

WSWMD ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBER TOWNS

July 1, 2014 was the start date for implementation of Act 148, Vermont's Universal Recycling Law, and WSWMD staff and town supervisors have spent considerable time assisting member towns in gearing up for the law. Most town transfer stations were already offering recycling along with trash collection so they were in compliance with the first phase of the law. However, starting July 1, 2015, Variable Rate Pricing (VRP), or Pay-As-You-Throw, becomes mandatory, and the District will pass an ordinance on behalf of member towns that requires trash haulers to register with WSWMD and provide a copy of their VRP plan. For information on Act 148 please visit the WSWMD's website: www.windhamsolidwaste.org.

During the past year, WSWMD continued to operate our 20-year old dual stream material recycling facility (MRF) in Brattleboro, losing significant amounts of recyclable materials to single stream programs being offered by some haulers. The District has over 100 roll-off containers that are utilized at town transfer stations and 24-7 recycling drop-off centers, and District trucks haul the boxes to the MRF. The District decided to continue providing the 24-7 recycling boxes until at least December 2015 to determine the impact of Act 148 on quantities of recyclables dropped off, and the extent of illegal dumping of trash in the boxes.

Due to a stagnant world economy, both the volume and value of the recyclable materials collected has decreased over the past two years, necessitating a 9 percent increase in the assessments to the member towns for FY 2015. Fortunately, the increase in the FY 2016 budget was contained to just 5.6 percent despite additional educational program requirements of Act 148.

The District conducted 8 Household Hazard Waste (HHW) collections this year in Brattleboro, Guilford, Halifax, Newfane, Wardsboro, Westminster, Wilmington, and Winhall. A total of 595 households participated in the collections. WSWMD has increased household participation rates in the HHW collection every year since 2010 through use of direct mailing notices to residents. Act 148 eventually requires that four HHW collections per year be offered in each town.

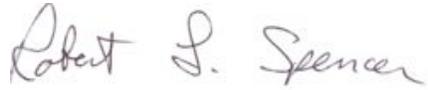
In May 2014, WSWMD joined the Vermont Paintcare Program, which provides free recycling of leftover paints, primers, coatings, sealers, stains, shellacs, waterproofing and rust preventatives. We now offer year-round collection at our Brattleboro convenience center so that residents no longer have to wait for a hazardous waste collection event to recycle leftover paint products.

The District continues to grow its composting facility, which accepts food scraps and non-recyclable paper from the Town of Brattleboro's residential curbside collection program, the only such program in Vermont. By 2020, curbside residential food scrap collection will be mandatory. Our composting facility is also processing food scraps from supermarkets, and other large generators. With a grant from Vermont ANR, composting programs are being established at four regional middle and high schools in the District. In addition, the District began selling its compost to residents in the fall.

A project was started in 2014 to install solar panels on the 25-acre closed landfill owned by WSWMD. This will directly benefit member towns by providing lower cost electricity to towns and school districts.

The District offers tours of our facilities to schools and interested residents. We also provide educational materials about reuse, recycling, composting, and we sell discounted backyard composters at the District office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert L. Spencer".

Robert L. Spencer
Executive Director