

Comprehensive Waste Reduction Program now Law in Vermont

In 2012, the VT Legislature passed **Act. 148** which is a comprehensive waste reduction plan including mandatory recycling and ban on yard waste and food waste from landfills phased in over several years.

Highlights of the law include:

- ❑ Mandatory Recycling Statewide by July 1, 2015.
- ❑ Leaf & Yard Waste Ban from Landfills effective July 1, 2015
- ❑ Organics (food waste) Ban from Landfills in a phased in manner based on the tonnage produced starting in 2014 with a ban from each individual household by 2020.

The law also requires that all trash cans set out in public spaces be accompanied by a recycling container. Too often, in public settings, there is no option for recycling. This bill would close that gap.

It would also require that all communities adopt a "Pay-As-You-Throw" system, where the more trash you generate, the more you pay. This mechanism has been credited with dramatic increases in recycling in communities where it has been implemented.

The State solid waste management plan established a 50 percent diversion rate for the state, measuring how much regular household and business material we, as a state, diverted from the landfill through recycling and composting. After 25 years, that rate hasn't exceeded 36 percent (as of 2009). This law was created with the intention to move recycling efforts in Vermont forward. In part, this is because of the impending issue of limited landfill space in the state. Vermont has only two major landfills: One in Moretown that as of this writing might be closed in the near future and the second landfill is in Coventry run by Casella Waste Management.

Collection Facilities such as **Town Transfer Stations** must offer services for **managing mandated recyclables by July 1, 2014, leaf and yard residuals by July 1, 2015 and food residuals by July 1, 2017.**

Solid Waste Haulers who pick up curbside must also provide these services as listed above with the same time frame.

A phased-in Food Waste Collection process is set up targeting larger organics generators to manage food organics according to organics **hierarchy, if a certified facility is within 20 miles.** The time frame for that is as follows:

- July 1, 2014 for generators of more than 104 tons/year of food waste
- July 1, 2015 for generators of more than 52 tons/year of food waste
- July 1, 2016 for generators of more than 26 tons/year of food waste
- July 1, 2017 for generators of more than 18 tons/year of food waste
- By 2020, all food waste, including that from households, must be diverted with no provision for distance.

FOR MORE INFORMATION YOU CAN CHECK VT ANR's website at:

www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/wastediv/solid/Act.148.htm