

Northwest Vermont Solid Waste Management District Supervisor's Report

The past 12 months saw the District grow to 16 member communities, with an increase in population of more than 15 percent. The Town and Village of Swanton became a member community as of July 1st, and the District has been working hard to provide services to all of the District's residents and businesses, while also dealing with the economic realities we all face today.

In 2009, the Northwest Vermont Solid Waste Management District continued to provide waste management services to Northwest District communities, including collection of household hazardous waste, electronics and special collections for difficult to dispose of items such as tires and appliances. The District also operates four drop off sites in District communities and the North Hero Transfer Station.

Overall in 2009, District communities sent 25,599 tons of trash to landfills, approximately 1,259 pounds per person. After recycling, reuse and composting, the average District resident generated 3.45 pounds of waste per day.

The District processed 371.21 tons of recyclables through their facility in Georgia in 2009. This amount included 161.52 tons of mixed paper and cardboard that was baled and shipped out to market, as well as 209.69 tons of plastic/tin/glass that was consolidated and transported to the Chittenden District's Material Recovery Facility for processing.

Below is a brief outline of some of the District's services and programs. While the list is not all-inclusive, it does provide a good overview of the District's work on behalf of Northwest residents. Please take a moment to review this report. Questions, comments and suggestions may be directed to District staff at (802) 524-5986.

Household Hazardous Waste Collections

The District sponsored 14 collections of household hazardous waste in 2009 in 12 District towns, with participants from throughout the District. More than 3,535 gallons of hazardous chemicals were collected for safe disposal, along with propane tanks, lead acid batteries, oil based paint and fluorescent bulbs.

Special Waste Collections

Sixteen collections for special waste--bulky, hard-to-dispose of items such as furniture, tires and appliances-- were held throughout the District. 55.57 tons of bulky items were collected and disposed of, along with 105 refrigerators, freezers and air conditioners. The District also collected over 1,787 tires. Residents of all district towns participated.

Computer and Household Electronics Recycling

In order to make it easier for residents to dispose of computers, household electronics, and fluorescent bulbs, the District continued accepting these items at our office on an ongoing basis. During 2009, the District helped residents recycle:

58,291 pounds of monitors, televisions, computers and other household electronics

15,288 feet of fluorescent lights
other mercury containing devices

By expanding this service the District has provided residents with a legal and affordable method for disposing of their outdated electronics.

Educational Outreach

District staff conducted educational workshops and presentations aimed primarily at food waste composting at one high school. This program has great potential for expansion to other institutions and businesses. We also worked with schools within the District to improve their waste management programs.

In addition, the District produces informational materials for residents including brochures, a newsletter, a website and articles for area publications. District staff are also available to give interviews to public information programs on local radio and television stations.

Illegal Burning and Dumping

The District's illegal burning and dumping program has been considered a model throughout the state. Our enforcement strategy has relied heavily on education, but the District does fine repeat offenders. Because of the effectiveness of the District's approach, there appeared to have been a decline in illegal burning within the District as the year began. However, district staff still responded to a number of reports of illegal dumping and burning in 2009.

All of the activities and services outlined above were provided by a full-time staff of just 4 people, with 8 part-time workers at the drop-off sites. The assistance of workers from member communities, and volunteers at collection events has been invaluable and greatly appreciated.

As the Town of Richford representative on the District Board of Supervisors, I am available to discuss District activities with town residents. I can be reached through the District office at (802)524-5986.

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