

State of Vermont
Department of Environmental Conservation
Waste Management & Prevention Division
1 National Life Drive – Davis 1
Montpelier, VT 05620-3704

AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Universal Recycling Stakeholders Group Minutes – April 24, 2017

Group Members Present:

Craig Goodenough	Goodenough Rubbish Removal
Kim Crosby	Casella Waste Systems
Sarah Reeves	Chittenden Solid Waste District
Jeff Myers	Myers Container Service
Joe Sinagra	Myers Container Service
Kurt Ericksen	VT Compost Company
Susan Alexander	Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Mgmt. District
Elly Ventura	Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Mgmt. District
Bob Sandberg	Cookeville Compost
Carl Witke	Central VT Solid Waste Mgmt. District
John José	Central VT Solid Waste Mgmt. District
Norm Staunton	CompassWorks Consulting
Shaina Kasper	Toxics Action Center
Deane Wilson	Rutland County Solid Waste District

By phone

Pam Clapp	Solid Waste Alliance Communities
Tara Holt	Town of St. Johnsbury
Ham Gillett	Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste Mgmt. District
Natasha Duarte	Composting Association of Vermont

ANR Staff Present:

Cathy Jamieson	Solid Waste Program Manager
Mia Roethlein	Solid Waste Program
Josh Kelly	Solid Waste Program
John Fay	Solid Waste Program
Rebecca Webber	Solid Waste Program

Presenters:

Christine Beling	U.S. EPA Region 1
Tim Langlois	Casella Waste Systems
Kyle Lanzit	Grow Compost
Dan Goossen	Green Mtn. Compost

Minutes

- 1:05pm – Mia Roethlein started meeting with group introductions
- 1:10pm- Presentations on Contamination in Recycling

- Chris Beling of the U.S. EPA presented on contamination in single stream recycling and how it continues to be a rising issue due to new packaging types. A group of stakeholders formed in 2014 to work on regional education among state agencies around single stream contamination but was not very successful. Found that campaigns that are specific to the area served are more effective such as the “Dirty Dozen” campaign in Springfield Massachusetts. Campaign includes quarterly curbside inspections, written materials, “oops” tags, and direct outreach. See [MASS Energy and Environmental Affairs](#) and [Recycling Partnership](#) for details and resources.
- Tim Langlois of Casella discussed as a MRF operator the most common offending contaminants including rope, film plastic, food scraps, hazardous materials, heavy steel, snow and ice. Chittenden MRF has a low contamination rate of 6% compared with the national average of 14-18% Good to consider “recyclable” versus “acceptable.” Most any material could be recyclable but not all materials are acceptable at MRFs. Focus on educating on what is acceptable.

Discussion: Cathy Jamieson inquired about very low contamination rate in the Stanley NY MRF and Tim attributed to strong education and an active general manager. Some discussion around what is acceptable and what is not for plastics. i.e. plastic totes.

Mia Roethlein inquired why the 2 main single stream VT MRFS accept different materials. Rutland MRF and Chittenden MRF have different specifications for what each will accept due to differences in equipment and age built.

Sarah Reeves shared that in Rhode Island they found it too difficult to focus on all of the materials acceptable and narrowed the outreach campaign down to the [four major materials](#) that are acceptable- paper, metal, glass and plastic. Recyclables brought to drop off centers versus picked up curbside in Rhode Island were much cleaner. Many agreed this was also the case in VT.

Statewide education campaign- [Recycling Re-simplified](#)- focused on the 6 major recyclables that are banned from VT landfills. Kyle Lanzit inquired about possible bottle bill expansion and educating consumers on purchasing choices to improve recycling efforts. Opinion of some that manufacturers should be responsible for recycling/end of life for the difficult packaging materials that they choose to use for their products.

Public Space Recycling can have high contamination- discussion on limiting what materials to focus on and using containers with design for the recyclable material (small opening for bottles and cans, slot for newspapers, etc.). Some towns have pulled trash bins all together to avoid having to deal with recycling and some have trained town personnel to sort prior to consolidation in recycling dumpster.

- Presentations on Contamination in Organics

- Kyle Lanzit of Grow Compost spoke of hauling operations and operation at a certified organic compost farm and how they limit what they accept to only [food scraps](#) (only exception is coffee filters). This makes it easier to educate their customers on what can go in the compost tote. All generators (customers) are trained prior to joining the hauling program. In order to troubleshoot contaminated loads- driver takes picture, has conversation with generator, explains that any seriously contaminated totes will be left for generator to deal with. They screen all loads prior to tipping at farm. Currently, they are tipping at multiple farms so tipping fees are low as there is a demand for the food scraps as animal feed.
- Mia spoke for Bob Spencer of Windham Solid Waste District who could not make it to meeting how they have dealt with contamination. Windham district has done good amount of outreach on curbside program, uses “oops” stickers and connects the resident to the finished product of local compost. This has led to low contamination rates. Windham will accept paper and compostable products along with the food scraps. They do not sell their compost as “certified organic”. They also screen at their facility.
- Dan Goossen of [Green Mtn. Compost](#) explained that they have two streams of incoming material- one that is certified organic and one that is not. They do not haul themselves so have no direct contracts with generators. Chittenden Solid Waste District business outreach program trains generators and haulers assist with informing generators of what can and can’t go in. Certified Organic stream accepts food scraps only, but can be in [BPI](#) certified bags. These are the only bags that are acceptable for certified organic. Bags help limit mess with totes.

For non-organic stream, they take all compostable service ware. Some of this breaks down well and some of it is screened out.

Nervous about curbside residential organics as it could lead to more loads with increased contamination.

- 2:30pm- ANR Updates

Staff changes within solid waste program. Bryn Oakleaf left for a position in DEC Watershed. Celia Riechel left for a position in DEC Environmental Assistance Office.

A “We Compost” sticker designed by DEC staff will be made available to all who want to use and distribute.

The Solid Waste Program continuing to evaluate where the gaps are with organics services and will update the map accordingly.

Statewide ad campaign on keeping food scraps out of the landfill ongoing over the next few months on TV and social media.

- 3:00pm- Adjourn

Next Steps:

- Next quarterly meeting will be held this summer TBD and the topic will be Hauling of Organics.
-