

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Solid Waste Working Group

Karen Ebel, Chair

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Minutes of December 1, 2023
Solid Waste Working Group (SWWG)
Room 208C
29 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03302

Members Present: Chair Karen Ebel, Reagan Bissonnette, Greg Leahey, Jim Malley, Freda Paris, Ben Piche, Eric Steinhauser, Michael Wimsatt, Rep. Judy Aron, Sen. Howard Pearl

Members Present Remotely¹: Steve Poggi, Duncan Watson, Josh Whipple

Members Not Present: Adam Clark, Erica Douglas, Megan Fontes, Matt Hughes, Colin Kelly, Mark Laliberte

Call to Order

Chair Ebel called the meeting to order at 9:31 AM.

Approval of Minutes

Freda Paris made a motion to accept the September 22, 2023, minutes. Eric Steinhauser seconded. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote. Mike Wimsatt abstained from the vote as he was not at the last meeting.

NHDES Updates

a. 2021-2022 Solid Waste Biennial Report

Mike Nork, NHDES, gave an overview of the 2021-2022 Biennial Report which will be published mid-December. It covers waste disposal trends, disposal capacity, legislation, the creation/early implementation of the 2022 Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP), etc. The permitting capacity chart was converted into a data table because the chart has been misinterpreted in the past. Mike Wimsatt explained that NHDES does not predict future capacity. The data is based on what is currently permitted. The group shared ideas for how NHDES can present and compare data in future biennial reports.

b. Overview of the [Managing My Waste webpage](#)

Paige Wilson, NHDES, walked through the new NHDES webpage that residents can use to find out how to reuse, recycle, and dispose of their wastes. The webpage touches on multiple activities in the SWMP. It includes:

- Interactive FAQs
- Links to relevant resources

¹ Remote attendance necessary due to logistical considerations.

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- A-Z list and blogs for different types of waste

A notice was sent out to solid waste operators, the Municipal EcoLink newsletter, and NHDES social media accounts. SWWG members suggested writing a press release, keeping the resource accessible on the NHDES homepage, and sending a notice to legislators and the [Waste Management Council](#).

c. Implementation of the SWMP

Mike Wimsatt gave an update on NHDES work related to the 2022 SWMP:

- Procuring a contractor to conduct state waste characterization study:
 - RFP period closed on Oct 10th – received 3 proposals. Currently in contract negotiations with selected contractor. Hoping to get a contract to G&C in January.
 - We intend to hire a temporary position for the 3 years SWIFR grant period to manage the grant projects. Waiting for internal processes to occur before we can post the position.
- The new “Managing My Waste” webpage is live and a resource for NH residents.
- Emailed external partners to ask for project updates that contribute to the goals/actions in the 2022 SWMP.

NEW ACTIVITIES:

- (Annual) Providing appropriate input on LSRs/bills for the 2024 legislative session. The SWMB is tracking 20 LSRs directly related to solid waste. Fiscal notes have been provided for 10 LSRs, so far.
- (Annual) Writing letters of support for municipalities and non-profits seeking funding during the FY24 grant year.
- Focusing on implementing the food waste disposal ban and grant program. A new job position will be created after 1/1/2024 (funded by HB2 allocation to the Solid Waste Management Fund) and then establish administrative rules.

Discuss draft SWWG 2023 Interim Report

Annual reports are not a requirement of the group but help with tracking progress. Chair Ebel gave an overview of the report highlighting the work the group has worked on during 2023.

- The group held 7 meetings with presentations by experts.
- Provided recommendations regarding municipal solid waste plans.
- Helped pass HB 300 (food waste ban) and funding allocation (HB462) for related grants.
- Supported HB465, to ban products with intentionally added PFAS.
- Provided guidance to NHDES on implementing the 2022 SWMP.

Rep. Aron made a motion to accept the report, pending the correction of the EPA SWIFR grant amount. Eric Steinhauser seconded. All were in favor.

The [final SWWG Interim 2023 Report](#), with a complete list of accomplishments, can be found on the NHDES SWWG webpage.

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Legislative Updates/2024 LSRs

Chair Ebel made comments on:

- LSR #2494 (prohibiting the disposal of lithium-ion batteries) – Fire chiefs and safety departments have expressed mutual concerns about batteries being a big safety issue.
- LSR #2805 (banning the sale of certain products with intentionally added PFAS) – The bill would require hiring a new employee to oversee the ban. The bill will likely go to the Commerce and Financial committees.

Rep. Aron provided updates about the subcommittee following the NHDES rulemaking:

- Next subcommittee meeting is December 5th at 1:00pm (LOB Room 303)
- All 20 chapters of the [solid waste \(Env-Sw\) rules](#) expire July 1, 2024.
- Mike Wimsatt explained the process NHDES goes through when making changes to rules and how they're approved. The entire process takes about 6 months/chapter. Public engagement is key.
- Draft Env-Sw 300 (permitting procedures) and Env-Sw 800 (landfill siting) rules will be presented to the Waste Management Council at their January meeting.

Senator Pearl is sponsoring another bill to fix language in RSA 149-M and RSA 147-A related to how NHDES conducts background checks. Last year's bill for this topic had some mix-ups.

Reagan Bissonnette mentioned that the Northeast Resource Recovery Association (NRRRA) has a webpage to track [NH Solid Waste Legislation Updates for the 2024 Session](#).

Member updates

NRRRA updates:

- Received EPA SWIFR Education & Outreach grant (3-year term) to help improve recycling rates in northern NH. Pre-/post-surveys will be used measure impact.
- Created free, [customizable recycling pamphlets](#) for town transfer stations.
- Published a [30-minute, Recycling 101 video](#) to answer FAQs and help residents understand where their recyclables go.
- [Completed C&D reuse pilot at Lancaster Transfer Station](#).
- Partnering with St. Anslem Center to create a statewide survey to gauge the recycling confidence levels among residents.
- [NRRRA Annual Recycling Conference \(June 3-4, 2024\)](#).

Future meeting dates

Due to NHDES building repairs, the group needs to have an alternative location for the next few meetings. Options: NHDES Pease location, UNH, NRRRA's office, facility tours.

- No January 2024 meeting.
- Next meeting: February 23, 2024 at 9:30-11:30am – *location TBD*
 - Discussion around next steps for the group – research tipping fee issues, follow up on EPR study committee report,
 - Chair Ebel will coordinate with members to find an alternative meeting location.

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- Ideas for future presenters/meetings:
 - Amy Farnum – White Farm/State Surplus Program.
 - Robert Watson – advanced sorting facilities for recyclables.
 - Site visit to WM Turnkey Landfill, material recovery facility (MRF), Merrimack wastewater treatment facility.

Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 11:37 AM

A recording of this meeting is available at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/1806965332446670763>