



Testimony provided by Jennifer Holliday

On behalf of the Chittenden Solid Waste District and the

Vermont Product Stewardship Council

Submitted to the Vermont House Committees on Fish and Wildlife and Natural Resources and Energy

H.36 Product Stewardship Program for Motor Vehicle Tires

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Committee Members,

Thank you for providing this opportunity to discuss H.36 and extended producer responsibility for tires. My name is Jennifer Holliday and I am the Product Stewardship and Compliance Manager for the Chittenden Solid Waste District. CSWD provides services for solid waste management as well as education for waste prevention and reduction for its 18 member towns that make up approximately one quarter of the state's population. I am also a founding member and Chair of the Vermont Product Stewardship Council (VTPSC). The Council members include every solid waste district and alliance in the state which represents over 85% of the state's population. The council was formed in 2008 and works specifically on extended producer responsibility initiatives including legislation as well as evaluation and implementation of EPR laws. The VTPSC recently designated tires as one of the top products to consider for EPR.

H.36 is based on policy in the form of laws known as extended producer responsibility (EPR). Vermont has 7 (EPR) laws, 6 of which have passed in the last 9 years. We are only second to California in the number of EPR laws. These laws require the producers or manufacturers of a product to fund and provide collection system for their products after consumers are through with them. Vermont's EPR laws include rechargeable batteries (1991), primary batteries (2014), mercury automobile switches (2006), mercury thermostats (2008), Mercury lamps (2011), electronics (2010) and paint (2013). These programs have been highly successful. They have provided financial, environmental and economic benefits statewide. These laws have saved local government hundreds of thousands of dollars, provide convenient collection systems for consumers to properly dispose or recycle their products keeping them out of the waste stream and helped to create more jobs in Vermont. These laws have resulted in the highest per capita collection rates for electronics, mercury thermostats and mercury lamps in the country. Legislators should be proud of the work that they have done writing and passing some of the most effective EPR laws. Vermont is truly a leader in the United States in this field.

There are currently no EPR laws for tires in the U.S. However there are at least 20 countries including Canada that have EPR laws for tires.

Current Tire Management in Vermont

There are approximately 625,000 scrap tires generated in Vermont each year. In 1992 tires were banned from being disposed of in the landfills. The infrastructure for scrap tire collection in Vermont is robust. Most scrap tires generated are managed through either tire dealers or by the individual that disposes of their tires at a solid waste facility. CSWD operates seven locations that accept scrap tires for recycling. The cost for an individual to leave a tire with the dealer or to drop it off at a recycling facility ranges between \$2-\$5 per tire and more for larger tires. Most tires are shipped out of state and used for tire derived fuel (TDF) or chipped for beneficial reuse such as

road construction, landfill construction, septic systems and other civil engineering projects. CSWD has been sending tires to a company called BDS in Norridgewock Maine for beneficial re-use.

VT Tire Problem

1. Illegal tire dumping – Every year tires are illegally dumped in the woods, waterways and along the roads by individuals most likely to avoid disposal costs. These are not only an eye soar in our communities but also provides an environment for mosquitos to breed that can carry diseases such as Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile Virus that have both been detected in Vermont. Ultimately illegally disposed of tires cost local government money to cleanup. The offense is repeated year after year throughout Vermont by consumers avoiding the disposal costs to properly manage their waste tires. There is no way to enforce illegal dumping unless you catch the person in the act. Here is some data for Chittenden County (handout):

CWD has had two types of amnesty programs where we pay for tire disposal. The first is the traditional Green Up Day program for illegally dumped tires. The second is a Tire and Appliance Round Up Day that was started in 1997 by CSWD in an attempt to discourage illegal disposal. Residents could bring up to four tires free of charge at these event that occurred twice a year. The Tire and Appliance Round Up was discontinued in 2013 for budget reasons. The total cost of these amnesty programs over the past 10 years has been \$275,069. CSWD Drop-Off Centers collect tires for a fee to cover the costs. Between the Drop-Off Centers and the amnesty programs, CSWD manages between 14% and 30% of the tires generated in Chittenden County each year (based on 160,000 generated per year). The percentage of total costs for tire management attributed to the amnesty programs at CSWD in the past 10 years have ranged between 21% in FY14 and 74% in FY11.

An EPR law for tires would remove the incentive to illegally dispose of tires because it would no longer cost the consumer at the collection point.

2. Large tire piles – According to the State of Vermont 2012 State-wide Large Tire Pile Inventory there are 62 tire piles that have over 100 tires that are abandoned or otherwise not being managed in the state. The largest of these piles still remaining is in Milton at the former site of Rhoades Salvage. CSWD has provided \$10,000 from our community cleanup funds as well as the use of our equipment and loader operator to help remove approximately 1/3 of the tires at the site. There are still between 115,000 and 230,000 tires remaining on site that will cost the town \$138,000 - \$460,000 to remove. CSWD supports some methodology to cleanup these legacy piles and to prevent new piles from forming. H.36 does not currently directly address this issue.
3. Markets – The ultimate destination for many of the tires that are managed in Vermont is unknown. This is because unlike solid waste facilities, tire dealers do not have to report to the State where their tires are sent. More than half the scrap tires generated in the United States are used for tire derived fuel (TDF) to fuel cement kilns, paper mills and waste to energy facilities. We can assume that most tire dealers will go where the markets are most affordable which typically is for TDF. This is not considered recycling or the highest and best use for scrap tires. Better uses such as crumb rubber products and civil engineering projects utilizing chipped and shredded tires are lacking in Vermont and limited in the region. Having industry more engaged in the problems of markets would be helpful. An EPR program could provide the structure that would require more tires to be beneficially reused rather than used as TDF.

In summary, an EPR program for tires in Vermont would help address the problem of illegal tire dumping, would reduce costs for local government and could expand the markets outside of TDF. CSWD and the VTPSC support working further with stakeholders to determine if EPR or any other mechanism could help address these challenges as well as addressing the legacy tire piles that need cleaning up.

