

fy 2022  
annual  
report



Chittenden Solid Waste District

# a message from cswd's board chair and executive director

Thanks to conservative budgeting and significant belt-tightening, the Chittenden Solid Waste District remained on strong financial footing in Fiscal Year 2022 (July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022). The District's FY22 total operating expenses were \$12,336,755 and operating revenues were \$16,569,666 for a net surplus of \$4,232,911. This surplus was applied to CSWD's reserves following the Board-approved prioritization schedule (see "Budget Memo" under FY2023 Budget on the Financial Information page of [cswd.net](http://cswd.net).)

The residents, businesses, and institutions of our 18 member towns and cities generated an estimated 305,389 tons of materials to be managed in calendar year 2021, compared with 270,207 tons in 2020, with the increase likely due to increased construction and overall economic activity. Chittenden County continues to be among the national leaders in landfill diversion, with an estimated 66.7% of those materials recovered in 2021 via composting (food scraps, leaves, and yard trimmings), anaerobic digestion, and recycling of Blue-Bin materials, Special Recycling, and Construction and Demolition materials. (The 2021 Diversion Report will be posted in October 2022.)

This foundation enabled CSWD to focus on strengthening our infrastructure and our commitments to our members, staff, and our mission: To reduce and manage the solid waste generated within Chittenden County in an environmentally sound, efficient, effective, and economical manner.

## STRENGTHENING CSWD'S INFRASTRUCTURE

### Preparing for a New Materials Recycling Facility

In March 2022, the CSWD Board of Commissioners voted unanimously in favor of CSWD submitting a bond request to the voters of Chittenden County in the November 2022

General Election enabling CSWD to borrow \$22 million to build a new Materials Recycling Facility.

### Organics Diversion Facility: Phase 1 work completed, foodware ban implemented

The first phase of a three-part expansion of CSWD's Organics Diversion Facility (or ODF – where Green Mountain Compost is made) was completed in FY22. This phase included implementation of a windrow turner that replaced four pieces of heavy equipment and reduced windrow-turning time from two weeks to three hours. The completion of a new curing and sales area enabled staff to remove all sales traffic to a separate gate, decreasing congestion and increasing safety for all facility users.

Due to increased contamination from non-compostable materials, the ODF began accepting only food scraps, paper towels and napkins, and newspaper, paper bags, and certified compostable bags used for lining food scrap collection containers as of January 1, 2022. CSWD provided just shy of a year of notice to vendors, commercial and institutional consumers of compostable products, food scrap haulers, and the public. A blog post on the drivers for this decision is on the CSWD website.

### New Administration Building approved

COVID-19 demonstrated the necessity of healthy and safe working facilities and the shortcomings of CSWD's Administration offices at 1021 Redmond Road in this regard. CSWD's Board of Commissioners approved planning for new offices to be pursued into FY23.

Other operational changes included the end of CSWD operation of the Drop-Off Center in Richmond after almost 30 years. CSWD submitted a bid for continued operation of the facility, but the Richmond Select Board voted to award the contract to Casella Waste Systems when CSWD's

lease expired on December 31, 2021. Though it was not the outcome we desired, the removal of this facility reduced CSWD operating expenses, enabled us to deploy experienced staff to other sites, and provided an opportunity for CSWD to re-evaluate our community's needs.

## **STRENGTHENING OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR COMMUNITY AND EMPLOYEES**

CSWD was not immune to the labor shortages experienced across Vermont, and the Board of Commissioners convened an Ad Hoc Committee to review employee compensation and benefits, ensuring the District is competitive in the labor marketplace and the compensation structure is clear and fair.

The Board adopted a Declaration of Inclusion at their May meeting, with staff forming a Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee devoted to ensuring and exploring opportunities for implementation of the Declaration's principles.


The CSWD Board passed resolutions recognizing retiring employees Nancy Plunkett (30 years) who implemented mandatory recycling in Chittenden County in 1993 and expanded CSWD's education and research programs,

and Lee Tuure (29 years), who transformed "town dump" locations into CSWD's beloved Drop-Off Centers. The Board also recognized the volunteer service of Commissioners Abby Foulk (Shelburne - 9 years) and Doug Taff (Hinesburg - 12 years).

CSWD staff reported on the 2021 (biannual) Household Solid Waste Survey Report, with key findings including that 93% of respondents reported a favorable impression of CSWD, and strong support for bonding for a new MRF. The survey also revealed opportunities for CSWD to provide more communication on appropriate materials management, particularly to new residents. Staff began the process for amending the CSWD Solid Waste Management Ordinance, which will wrap up in FY23.

Overall, FY22 proved an extremely busy year as CSWD staff and Board of Commissioners rebooted projects stalled by the pandemic and looked ahead to opportunities to build on the District's 35 years of public service to Chittenden County.



  
Paul Ruess  
Chair, Board of Commissioners



  
Sarah Reeves  
Executive Director

# who we are

**We are a municipal district** created in 1987 to oversee and manage solid waste in Chittenden County.

CSWD serves about a quarter of the population of Vermont (168,865 residents and 7,944 businesses)\* with facilities, programs, and expertise developed over our 34-year history.

\*2021 data. Sources: U.S. Census and VT Dept. Of Labor

## OUR MISSION

The Chittenden Solid Waste District's mission is to reduce and manage the solid waste generated within Chittenden County in an environmentally sound, efficient, effective and economical manner.

## OUR VISION

Products are designed to be reused or recycled and our community fully participates in minimizing disposal and maximizing reuse and recycling.

## HOW WE'RE FUNDED

Our revenue comes from three primary sources:

- **User fees** on incoming material at our facilities;
- **The Solid Waste Management Fee (SWMF)**, a per-ton fee on material sent to the landfill;
- **Material and product sales** from material we collect and process at our facilities and sell;
- A small, variable percentage of our funding comes from **State grants for hazardous waste and other materials management**.

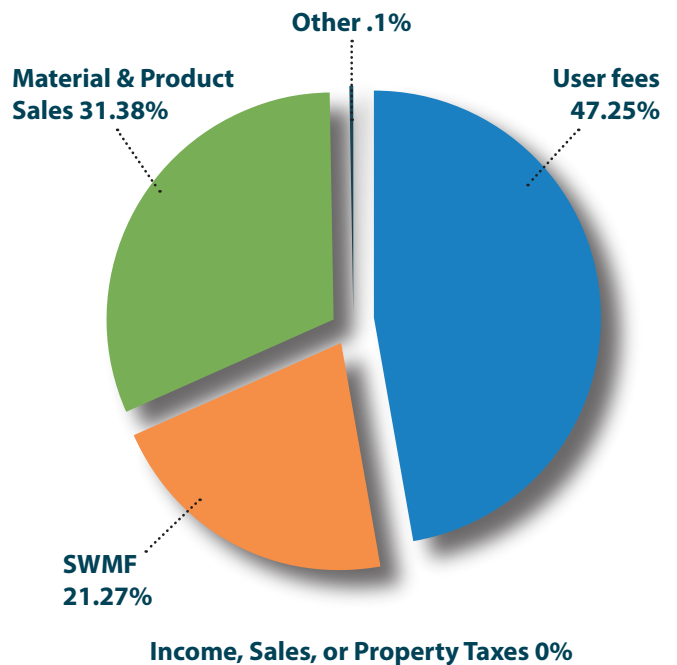
**We are not funded by Income, Sales and Property tax dollars.**

### CHITTENDEN COUNTY, VT



2021 data. Sources: U.S. Census and VT Dept. of Labor

## FY22 REVENUE \$16.03M (unaudited)



# what we do

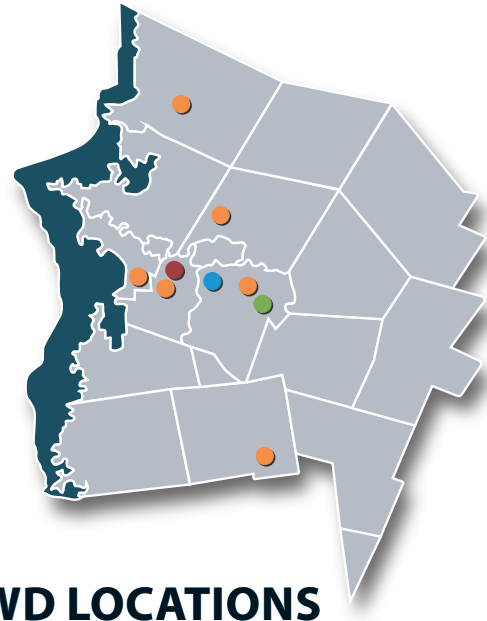
## REDUCE WASTE

- › **Educate residents, businesses, schools, and event leaders** on waste prevention and diversion
- › **Promote community reuse options**
- › **Process leftover paint** from residents and businesses into Local Color Paint
- › **Maintain and enforce our Ordinance**, which includes waste prevention and diversion requirements
- › **Help our members** comply with federal and state solid waste laws
- › **Provide facilities and tools** to help members prevent waste and maximize diversion from the landfill to recycling, composting, and other resource recovery
- › **Advocate for state-wide policies** that will reduce waste

## MANAGE MATERIALS

Our facilities:

- › **The only municipally owned Materials Recycling Facility** (blue-bin recyclables sorting center) in Vermont
- › **Six regional Drop-Off Centers** for household trash, recycling, organics, and special recycling
- › **A comprehensive hazardous waste program for households and small businesses** that includes a permanent year-round collection facility *and* a seasonal mobile collection unit
- › **The state's largest Organics Diversion Facility** (home of Green Mountain Compost) turning food scraps and yard trimmings into compost and soil blends supporting local soils



## CSWD LOCATIONS

- **Drop-Off Centers**
- **Environmental Depot**
- **Materials Recycling Facility**
- **Organics Diversion Facility** (Green Mountain Compost)

## SUPPORT OUR MEMBERS

- › **Technical expertise and support** for waste-related RFPs and studies
- › **Grant funding**
  - › Community Cleanup Fund for all member towns
  - › Waste Reduction Container and Project Grants
- › **Provide waste-reduction containers**
  - › Recycling bins
  - › Containers for food-scrap drop-off at CSWD facilities
- › **Brokering and investigation** of beneficial use options for biosolids
- › **Green Up Vermont donation** on behalf of all member towns;
- › **Outreach and education**

# how we're doing

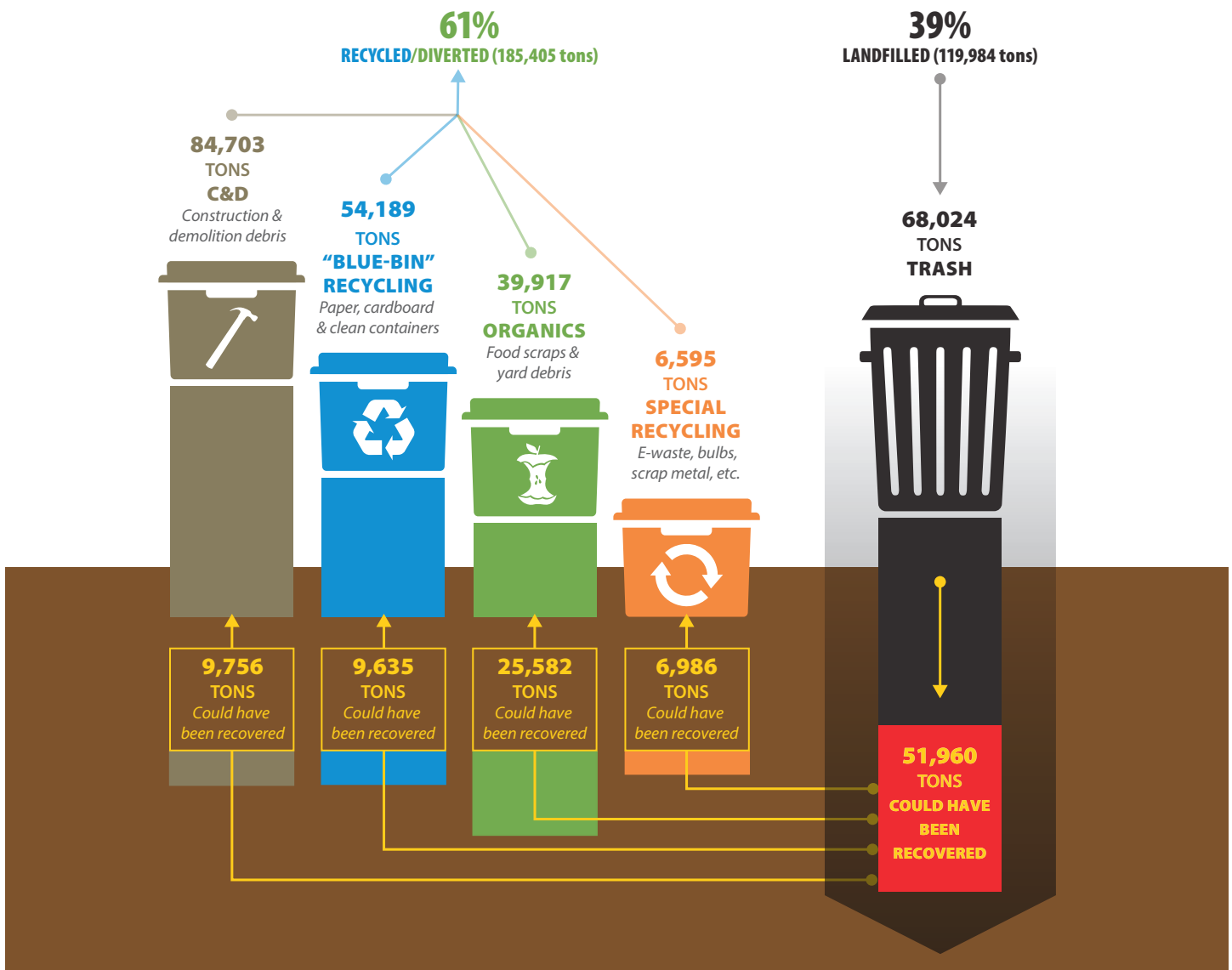
This graphic shows three key measurements of all the materials that individuals and businesses in Chittenden County, VT generated in 2021:

1. An estimate of how much "stuff" we all generated and needed to manage as solid waste in 2021.
2. Which stream all that stuff went to — landfill or recovery via recycling or composting.
3. How much recoverable material our community chose to send to the landfill instead of keeping it out of the trash by using a currently available program or facility.

Full details are available in the 2021 CSWD Diversion Report.

## 100% MATERIALS GENERATED (305,389 tons)

61% RECYCLED/DIVERTED + 39% LANDFILLED



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