

Zero Waste in Action

Real communities. Real solutions.

Zero Waste Resolution: Vermont, USA

Summary

In 2003 the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District adopted a Zero Waste plan that shifted the emphasis away from waste management and toward eliminating waste and managing resources.

Population

65,000

Year enacted

2003

Overview

In adopting its 10-year plan, “Working Toward a Zero Waste Region,” in 2003, the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District (CVSWMD) created the first Zero Waste plan in New England. The plan shifted the emphasis away from waste management and toward eliminating waste and managing resources through a Zero Waste philosophy.

Focus on Organics

The top priority in the plan is to increase the recovery of organic materials because organics were 40% of the district’s waste. Establishing organics collection programs and providing technical assistance to businesses and large commercial generators are key initiatives.

Other priorities for recovering organic materials include developing composting programs for all the schools in the region and creating a residential composting pilot program using innovative backyard composting bins.

Other Zero Waste Actions

Other focal points of the Zero Waste plan are increasing recycling rates for common materials such as cardboard and plastic bottles, and expanding the existing drop-off structure to include more materials (textiles, electronics, and universal waste such as batteries).



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The plan also recommends establishing opportunities to divert construction materials, developing stricter enforcement of recycling policies, and expanding mandatory recycling and pay-as-you-throw pricing (PAYT).

Finally, a proposed reuse grant program could help recover resources for new uses through projects and partnerships.

With the Zero Waste plan, the district expects to reach a 50-70% diversion rate by 2015.

Background

CVSWMD has twice rejected siting a landfill in the community and continues to pursue aggressive waste reduction as a priority instead. Programs already in place include mandatory recycling of select materials and PAYT pricing. An Additional Recyclables Collection Center (AARC) collects and recovers a diverse array of hard-to-recycle materials.

Haulers must provide recycling services for specified materials as part of their permit license. The fee for recycling can only be charged at 50% of the trash fee.

Downloads

[“Working Towards a Zero Waste Region” Presentation](#)

More information

Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District Zero Waste

VT Digger Article: [“Zero Waste saves money and prolongs landfill life”](#)



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