

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Solid Waste Working Group

Karen Ebel, Chair

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Minutes of August 3, 2023
Solid Waste Working Group
Room 208C
29 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03302

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

Members Present Remotely¹: Duncan Watson, Josh Whipple

Members Not Present: Rep. Judy Aron, Megan Fontes, Colin Kelly, Sen. Howard Pearl

Call to Order:

Chair Ebel called the meeting to order at 9:28 AM

Approval of Minutes:

Steve Poggi made a motion to accept the June 23, 2023 minutes. Matt Hughes seconded. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

Review of Food Waste Work

To date, the SWWG and NHDES have worked to accomplish the following:

- Hosted guest speakers from different areas of the food system.
- [HB300](#) disposal ban passed.
 - Part of NHDES EPA SWIFR grant will assess food waste generators in the state.
- [HB462](#) appropriated \$1 million to SWMF and established a new staffing position to run the grant program. At least \$500,000 will support food waste management projects.
 - Details of SWMF grant program must be established through rulemaking.
 - Per the bill, the new staff person cannot be hired until after January 1, 2024.
- NRRR compiled a [list of food composting and diversion services](#) available in and around New Hampshire.

As needed, SWWG will continue providing feedback to NHDES on its food waste diversion work, outreach and education efforts, and provide feedback on food waste diversion efforts as members are engaged in or become aware of them.

¹ Remote attendance necessary due to logistical considerations.

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Discussion of Future Work & Potential Legislative Recommendations

Members discussed future work to focus on:

- Support NHDES, as needed, with outreach and review website updates.
- Identify ways to support towns and businesses with waste management.
- Secure sustainable funding.
- Identify ways for NHDES to efficiently solicit, collect, track, and synthesize efforts from external partners that advance the actions in the 2022 SWMP.
- Propose legislation to update the statute about disposal of certain devices ([RSA 149-M:27](#)) and batteries ([RSA 149-M:28](#)). Expand/clarify language based on current materials handled by solid waste facilities. Chair Ebel will file a LSR that proposes to ban disposal of lithium batteries due to increased use and management risks (fires) and to update language re: the e-waste ban.
- Other legislative initiatives to be discussed, including possible update/clarification of municipal responsibilities in RSA 149-M:23-24.

Suggestions for NHDES to leverage EPA SWIFR grant:

- Create a guide or use contractor to help towns determine a food waste program design that is practical for their setup and resources.
- Identify food waste resources and services available to municipalities, as well as the gaps in service areas.
- Isolate “batteries” as its own category in the waste characterization study.

Chair Ebel proposed the group issue annual interim reports to track their efforts each November. Unlike the first interim report requirement, annual reports are not required by statute, but there was consensus among SWWG members that this approach will also help when writing the final report in 2026. It was agreed that an annual interim report will be prepared for November issuance.

Legislative & NHDES Updates

Chair Ebel shared legislative updates:

- [SB61](#) failed. NHDES is reviewing administrative rules related to landfills.
- [HB 253](#) and [SB 159](#) study committees are starting soon. Their reports are due November 1, 2023. Chair Ebel will suggest the EPR study committee look at batteries.
- [HB465](#) was retained by Commerce committee and will be looked at again this Fall.

Mike Wimsatt provided an update on NHDES work:

- Finalizing RFP to procure contractor(s) for EPA SWIFR grant. RFP will be posted in Fall 2023.
- Website updates with resident recycling and disposal info will be published in Fall 2023.
- Factsheets about [PFAS in consumer products](#) are posted on NEWMOA website.
- Upcoming SWOT workshop with NHDAS about how municipalities can use state waste contracts and White Farm.

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- Staff met with NH Department of Health and Human Services to discuss how food safety rules (He-P 2300) impact food donations and school share tables.

Member Updates

NRRA starts new FY23-24 USDA grant year on October 1st – part of which, will focus on municipal food waste diversion.

Ben Piche shared that Coca Cola is looking at EPR models for reclaiming their plastic bottles. EPR may have a higher recovery rate, compared to a bottle bill, because it takes responsibility off consumers to deposit their containers.

Future 2023 Meeting Dates

- September 22nd – Discuss SWMP tracking strategies. Prior to meeting, NHDES will share a list of SWMP actions that can be led by external partners.
- October 27th – Review 2023 Biennial Report.
- November meeting rescheduled to December 1st

Chair Ebel will work with Duncan Watson to schedule a guest speaker in January/February 2024 to talk about advanced sorting facilities for diverting recyclables.

Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM

A recording of this meeting is available at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/2036776454136242780>