferences or both, may have full or limited voting rights and may be convertible into common stock. Accordingly, the issuance of preferred stock may discourage bids for the common stock or otherwise adversely affect the market price of the common stock.

Anti Takeover Effects of Delaware Law

We are subject to the provisions of Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law. Under Section 203, we would generally be prohibited from engaging in any business combination with any interested stockholder for a period of three years following the time that this stockholder became an interested stockholder unless:

prior to this time, the board of directors of the corporation approved either the business combination or the transaction that resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder;

upon consummation of the transaction that resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder, the interested stockholder owned at least 85% of the voting stock of the corporation outstanding at the time the transaction commenced, excluding shares owned by persons who are directors and also officers, and by employee stock plans in which employee participants do not have the right to determine confidentially whether shares held subject to the plan will be tendered in a tender or exchange offer; or

at or subsequent to such time, the business combination is approved by the board of directors and authorized at an annual or special meeting of stockholders, and not by written consent, by the affirmative vote of at least 66 2/3% of the outstanding voting stock that is not owned by the interested stockholder.

Table of Contents

Under Section 203, a business combination includes:

any merger or consolidation involving the corporation and the interested stockholder;

any sale, transfer, pledge or other disposition of 10% or more of the assets of the corporation involving the interested stockholder;

any transaction that results in the issuance or transfer by the corporation of any stock of the corporation to the interested stockholder, subject to limited exceptions;

any transaction involving the corporation that has the effect of increasing the proportionate share of the stock of any class or series of the corporation beneficially owned by the interested stockholder; or

the receipt by the interested stockholder of the benefit of any loans, advances, guarantees, pledges or other financial benefits provided by or through the corporation.

In general, Section 203 defines an interested stockholder as an entity or person beneficially owning 15% or more of the outstanding voting stock of the corporation and any entity or person affiliated with or controlling or controlled by such entity or person.

Transfer Agent

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is Wells Fargo Shareowner Services.

DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES WARRANTS

We may issue securities warrants for the purchase of common stock or preferred stock, respectively referred to as common stock warrants and preferred stock warrants. Securities warrants may be issued independently or together with any other securities offered by this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement and may be attached to or separate from such other securities. Each issuance of the securities warrants will be issued under a separate securities warrant agreement to be entered into by us and a bank or trust company, as securities warrant agent, all as set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the particular issue of offered securities warrants. Each issue of securities warrants will be evidenced by securities warrant certificates. The securities warrant agent will act solely as an agent of ours in connection with the securities warrant certificates and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holder of securities warrant certificates or beneficial owners of securities warrants.

If we offer securities warrants pursuant to this prospectus in the future, the applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of such securities warrants, including the following, where applicable:

the offering price;

the aggregate number of shares purchasable upon exercise of such securities warrants, and in the case of securities warrants for preferred stock, the designation, aggregate number, and terms of the class or series of preferred stock purchasable upon exercise of such securities warrants;

the designation and terms of the securities with which such securities warrants are being offered, if any, and the number of such securities warrants being offered with each such security;

the date on and after which such securities warrants and any related securities will be transferable separately;

the number of shares of preferred stock or shares of common stock purchasable upon exercise of each of such securities warrants and the price at which such number of shares of preferred stock or common stock may be purchased upon such exercise;

Table of Contents

the date on which the right to exercise such securities warrants shall commence and the expiration date on which such right shall expire;

federal income tax considerations; and

any other material terms of such securities warrants.

Holders of future securities warrants, if any, will not be entitled by virtue of being such holders, to vote, to consent, to receive dividends, to receive notice with respect to any meeting of stockholders for the election of our directors or any other matter, or to exercise any rights whatsoever as stockholders of Waste Connections.

DESCRIPTION OF RIGHTS TO PURCHASE SHARES OF COMMON OR PREFERRED STOCK

We may issue, as a dividend at no cost, to holders of record of our securities or any class or series thereof on the applicable record date, rights to purchase shares of our common stock or preferred stock, to purchase warrants exercisable for shares of our common stock or preferred stock, or to purchase units consisting of two or more of the foregoing. In this prospectus, we refer to such rights as stockholder rights. If stockholders rights are so issued to existing holders of securities, each stockholder right will entitle the registered holder thereof to purchase the securities issuable upon exercise of the rights pursuant to the terms set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If stockholder rights are issued, the applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of such stockholder rights including the following where applicable:

record date;

subscription price;

subscription agent;

aggregate number of shares of preferred stock, shares of common stock, warrants, or units purchasable upon exercise of such stockholder rights and in the case of stockholder rights for preferred stock or warrants exercisable for preferred stock, the designation, aggregate number, and terms of the class or series of preferred stock purchasable upon exercise of such stockholder rights or warrants;

the date on which the right to exercise such stockholder rights shall commence and the expiration date on which such right shall expire;

federal income tax considerations; and

other material terms of such stockholder rights.

In addition to the terms of the stockholder rights and the securities issuable upon exercise thereof, the prospectus supplement may describe, for a holder of such stockholder rights who validly exercises all stockholder rights issued to such holder, how to subscribe for unsubscribed securities, issuable pursuant to unexercised stockholder rights issued to other holders, to the extent such stockholder rights have not been exercised.

Edgar Filing: WASTE CONNECTIONS, INC. - Form 424B3

Holders of stockholder rights will not be entitled by virtue of being such holders, to vote, to consent, to receive dividends, to receive notice with respect to any meeting of stockholders for the election of our directors or any other matter, or to exercise any rights whatsoever as stockholders of Waste Connections, except to the extent described in the related prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF UNITS

We may issue units consisting of two or more other constituent securities. These units may be issuable as, and for a specified period of time may be transferable only as a single security, rather than as the separate constituent securities comprising such units. The statements made in this section relating to the units are summaries only. These summaries are not complete. When we issue units, we will provide the specific terms of the units in a prospectus supplement. To the extent the information contained in the prospectus supplement differs from this summary description, you should rely on the information in the prospectus supplement.

When we issue units, we will provide in a prospectus supplement the following terms of the units being issued:

the title of any series of units,

identification and description of the separate constituent securities comprising the units,

the price or prices at which the units will be issued,

the date, if any, on and after which the constituent securities comprising the units will be separately transferable,

information with respect to any book-entry procedures,

a discussion of any material or special United States federal income tax consequences applicable to an investment in the units, and

any other terms of the units and their constituent securities.

Table of Contents

GLOBAL SECURITIES

Book-Entry, Delivery and Form

Unless we indicate differently in a prospectus supplement, the securities initially will be issued in book-entry form and represented by one or more global notes or global securities, or, collectively, global securities. The global securities will be deposited with, or on behalf of, The Depository Trust Company, New York, New York, as depository, or DTC, and registered in the name of Cede & Co., the nominee of DTC. Unless and until it is exchanged for individual certificates evidencing securities under the limited circumstances described below, a global security may not be transferred except as a whole by the depository to its nominee or by the nominee to the depository, or by the depository or its nominee to a successor depository or to a nominee of the successor depository.

DTC has advised us that it is:

- a limited-purpose trust company organized under the New York Banking Law;
- a banking organization within the meaning of the New York Banking Law;
- a member of the Federal Reserve System;
- a clearing corporation within the meaning of the New York Uniform Commercial Code; and
- a clearing agency registered pursuant to the provisions of Section 17A of the Exchange Act.

DTC holds securities that its participants deposit with DTC. DTC also facilitates the settlement among its participants of securities transactions, such as transfers and pledges, in deposited securities through electronic computerized book-entry changes in participants' accounts, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of securities certificates. Direct participants in DTC include securities brokers and dealers, including underwriters, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and other organizations. DTC is a wholly-owned subsidiary of The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation, or DTCC. DTCC is the holding company for DTC, National Securities Clearing Corporation and Fixed Income Clearing Corporation, all of which are registered clearing agencies. DTCC is owned by the users of its regulated subsidiaries. Access to the DTC system is also available to others, which we sometimes refer to as indirect participants, that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a direct participant, either directly or indirectly. The rules applicable to DTC and its participants are on file with the SEC.

Purchases of securities under the DTC system must be made by or through direct participants, which will receive a credit for the securities on DTC's records. The ownership interest of the actual purchaser of a security, which we sometimes refer to as a beneficial owner, is in turn recorded on the direct and indirect participants' records. Beneficial owners of securities will not receive written confirmation from DTC of their purchases. However, beneficial owners are expected to receive written confirmations providing details of their transactions, as well as periodic statements of their holdings, from the direct or indirect participants through which they purchased securities. Transfers of ownership interests in global securities are to be accomplished by entries made on the books of participants acting on behalf of beneficial owners. Beneficial owners will not receive certificates representing their ownership interests in the global securities, except under the limited circumstances described below.

To facilitate subsequent transfers, all global securities deposited by direct participants with DTC will be registered in the name of DTC's partnership nominee, Cede & Co., or such other name as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC. The deposit of securities with DTC and their registration in the name of Cede & Co. or such other nominee will not change the beneficial ownership of the securities. DTC has no knowledge of the actual beneficial owners of the securities. DTC's records reflect only the identity of the direct participants to whose accounts the securities are credited, which may or may not be the beneficial owners. The participants are responsible for keeping account of their holdings on behalf of their customers.

Table of Contents

So long as the securities are in book-entry form, you will receive payments and may transfer securities only through the facilities of the depository and its direct and indirect participants. We will maintain an office or agency in the location specified in the prospectus supplement for the applicable securities, where notices and demands in respect of the securities and the indenture may be delivered to us and where certificated securities may be surrendered for payment, registration of transfer or exchange.

Conveyance of notices and other communications by DTC to direct participants, by direct participants to indirect participants and by direct participants and indirect participants to beneficial owners will be governed by arrangements among them, subject to any legal requirements in effect from time to time.

Redemption notices will be sent to DTC. If less than all of the securities of a particular series are being redeemed, DTC's practice is to determine by lot the amount of the interest of each direct participant in the securities of such series to be redeemed.

Neither DTC nor Cede & Co. (or such other DTC nominee) will consent or vote with respect to the securities. Under its usual procedures, DTC will mail an omnibus proxy to us as soon as possible after the record date. The omnibus proxy assigns the consenting or voting rights of Cede & Co. to those direct participants to whose accounts the securities of such series are credited on the record date, identified in a listing attached to the omnibus proxy.

So long as securities are in book-entry form, we will make payments on those securities to the depository or its nominee, as the registered owner of such securities, by wire transfer of immediately available funds. If securities are issued in definitive certificated form under the limited circumstances described below, we will have the option of making payments by check mailed to the addresses of the persons entitled to payment or by wire transfer to bank accounts in the United States designated in writing to the applicable trustee or other designated party at least 15 days before the applicable payment date by the persons entitled to payment.

Redemption proceeds, distributions and dividend payments on the securities will be made to Cede & Co., or such other nominee as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC. DTC's practice is to credit direct participants' accounts upon DTC's receipt of funds and corresponding detail information from us on the payment date in accordance with their respective holdings shown on DTC records. Payments by participants to beneficial owners will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is the case with securities held for the account of customers in bearer form or registered in street name. Those payments will be the responsibility of participants and not of DTC or us, subject to any statutory or regulatory requirements in effect from time to time. Payment of redemption proceeds, distributions and dividend payments to Cede & Co., or such other nominee as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC, is our responsibility, disbursement of payments to direct participants is the responsibility of DTC, and disbursement of payments to the beneficial owners is the responsibility of direct and indirect participants.

Except under the limited circumstances described below, purchasers of securities will not be entitled to have securities registered in their names and will not receive physical delivery of securities. Accordingly, each beneficial owner must rely on the procedures of DTC and its participants to exercise any rights under the securities and the indenture.

The laws of some jurisdictions may require that some purchasers of securities take physical delivery of securities in definitive form. Those laws may impair the ability to transfer or pledge beneficial interests in securities.

DTC may discontinue providing its services as securities depository with respect to the securities at any time by giving reasonable notice to us. Under such circumstances, in the event that a successor depository is not obtained, securities certificates are required to be printed and delivered.

Table of Contents

As noted above, beneficial owners of a particular series of securities generally will not receive certificates representing their ownership interests in those securities. However, if:

DTC notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue as a depository for the global security or securities representing such series of securities or if DTC ceases to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act at a time when it is required to be registered and a successor depository is not appointed within 90 days of the notification to us or of our becoming aware of DTC's ceasing to be so registered, as the case may be;

we determine, in our sole discretion, not to have such securities represented by one or more global securities; or

an Event of Default has occurred and is continuing with respect to such series of securities, we will prepare and deliver certificates for such securities in exchange for beneficial interests in the global securities. Any beneficial interest in a global security that is exchangeable under the circumstances described in the preceding sentence will be exchangeable for securities in definitive certificated form registered in the names that the depository directs. It is expected that these directions will be based upon directions received by the depository from its participants with respect to ownership of beneficial interests in the global securities.

We have obtained the information in this section and elsewhere in this prospectus concerning DTC and DTC's book-entry system from sources that are believed to be reliable, but we take no responsibility for the accuracy of this information.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities offered pursuant to any applicable prospectus supplement, directly to one or more purchasers or through dealers, agents, or underwriters. We may sell the securities offered pursuant to any applicable prospectus supplement in at-the-market equity offerings or on a negotiated or competitive bid basis through underwriters or dealers or directly to other purchasers or through agents. We will name any underwriter, dealer, or agent involved in the offer and sale of the securities in the applicable prospectus supplement. We reserve the right to sell the securities directly to investors on our own behalf in those jurisdictions where and in such manner as we are authorized to do so.

We may distribute the securities from time to time in one or more transactions:

at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed;

at market prices prevailing at the time of sale;

at prices related to prevailing market prices; or

at negotiated prices.

We may also, from time to time, authorize underwriters, dealers, or other persons, acting as our agents, to offer and sell the securities upon the terms and conditions as are set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. In connection with the sale of the securities, underwriters may be deemed to have received compensation from us in the form of underwriting discounts or commissions and may also receive commissions from purchasers of the securities for whom they may act as agent. Underwriters may sell the securities to or through dealers, and dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions, or commissions from the underwriters and/or commissions from the purchasers for whom they may act as agent.

We will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement any underwriting compensation we pay to underwriters or agents in connection with the offering of the securities, and any discounts, concessions, or commissions allowed by underwriters to participating dealers. Dealers and

agents participating in the distribution

Table of Contents

of the securities may be deemed to be underwriters, and any discounts and commissions received by them and any profit realized by them on resale of the securities may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions. We may enter into agreements with any underwriters, dealers, and agents which may entitle them to indemnification against and contribution toward certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act and to reimbursement for certain expenses. We will describe any indemnification agreements in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Unless we specify otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, any securities issued hereunder other than shares of our common stock will be a new issue with no established trading market. If we sell any shares of our common stock pursuant to a prospectus supplement, such shares will be listed on the New York Stock Exchange, subject to official notice of issuance. We may elect to list any of the securities issued hereunder on any exchange, but we are not obligated to do so. It is possible that one or more underwriters or agents may make a market in the securities issued hereunder, including our common stock, but will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. Therefore, we cannot assure you as to the liquidity of the trading market for the securities.

If indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may authorize underwriters, dealers, or other persons acting as our agents to solicit offers by certain institutions or other suitable persons to purchase the securities from us at the public offering price set forth in the prospectus supplement pursuant to delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and delivery on the date or dates stated in the prospectus supplement. We may make delayed delivery with various institutions, including commercial and savings banks, insurance companies, pension funds, investment companies, and educational and charitable institutions. Delayed delivery contracts will be subject to the condition that the purchase of the securities covered by the delayed delivery contracts will not at the time of delivery be prohibited under the laws of any jurisdiction in the United States to which the purchaser is subject. The underwriters and agents will not have any responsibility with respect to the validity or performance of these contracts.

To facilitate an offering of the securities, certain persons participating in the offering may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain, or otherwise affect the price of the securities. This may include over-allotments or short sales of the securities, which involves the sale by persons participating in the offering of more securities than we sold to them. In these circumstances, these persons would cover the over-allotments or short positions by making purchases in the open market or by exercising their over-allotment option. In addition, these persons may stabilize or maintain the price of the securities by bidding for or purchasing securities in the open market or by imposing penalty bids, whereby selling concessions allowed to dealers participating in the offering may be reclaimed if securities sold by them are repurchased in connection with stabilization transactions. The effect of these transactions may be to stabilize or maintain the market price of the securities at a level above that which might otherwise prevail in the open market. These transactions may be discontinued at any time.

Certain of the underwriters, dealers, or agents and their respective associates may be customers of, and/or engage in transactions with, and perform services for us in the ordinary course of business.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the securities will be passed upon for us by Latham & Watkins LLP, San Francisco, California.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements, financial statement schedule and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting (which is included in Management's Report on Internal

Table of Contents

Control over Financial Reporting) incorporated in this prospectus by reference to the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011 have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

Table of Contents

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN INFORMATION BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information we file with them which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents instead of having to repeat the information in this prospectus. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be part of this prospectus, and later information that we file with the SEC will automatically update and supersede this information. We incorporate by reference the following documents:

Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011, filed on February 8, 2012;

Our Current Report on Form 8-K filed on February 16, 2012 and our Current Report on Form 8-K/A filed on February 27, 2012;

The description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed on October 18, 2002; and

All documents we file pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act prior to the filing of a post-effective amendment that indicates that all securities offered hereby have been sold or that deregisters all securities covered hereby then remaining unsold, are deemed to be incorporated by reference in this registration statement and are a part hereof from the date of filing of such documents.

This prospectus is part of a registration statement on Form S-3 we have filed with the SEC under the Securities Act. This prospectus does not contain all of the information in the registration statement. We have omitted certain parts of the registration statement, as permitted by the rules and regulations of the SEC. You may inspect and copy the registration statement, including exhibits, at the SEC's Public Reference Room or on our website at <http://www.wasteconnections.com>. Information contained on our website is not and should not be deemed a part of this prospectus or any other report or filing filed with the SEC. Our statements in this prospectus about the contents of any contract or other document are not necessarily complete. You should refer to the copy of each contract or other document we have filed as an exhibit to the registration statement for complete information.

We will furnish without charge to you, upon written or oral request, a copy of any or all of the documents incorporated by reference, including exhibits to these documents. You should direct any requests for documents to:

Waste Connections, Inc.

Attn: Investor Relations

Waterway Plaza Two

10001 Woodloch Forest Drive, Suite 400

The Woodlands, TX 77380

(832) 442-2200

Table of Contents

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly, and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any document we file at the SEC's Public Reference Room located at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the Public Reference Room. Our filings with the SEC are also available to the public at the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. You may also obtain copies of the documents at prescribed rates by writing to the SEC's Public Reference Section at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Certain of our filings with the SEC are available on our website at <http://www.wasteconnections.com>. Information contained on our website is not and should not be deemed a part of this prospectus or any other report or filing filed with the SEC.

Table of Contents