

How Zero Waste is Shaping Policy in VT

Countdown to Zero Waste

If it can't be reduced, reused, repaired, rebuilt, refurbished, refinished, resold, recycled or composted, then it should be restricted, redesigned or removed from production.

- Mark Gagliardi



22 Cities & Towns

Working Towards A Zero Waste Region

A 10-Year Solid Waste Implementation Plan

Adopted April 7, 2003

Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District

Why A Zero Waste Goal?

The staff and board recognize that:

- Waste generation continues to increase,
- Recycling rates are stalled,
- Participation is declining,
- Costs keep rising, and
- Burying & burning resources is not a smart idea.



Central Vermont's Approach

Policy Decisions:

- Adopt a Precautionary Principle
- Commit to 5-year program cycles
- Identify new indicators to chart progress
- Test, evaluate, adapt, implement
- Prioritize new program development on:
 - Potential for high diversion
 - Multi-sector involvement
 - Emphasis on preservation of resources/sustainability
 - Rural economic development potential



Planning Forward 10 Years

What Policies & Initiatives Get Us To Zero?

Programmatic Initiatives:

- Develop organics programming for residential, commercial, school sectors
- Expand existing drop-off infrastructure
- Expand mandatory recycling (and PAYT)
- Define a Zero Waste HHW program



The Affects of Targeting Zero

- Public-private partnerships
 - Farms - composting
 - Environmental groups supporting, promoting Zero Waste – affecting state policy, public process
 - Citizen Advocates – landfill plans put on hold
- Inter-municipal alliances
 - First inter-district programming – organics
- Creating new organizations
 - Non-profit off-shoot
 - Developing new capacity in existing organizations



Pure Policy Initiatives

- Participant and organics chairperson in statewide, waste prevention stakeholder process
- Appointee to legislative committee to review solid waste
- Invited by legislators to testify on proposed environmental legislation
- Participant in Compost Association of Vermont *Legal Compost* stakeholder process
- News articles, Op-Ed pieces, invitations to speak

Local Governments

- Build from a place of strength – governing
- Spend Political Capital in lieu of \$
- Establish a new environment in which zero waste can flourish
 - Adopt a zero waste policy and/or plan – **commit!**
 - Pass Pay-As-You-Throw - **incentivize**
 - Legislate Mandatory Recycling – **set the bar**
 - Enact Hauler licensing – **capture the data**

Comfortable? Embrace Zero!

- Create incentives in contracts, zoning and permitting
- Ban materials from landfill, incineration, use or sale
- Encourage product stewardship
- Create new rules for the new world you wish to live in

Always Advocate

If you are not for zero,
how much waste are you for?

Zero Waste- Because None is Better!

Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District provides leadership, education, and services for residents and businesses in reducing and managing their solid waste in order to protect public health and the environment to the greatest extent feasible.

Donna Barlow Casey, Executive Director
director@cvswwmd.org

137 Barre St.
Montpelier, VT 05602
229-9383 phone
229-1318 fax
www.cvswwmd.org

