

Addison County Solid Waste Management

District



1223 Route 7 South
Middlebury, Vermont 05753

Addison
Bridport
Cornwall
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Goshen
Leicester
Lincoln
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Monkton
New Haven
Orwell
Panton
Ripton
Shoreham
Starksboro
Vergennes
Waltham
Weybridge
Whiting

Testimony on S.208

Provided by **Teresa A. Kuczynski, District Manager,**
Addison County Solid Waste Management District

Submitted to the Vermont House Committee on Natural Resources and Energy
April 10, 2014

Chairman Klein and Committee Members,

Thank you for providing this opportunity to comment on S.208. My name is Teresa Kuczynski, and I am the District Manager for the Addison County Solid Waste Management District. I also serve as President of the VT Solid Waste District Managers' Association.

First, I would like to present a letter from the VSWDMA expressing support for moving forward with the implementation of Act 148 and the new Materials Management Plan proposed by the Agency of Natural Resources.

Addison County Solid Waste Management District

The Addison County Solid Waste Management District (ACSWMD), formed in 1988, is made up of 19 towns in Addison County, with a population of approx. 31,170. In 2011, the ACSWMD reached a 53.82% diversion rate, and a 2.03 lbs/per capita disposal rate (see attached chart). I would like to report the progress our District has been making toward implementation of Act 148:

- The ACSWMD is close to completing construction of a \$1.2 Million expansion of the District Transfer Station in Middlebury to: (1) add a Special Waste Building (see attached photo) to accommodate continued growth in the volume of special wastes for diversion; (2) add a new tip wall to prepare for future growth in organics collection; and (3) expand the office building to add more offices.
- The ACSWMD has created a new F/T public outreach position to assist with the many public education requirements of the new VT Materials Management Plan.
- Funds of \$100,000 each have been set aside in a new Recyclables Contingency Fund and Organics Contingency Fund to buffer the financial impact of implementing Act 148.

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- A new municipal grant fund of \$50,000 was established to assist our member towns with preparing for Act 148 mandates. Eligible projects include public recycling receptacles, consultant advice, capital equipment, and modifications to town drop-offs.
- ACSWMD staff has been busy assisting with the creation of new compost programs in institutions such as schools and nursing homes this year. Act 148 has definitely spurred new interest in food waste diversion.
- The ACSWMD has held two meetings with licensed commercial haulers regarding Act 148 and is in the process of meeting with member town selectboards and planning commissions to identify their needs in modifying town drop-offs and curbside collection programs to meet Act 148 deadlines.

The initiatives listed above have been a result of anticipated needs and planned resources of the ACSWMD. However, the towns and the commercial haulers are in need of planning assistance and financial help in order to adapt to Act 148 mandates. With 19 towns and 33 licensed commercial haulers, the need for implementation grants and start-up loans will be significant, more than the ACSWMD can fulfill. Schools are also in need of financial assistance.

As for the future, regional cooperation is not a new concept to the ACSWMD. We have sent recyclables to out-of-district material recovery facilities since 1993. Our trash has been hauled to in-state and out-of-state disposal facilities. Our privately-owned compost facilities have accepted materials from several districts. We will continue to identify opportunities to cooperate with other communities. As for mandatory recycling, the ACSWMD has had a mandatory recycling ordinance in place since 1993, requiring all haulers and facilities to collect recyclables. It is a standard practice in our area: all 12 town drop-offs, 33 licensed commercial haulers and the Middlebury curbside recycling program provide the services. The District ordinance has also required pay-as-you-throw fee systems since 1993, so this will not be a major change. However, a new element will be the inability to charge for recyclables, as the collectors are currently allowed to charge for recyclables and compostables, provided the rate is less than the trash rate.

S.208

Waste Transportation - One Ton Exemption

The ACSWMD supports the elimination of the one-ton exemption for commercial haulers. This exemption would exempt haulers with vehicles having a rated capacity of one ton or less from providing parallel collection for recyclables and trash. This is a major loophole that would encourage more vehicles on the roads, will not provide the same level of recycling services for all residents of the state and will put haulers with larger vehicles at a competitive disadvantage to the smaller vehicle haulers. In the ACSWMD, 22 of the 33 licensed commercial haulers are small haulers - all have been required to provide recyclable collection since 1993.

Parallel Collection of Mandated Recyclables Exemption

The ACSWMD does not support an exemption for haulers to provide collection of mandatory recyclables under Act 148. This undermines the effectiveness of the law, which was intended to create consistent and convenient services throughout the state. The ACSWMD would consider supporting some flexibility in the law for organic material collection, as residents in our rural area have other acceptable alternatives for managing their own organics in their backyard. This is not the case for the mandatory recyclables.

Solid Waste Infrastructure Assistance \$1 Increase in Franchise Tax

S.208 proposes to increase the solid waste franchise tax by \$1/ton and to set up a separate account to help fund infrastructure required for implementing Act 148. The ACSWMD supports an increase in the state franchise tax to assist with the funding of Act 148 implementation.

Solid Waste Infrastructure Advisory Committee

The ACSWMD supports the proposed Solid Waste Infrastructure Advisory Committee to determine what infrastructure is needed in the state for implementation of Act 148 and make recommendations to the Legislature. This will be an effective way to accelerate the discussion of regional cooperation and identify specific needs for financial assistance.

Data Collection

Data is an integral element of the system and the only means of determining whether the performance measurements in the proposed Materials Management Plan are met. The ACSWMD supports a more assertive approach by the Agency of Natural Resources in collecting data, analyzing data and sharing data in an easily retrievable form.

Construction & Demolition Waste Pilot Project

The tracking of construction & demolition (C&D) waste in Vermont has been given a lower priority because it does not count toward the state's 50% diversion rate. It is also a difficult waste to track. The ACSWMD would like to see major improvements in the promotion and tracking of C&D diversion. If the creation of pilot projects is a good beginning, then the ACSWMD supports the effort, provided that the Agency of Natural Resources carefully monitors the project so that facilities are held accountable for keeping hazardous and prohibited materials out of the recycling waste stream, and ensures that "recyclable" materials are indeed recyclable, depending on the markets designated for individual materials. The pilot projects should also be required to carefully monitor the total volumes, the towns of origin and the destinations/designated end uses for marketed materials. The ACSWMD does not support a ban on C&D at this time.

Report on Financial Benefits of Solid Waste Districts and Consolidation

The ACSWMD does not support this provision. The amount of time and effort expended on yet another study at this time will be a distraction from the implementation of Act 148 for all involved, including the Agency of Natural Resources. The proposed Materials Management Plan sets stringent goals for meeting the requirements of Act 148. The various Act 148 deadlines are looming in the near future, and everyone is working at a fast pace to meet them. The coming year should be spent on adapting to new systems, meeting and

contracting with other districts to pursue regional cooperation, designing and constructing new facilities or expansions to existing facilities, and assisting out towns and haulers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

**Testimony to HNR&E Committee, 4/10/14
Teresa A. Kuczynski, District Manager
Attachments**



ACSWMD Transfer Station, Middlebury, VT - New Special Waste Building Construction 2014

ACSWMD MSW Disposal v. Diversion (lbs/capita/day), 2001-2011

