



THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Solid Waste Working Group

Karen Ebel, Chair

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Minutes of March 31, 2023 Solid Waste Working Group (SWWG) Room 208C 29 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03302

Members Present: Chair Karen Ebel, Reagan Bissonnette, Adam Clark, Ben Hoy, Matt Hughes, Mark Laliberte, Greg Leahey, Jim Malley, Freda Paris, Sen. Howard Pearl, Steve Poggi, Eric Steinhauser, Michael Wimsatt

Members Not Present: Rep. Judy Aron, Megan Fontes, Colin Kelly, Benjamin Piche, Duncan Watson

Call to Order:

Chair Ebel called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM.

Approval of Minutes

Eric Steinhauser made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 24, 2023, meeting; Steve Poggi seconded the motion. No vote was taken.

Presentations on Food Waste Diversion Initiatives

WM CORE – Charlestown, MA

Chris Lucarelle, with Waste Management (WM), presented about their Centralized Organics Recycling (CORE) facility. The facility serves the Greater Boston area and accepts organics from commercial, industrial, and municipal sources, along with wastewater.

CORE is WM's preferred solution for food waste with high contamination such as packaged foods and post-consumer waste from venues/events. CORE can handle up to 25% contamination, as WM has machinery to remove packaging and other contaminants. By comparison, composting requires significantly lower contamination levels. The end product, known as engineered bioslurry, goes to a wastewater treatment facility to generate biogas for electricity production. Chris provided a [video](#) with more details about the facility.

The group discussed the limited volume of food waste generated in NH compared to more populated states. This might impact development of such a facility in NH which requires high intake volumes.

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University of New Hampshire (UNH) Composting Program – Durham, NH

Anton Bekkerman and Evan Ford presented about the university's composting program, which captures food waste generated by the people, programs, and places associated with UNH. Food waste generated on campus is combined with bedding from their equine program to create compost for use on UNH farm fields.

To reduce contamination, UNH food services staff separate food scraps in campus cafeterias, rather than students and faculty. The dining halls use a garbage pulper which chops up the food waste and separates it from the water so it can be composted. Roughly 120-160 tons of food waste is diverted for composting each year – approximately 1,500 pounds per day.

Challenges/considerations:

- Contamination of food waste,
- Efficiency of management approach,
- Pests and vectors,
- Phosphorus loading on soils from repeated applications over the years.

Elm City Compost Initiative – Keene, NH

Albert Diemand presented about Elm City Compost Initiative, a food scrap collection service in Keene, NH. Customers can use their curbside pickup and/or local drop-off locations. Roughly 5-7 tons of food waste is diverted per month.

Challenges/considerations:

- Access to a composting facility,
- Transportation costs and tipping fees,
- Educating participants about accepted materials (e.g., meat and dairy is allowed),
- Residents don't always understand the magnitude of solid waste management costs.

Elm City Compost has partnered with a farm to do their own composting rather than transporting food waste to a facility in Brattleboro, VT. They have received a permit from NHDES but still need some equipment before opening the facility. Albert shared ideas for how to support more food waste diversion in New Hampshire:

1. Establish incentives for businesses to divert food waste;
2. Increase public education and advertise benefits of food waste diversion; and
3. Provide financial support for purchasing equipment for composting operations.

Discussion of Future Meeting Topics

Ideas for meeting topics:

- Focus areas identified in SWWG Initial Report – the group discussed the need for further education, among group members, on a variety of topics including how to implement composting or other food waste diversion methods.

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- Funding barriers and opportunities
- Update from NHDES on rule changes and SWMP implementation plan

Potential presenters:

- John Fischer, MassDEP to continue discussion of food waste diversion and waste bans.

Legislative Updates

Chair Ebel discussed the following 2023 legislative bills:

- [HB 300](#) & [HB 462](#) – added into the proposed state budget by the Finance Committee
- [HB 56](#) – passed the House, heading to the Senate.
- [HB 253](#) – heading to the Senate.

Sen. Pearl shared that several Senate bills related to landfills have crossed over to the House.

Member Updates

Director Wimsatt shared that NHDES is updating rules chapter by chapter. A public input session was held in early March about Env-Sw 800 and Env-Sw 1400 which pertain to landfills and financial assurance. The deadline to submit written comments is April 7th.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:29 AM. A recording of this meeting is available at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/6935237092555385092>