

In the process of budgeting we compiled and started looking at data from our last complete fiscal year. In the next month will be working on analyzing this data and producing our annual report and supervisor's reports.

I am sad to pass on the news that on Tuesday, Aaron Shepard resigned from employment with the NWSWD. For the past 6 years Aaron has helped the NWSWD accomplish great things as our Outreach and Compost Manager. He successfully built our compost programs and if needed was the boots on the ground to get the work done. He helped build our website and provide outreach to schools. His role will be a difficult one to fill. He will be missed, and I wish him the best in his future endeavors.

In October we normally host field trips and perform school outreach. In the past we have hosted the Fairfield School to examine the waste and recycling system and how they participate in it. NWSWD staff also visit schools to explain composting and other topics. However, this year, those activities have been canceled. One possible ramification whether we can meet our SWIP goals this year. I have been in discussion with ANR and they are investigating relieving all Districts of these requirements this year.

Operationally, things are starting to slow down for the winter. HHW is quieting down and in the next month we will be cleaning out our storage containers for the season. Our customer counts per week are down from their mid-summer highs, although since there shouldn't have been as many vacationers on the lakes and in the mountains this summer we'll see how slow it gets. Now we prepare for ice and snow.

Last year I served on the Single-use Product Working Group set up by the Legislature in S.113. Since Single-use items, paper, and packaging make up an estimated 32% of Vermont MSW, and Single-use products that are not recyclable make up a significant portion of our disposal, was an important opportunity for the NWSWD to contribute to a solution to reduce and recycle this portion of our waste stream.

Out of this group grew an effort to create an extended producer responsibility (EPR) law for all packaging and printed materials. I have been working with a group of other Districts and the Product Stewardship International who are helping us to draft this legislation.

EPR programs have been successful in Vermont including those for E-waste, paint, batteries, and fluorescent bulbs. These laws put the burden of managing wastes onto those who produce the items. This has been especially useful when the waste is hazardous, difficult, and expensive to manage. With the volatility of the recycling markets over the past five years, the increasing questioning of the recyclability of plastic, and the complexity of packaging materials it seems like a good time to put more of the responsibility for the waste from packaging onto the manufacturers. This is also taking shape in Washington and New York and these systems already exist in Quebec, Vancouver, and most of Europe. I'll keep you all informed as this initiative progresses.

Onward - John