



# Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission

3 October 2011

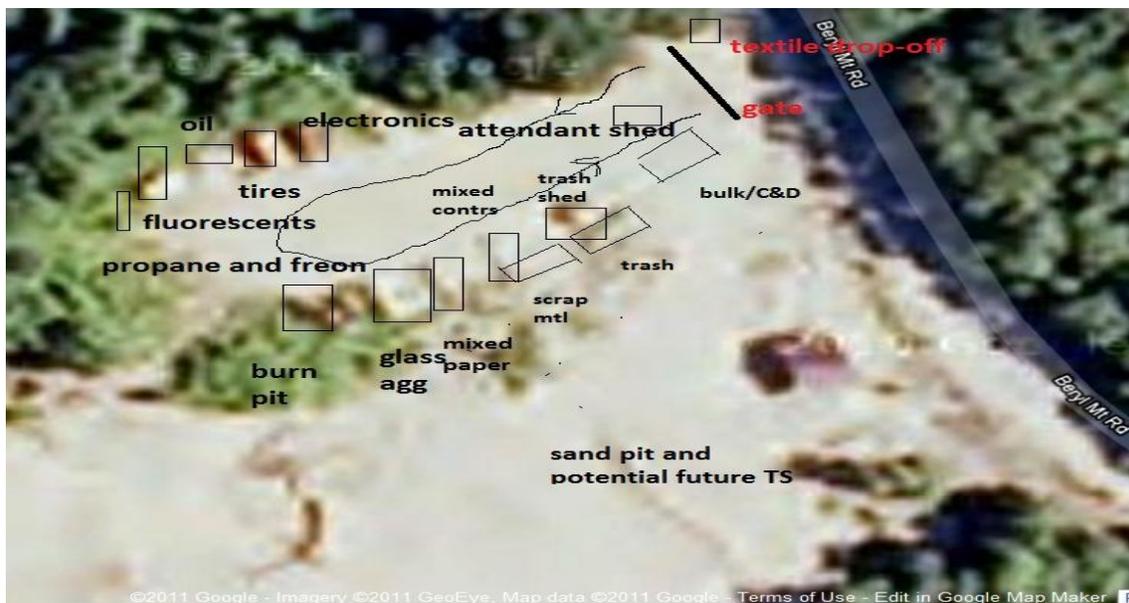
Mr. Jim Jennison  
Acworth Transfer and Recycling Facility  
PO Box 37  
Acworth, NH 03601

Via Email: [townoff@sover.net](mailto:townoff@sover.net)

Dear Mr. Jennison: Jim

It was a sincere pleasure to meet with you, former selectman John Tuttle and Highway Supervisor David LeCasse at the Acworth Transfer and Recycling Facility. I thoroughly enjoyed the tour and discussions we had about current operations at the facility and some changes you would like to incorporate in the future

Even though Acworth is a small community, your facility offers many opportunities to reduce waste. The facility, as seen below in the overview photo, is on approximately two acres and is laid out to encourage recycling and waste reduction. The town has made creative use of precast concrete blocks and used storage trailers to provide inexpensive access to many waste reduction options.



## The Current Waste Reduction Program

The estimated 2009 population of Acworth is 958 and 95% of the town uses the facility. In 2010, the budget for solid waste operations was \$69,730. The operating budget is appropriated through property taxes. Revenue from fees and recycling is unknown, but is estimated to have been around \$9,000. This revenue goes into the

general fund. In 2010, the town disposed of 320 tons of MSW and C&D and recycled or reused 107 tons primarily through the Northeast Resource Recovery Association (NRRRA). Gobin Disposal took the MSW to Claremont, NH for incineration and the C&D to their Newport facility for separation and processing.

### Waste Reduction Descriptions

Access to and from the facility is through a gate. The gate is kept open during the normal hours of operation and locked when the facility is not open to the public.



Signage provides the hours of operations and information for emergency contact. When the gates are open, additional signs notify users that there are disposal fees for some items. A planet aid box is outside the gate allowing opportunity for clothing drop-off at any time.



Signage on the attendant's shed directs traffic to the right towards the multiple waste reduction opportunities.



Residents are given the choice to recycle electronics, waste oil (used to heat the highway garage), lead acid batteries, tires, Freon containing appliances, fluorescent bulbs, propane tanks, glass aggregate (taken to the neighboring Town of Alstead

for local use), mixed paper, mixed containers (including #1-7 plastics) and scrap metal. Fees are collected for electronics, tires, Freon containing appliances, and propane tanks. Electronics, tires and fluorescent bulbs are stored in marked stored trailers. Waste oil is collected in a special containment vessel with roof. Lead acid batteries are stored on an impermeable surface under cover and propane tanks are kept on pallets.



Clean, unpainted wood may be left at no charge for burning in caged burn pit. Brush is inspected before unloading and burned regularly.



Glass aggregate (bottles, window glass and ceramics) is collected in a bunker constructed from concrete blocks. This is crushed regularly by the Highway Department. The Highway Department takes this to Alstead where it is left (at no charge) to be used in special projects by the town.

Clean cardboard (OCC), mixed paper, boxboard, and junk mail are collected together in a roll-off. A second roll-off is placed parallel to the mixed paper for the collection of mixed containers (plastic #1-7, aluminum cans, and tin cans). The roll-offs are placed behind block walls. This allows for vehicles to back up next to the containers. The materials are marketed through the NRRRA. The town pays \$17.50/ton for mixed container processing and

currently is receiving \$115/ton for mixed paper. The roll-offs are hauled whenever filled by the NRRRA's vendor. The Highway Department compacts the containers with a backhoe to allow for tandem hauling which reduces the hauling fees.



Scrap metal is collected in a roll-off kept behind a wall. The scrap metal is taken to Claremont where the current market pays \$235/ton.

### **Disposal**

The Town of Acworth compacts its non-recyclable wastes. They rent the compactor and container from Gobin Disposal Services for \$300/month. They pay an additional \$81/ton to the incinerator for disposal. The container is hauled every 6-8 working days (they are open 3 days/week) for a contracted fee of \$165/haul. The disposal chute is uncovered. Residents are to check with the attendant before disposing of their rubbish. There is no fee for disposal of rubbish.



C&D and bulky waste are both collected in the same roll-off container. Residents are assessed a fee for disposal of these items. They are hauled by Gobin Disposal Services to their facility in Newport, NH where it is separated for reuse, demolition and disposal. The town is charged a fee of \$81/ton plus a haul fee of \$165.



Residents exit the facility through the same gate through which they entered.

### **Changes Desired by the Town**

In my discussion with the staff, they suggested the following changes they would like to see:

- A fee based disposal system. Acworth is a small isolated rural town. Their waste budget places a tax burden of around \$73 per person on the residents of the community. A disposal fee would help reduce the waste taken for disposal, increase waste reduction efforts and reduce the tax burden.
- Establish an Enterprise Fund. NH DES allows for the town to establish a special fund dedicated to the operation of a facility. The facility must be self-supporting removing it entirely from the tax base. This could be difficult in a community as small as Acworth. Fees for disposal would need to cover most of the operating and equipment costs making them almost prohibitive.
- Make use of the empty sand pit adjacent to the existing location. This could be as simple as moving the glass, mixed paper, mixed containers and scrap metal behind simple saw tooth design walls constructed from preformed concrete blocks to the construction of an entirely new facility on the site. The sand pit may have a recharge zone and aquifer under it limiting the facility expansion. However, the town

Highway Department has indicated they would be willing to build a saw tooth design for the containers. This design change would have minimal impact on any recharge zone or aquifer under the sand pit.

- Place a roof over the rubbish hopper. This would reduce the weight of any rubbish taken for disposal.
- More waste reduction education. This is both inexpensive and effective.

### **Recommendations**

As part of a grant the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Committee received from USDA, a review of community solid waste programs was included. Acworth requested an examination of their program/facility and recommendations to improve its efficiency, layout and/or operations.

Acworth is doing a great job at reducing their wastes. These efforts should be commended. The revenue generated from the waste reduction efforts described help defray the costs to taxpayers. However, any funds needed for operating costs and capital expenditures must be approved by the residents at their annual budget meetings. In these difficult financial times, any steps to save residents money will make the process easier. The people present at the interview made some excellent suggestions, most of which this report supports.

The following are suggestions which may help reduce the cost to residents, and increase waste reduction in Acworth:

- Place a roof or cover over the rubbish disposal hopper. Even if no other recommendation from this review is heeded, this will pay for itself very quickly by reducing the weight of rubbish taken for disposal. All final disposal facilities base their tipping fees upon the weight of materials brought to them. A roof or cover over the hopper will keep both rain and snow out of the compactor thus reducing the weight.
- Burning of clean wood and yard waste generates pollution and may disturb neighbors nearby. The State of NH is considering a ban on this practice. A better use of this material is to shred it. Tub grinders can be hired and the materials can be used and/or sold as mulch. The cost to grind is approximately \$400 to \$600/hour plus transportation (the transportation costs can vary depending upon vendor and the point of origin). See attachment A for a list of potential vendors.
- Your signage works well. However, you should update your signs regularly and add new ones as needed. If your signs get bent or illegible, you should replace them. NH the Beautiful has a grant program available for free signs. For more information, please contact the NRRRA for information.
- It would benefit both the facility and town to have a comprehensive capital improvement plan (CIP) for the facility. The CIP helps anticipate future funding by prorating the cost of equipment over its projected life. The monies annually allocated for the Capital Equipment fund are approved annually as part of the town budget. This strategy eliminates the sticker shock when a piece of equipment needs replacement.
- Construct a reuse shed. The Planet Aid box encourages clothing reuse, but a reuse shed could be used for the exchange of used books and reusable household items.
- Increased residential education. Your current fliers need updating. Some of the pricing and operating hours are outdated. This step is essential if you adopt a fee based disposal system. Both the NRRRA and the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission may be able to assist.

- Acworth is recycling around 25% of their waste stream according to the 2010 annual report filed with the Waste Management Division of NHDES. This figure is very commendable. However, a Pay-as-You-Throw Program (PAYT) would benefit the community by:
  - Encouraging waste reduction and discouraging trash disposal.
  - PAYT encourages resident to utilize the free waste reduction options rather than paying for trash disposal. There are a variety of programs which can be adapted by the town. Most programs charge a per bag fee for individuals depositing their waste.
  - PAYT equalizes the cost of disposal and eliminates inequities found in tax based systems. In a tax based program, the cost of the solid waste program is part of the entire tax load and charged to all based on property values, not the volume of waste disposed. This results in households generating little trash subsidizing those who generate more.
  - Most towns have switched to a PAYT system without an increase in illegal disposal or major complaints from the populace. A concerted effort to educate the residents is needed to make any switch successful. A few years ago, the Town of Walpole introduced a PAYT program which has worked successfully to reduce their disposal costs and increase waste diversion. The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission or the Northeast Resource Recovery can provide guidance and recommendations on the implementation and operation of a PAYT Program.

Once again I would like to thank you for the time you and the others took to show me your program, share your ideas and the efforts you make to reduce waste disposal. As mentioned earlier, I think the facility and your waste reduction efforts are commendable. Please contact me with any questions you may have about the suggestions made.

Sincerely,



Patrick Pinkson-Burke  
Solid Waste Planner  
Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission



*"Partnering to make recycling strong through economic and environmentally sound solutions"*

Northeast Resource Recovery Association, 2101 Dover Road, Epsom, NH 03234  
Telephone: (603) 736-4401 Fax: (603) 736-4402  
E-mail: [info@nrna.net](mailto:info@nrna.net) Web Site: [www.nrra.net](http://www.nrra.net)

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### Brush/Stump Processors

1. Aggregate Recycling Corporation (ARC)  
Eliot, ME 03903  
Contact: Jay Doherty  
Phone: 1-207-439-5584  
[www.aggregaterecycling.com](http://www.aggregaterecycling.com)  
Materials ARC processes include: stumps, pallets, construction/demolition wood waste, asphalt shingles and concrete, as well as premium bark mulch.
2. Commercial Recycling Systems  
Scarborough, ME 04074  
Contact: Tom Kane  
Phone: 1-207-883-3325  
[www.cprcs.com](http://www.cprcs.com)  
CPRC Systems provides a wide range of soil remediation and construction/demolition debris recycling services.
3. M-R Wood Recycling  
Derry, NH 03038  
Contact: Dan Roy  
Phone: 1-603-425-0300  
[www.m-rwoodrecycling.com](http://www.m-rwoodrecycling.com)  
M-R grinds material on-site or removes material from site.
4. Pro Bark, Inc.  
Plaistow, NH 03865  
Contact: Jeff Brown  
Phone: 1-603-382-6860  
[www.probark.com](http://www.probark.com)  
Services include wholesale and retail mulch sales, wood and greenwaste recycling, bark blowing, and mulch application

Please tell these companies that you received their name from NRRA.