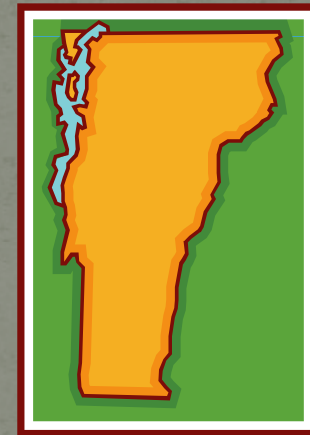


# Ideas for Practicing WasteLESSness

Progress  
in Central  
Vermont



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**The Challenge of Moving Towards a Goal of Zero**  
Presented by  
Donna Barlow Casey



April 7,  
2003

- Adopt a Zero Waste Plan
- Agree to take a Precautionary Approach to all waste-based decisions
- Prioritize strategic endeavors
- Commit staff and financial resources to the effort
- Reach out to new partners

The 22 member communities of the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District become the largest group of cities and towns to commit to a zero waste goal.

- Foundational Elements of Zero Waste Programming

- What is the material and how can this resource be preserved, protected, conserved?
- Identify available options for the material stream or items and rank the best and highest use.
- Consider the viable opportunities.
- Assess the costs and environmental impacts and benefits.
- Establish realistic goals and timeframes for development of new initiatives.
- Report on progress, success and failings.

## ZERO WASTE

Japan was the origin of the zero waste concept, which originated as an extrapolation from the "zero defects" goals of quality management.

- **A –Z Guide to Reuse**

- Web based searchable database of 87 different categories of items for identifying how to avoid wasting them

- **Reuse Business Database**

- Adaptation of a former print publication developed by The ReStore for searching where to take and get reusable items and materials in the region



## Web- Based Tools for Waste Reduction

These two projects are the most frequently accessed tools on our website!

- The Lawrence Walbridge Fund for Reuse

- Provides small grants of up to \$2,500 to businesses seeking to initiate or expand reuse enterprises or educational efforts focused on reuse of products and/or materials
- 16 recipients have been awarded \$27,764 in grants during its 11 year history
- Wide range of recipients including the arts-and-craft based ReStore, Vermont Raw Pet Food,
- Good Beginnings diaper company, and Sorella Luna menstrual product manufacturer

Programs  
& Actions  
for  
Achieving  
Zero  
Waste  
Change

- Textile Drop 'N Swap

- Community based used clothing drop and FREE pick up that has averaged redistribution and recycling of over 40 tons of clothing, linens and shoes annually
- 75 – 100 volunteers per event
- Originally a District-run program, now sustained by Norwich University through our partnership outreach
- Norwich University is now mentoring other colleges in creating and operating similar events

Partnering  
for Zero  
Waste  
Change



- Residential Organics Diversion via Green Cone Food Scrap Digesters

- On site opportunity for owner-occupied homeowners to divert 100% of food scraps, inclusive of meat, cheese, grease and bones
- Over 500 households currently using Green Cones
- Diversion of food scraps shown to equal from 10 – 20% of a household's waste, saving homeowners money on disposal when self-hauling
- Green Cones have no methane emissions, so they eliminate all green house gas emissions for transport and disposal
- Cost of Green Cone is under \$100 when purchased in bulk orders

Funding to develop this program provided by the USDA and the VT Agency of Natural Resources



## • Commercial Organics Collection Program

- 5 years of development
- 3 separate geographic areas with different end users for material
- 37 businesses - restaurants, cafeterias, and grocers - diverting 2,534 tons pre- and post-consumer food scraps to compost facilities and farms
- Plans to quadruple customer base in FY 2010



Targeting  
Organics  
to  
Diminish  
Waste  
and  
Climate  
Change  
Impacts



## • School Organics Diversion Program

- K-12 Program to divert food scraps to composting



23 schools

70%+ of all public schools in District

8,898 students

6,832 families

- Small schools project to investigate on-site technologies appropriate for isolated rural schools off a collection route, or schools too small to make commercial collection financially viable
- Green Cone food scrap digester installation for pre-school and schools without cafeterias



- **VT Product Stewardship Council**

- Founding member & financial contributor
- Active participant in legislative effort to see S.77 e-waste bill passed in 2009



- **Zero Waste Zones**

- Encourage student suggestions for expanding zero waste areas and practices in schools
  - Switch to durable utensils
  - Changeover to milk cows
  - Exchange paper for recycled plastic trays
- Support Zero Waste Zones in public spaces and community based programs such as Farmers Markets



# Moving Forward in an Economic Downturn

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Changing  
the System  
in Central  
Vermont



# Local Recycling & Reuse Spur "downstream" Economic Impacts

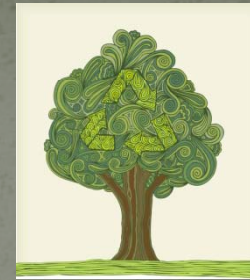
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Municipal entities can use their political capital in lieu of financial capital to create change.

Strategic decisions about how to do this can result in local economic development, green job creation, and the proliferation of a Zero Waste mindset.

## Green Business Development is a *Real and Important Opportunity* for Local Economies

- Recycling and Reuse are competitive with other major industries such as machinery manufacturing, computer and electronic manufacturing, mining and insurance
- Reuse industry in the US employs nearly 170,000 workers in more than 26,000 establishments supporting an annual payroll of \$2.7 billion and generating approximately \$14.1 billion in revenue



Source:

US Recycling  
Economic  
Information (REI)  
Study commissioned  
by the US EPA and  
numerous states  
through a cooperative  
agreement with the  
National Recycling  
Coalition (NRC)

## LEGISLATION & POLICY

- Strengthen Pay-As-You-Throw Ordinance
- Review and Clarify Zero Waste Plan
- Investigate Differential Surcharge
- Consider Franchise Opportunities
- Ban Gasification
- Develop Food Scrap-to-Energy Project

Recognizing  
One's Power



## RESEARCH & PLANNING

- Materials Flow Analysis
  - Sort remaining waste and identify categories of materials , identify potential beneficial uses, propose local opportunities for economic development and prioritize program and business development by material

## DEMONSTRATING BENEFITS

### Indicators of Success

- Create set of indicators that goes beyond diversion statistics for measuring success
- Identify new measures for reporting progress and determining accomplishments

### Using One's Influence

## MODELING CHANGE

### • Walk Your Talk

- Reinforce the difference between Zero Waste and traditional waste systems through language
- Urge zero waste legislation
- Demonstrate the need for a new system that is resource-focused



Vision without action is  
merely a dream.

Action without vision just  
passes the time.

Vision with action can  
change the world.

---Joel Barker

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