



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services



Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner

April 7, 2015

The Honorable Robert Haefner, Chairman
Environment and Agriculture Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 306
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

RE: SB 251, An Act relative to regulations for commercial composters

Dear Chairman Haefner and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 251. This bill would specifically add "requirements and best practices for facilities that compost organics,..." to the list of rulemaking responsibilities and authorities under RSA 149-M:7. The Department of Environmental Services (DES) supports this bill.

Regulations on composting have been included in the Solid Waste Rules (the implementing administrative rules for RSA 149-M) since the early 1990s. The rules currently place more stringent permitting requirements upon the composting of meat and dairy products than they do for composting of vegetative matter alone. In recent years, those more stringent requirements have been identified as a potential barrier to establishment of viable food composting operations in New Hampshire.

DES believes that rule updates are necessary to reflect developments in this field, particularly as they relate to the composting of meat and dairy products. The Department had hoped to develop new composting rules last year when it was working on revising and readopting the entire set of rules in advance of their expiration date. However, the schedule for re adoption did not allow enough time to do the required research and to get input from stakeholders. Accordingly, the existing composting rules were re adopted, and the Department plans to initiate a new rulemaking effort relative to composting over the coming year. We welcome your support in advancing the preferred waste management methods in the hierarchy established in RSA 149-M:3.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Michael Guilfoy, Administrator of the Solid Waste Management Bureau (Michael.guilfoy@des.nh.gov, 271-6467) or Michael Wimsatt, Director of the Waste Management Division (Michael.wimsatt@des.nh.gov, 271-2905).

Sincerely,

Thomas S. Burack
Commissioner

cc: Senator Martha Fuller Clark, Sponsor, SB 251