

## TIMELINE HISTORY OF ORGANICS RECYCLING IN CONNECTICUT

- 1986 - [Public Act 86-1](#) was the landmark legislation that, among other things, authorized state funding for development of the recycling infrastructure in Connecticut.
- 1987 - DEP established a Source Reduction and Recycling Program to help implement Public Act (P.A.) 86-1. More landmark legislation, [P.A. 87-544](#), mandated statewide recycling and gave DEP the authority to develop regulations designating items required to be recycled in Connecticut.
- 1989 - The [recycling regulation](#) became effective and included leaves as a mandatory recyclable item.
- 1989 - The legislature passed a law ([CGS Sec. 22a-208i](#)) that provided a permit exemption from the requirements of Sec. 22a-208a and 22a-430 for leaf-only composting facilities in order to facilitate recycling of leaves, and to streamline the approval process. This law also gave DEP the authority to adopt leaf composting regulations.
- 1989 - In reaction to these laws, DEP partnered with the UCONN Cooperative Extension Service to write guidance for municipalities entitled "[Compost – Send Your Leaves to a MULCH Better Place](#)". Although several methods for composting leaves was explained, the windrow-and-turn method is recommended. A series of informational seminars and [operator training](#) courses followed.
- 1989 - DEP started registering leaf composting facilities on a voluntary basis until regulations could be adopted.
- 1990 - DEP produced and distributed a training video "[Leaf Composting – Windrows of Opportunity](#)".
- 1991 - DEP produced and distributed its video "[Home Composting – Turning Your Spoils to Soil](#)" and related [educational materials](#).
- 1993 - The legislature passed a ban ([CGS Sec. 22a-208v](#)) on disposal of grass clippings in landfills or resource recovery facilities effective October 1995. Note that this was not a DEP proposal, but rather one from the CT Resources Recovery Authority as a means to reduce nitrogen emissions from waste to energy facilities.
- 1993 - DEP produced and distributed its "[Don't Trash Grass!](#)" video and [toolkit](#).
- 1993 - DEP included Leaf Utilization in the [Manual of Best Management Practices for Agriculture](#) suggesting management practices designed to reduce the impact of agriculture on ground and surface water quality, including composting, sheet leaf composting and ground mulch. (pgs. 244-245)
- 1993 - DEP developed a [General Permit to Construct & Operate Certain Recycling Facilities](#) (a.k.a. the Recycling GP) which included the handling of leaves.

- 1994 - Leaf Composting [Regulations](#) were adopted that established siting and operation criteria, as well as [registration](#) requirements. It also provided for sheet leaf composting of leaves on land actively devoted to agriculture (i.e. tilling leaves into farmland for agricultural amendment) through a notification process.
- 1995 - The legislature repealed the 1993 [grass clipping disposal ban](#) and extended the effective date to October 1997.
- 1996 - DEP added Grass Clipping Utilization to the [Manual of Best Management Practices for Agriculture](#) suggesting management practices designed to reduce the impact of agriculture on ground and surface water quality, including application to cropland, incorporated into manure storage facilities, and added to on-farm composting operations. (pgs. 245A-245D)
- 1997 - The legislature repealed the [grass clipping disposal ban](#) again and extended the effective date to October 1, 1998. This time, it stuck.
- 1997 – DEP includes grass clippings in the General Permit to Construct & Operate Certain Recycling Facilities.
- 1997 - DEP partnered with ConnDOT to perform [field studies](#) using compost for soil erosion control, establishing turf, and amending planting backfill. This resulted in ConnDOT adopting a materials specification for compost in their [“Standard Specifications for Roads, Bridges and Incidental Construction”](#) (Section M.13.06 in Form 816).
- 1997 - DEP leads by example by initiating an [On-site Office Food Scrap Composting Program](#) at their headquarters building at 79 Elm Street in the Capitol district of Hartford, CT.
- 1999 - DEP published [Best Management Practices for Grass Clipping Management](#), emphasizing leaving them on the lawn as the first and best management practice.
- 2001 - DEP commissions a [GIS Mapping Study](#) to identify and quantify the large scale commercial and institutional food residual generators in Connecticut as a tool for food scrap recyclers, generators, haulers and prospective organics recycling entrepreneurs to understand the volumes and locations of potential feedstock. The database and map was updated in 2011.
- 2002 - DEP funds four commercial and institutional [food scrap recycling pilot projects](#). One of these projects resulted in a [School Composting Manual](#).
- 2002 - DEP issued the first [General Permit for the Addition of Grass Clippings at Registered Leaf Composting Facilities](#). Having a registered leaf site is a pre-requisite to applying for this GP.
- 2003 - DEP develops a [Sheet Leaf Composting](#) guidance document and registration form.

- 2005 - [Grass Clipping General Permit](#) was modified/reissued on April 22, 2005 to extend expiration date by 2 years. Expired April 22, 2007. Subsequent reissuances occurred on April 24, 2007 (Expired April 23, 2012), and on May 29, 2012 (Expires May 28, 2017).
- 2006 - Updates to the [Statewide Solid Waste Management Plan](#) (SWMP) included [organics recycling](#). (Strategies 2-14, 2-15, 2-16, 2-17, 2-18, 4-5)
- 2007 - Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee - [Subcommittee](#) on Organics Recycling & Composting was established per recommendation in SWMP. The subcommittee concluded their work in 2008 with a [summary report](#) of their work and status of completion, and was disbanded.
- 2007 - DEP Issues the first [Municipal Transfer Station General Permit](#) and it included provisions for leaves, grass clippings and food waste transfer activities. The GP was reissued in 2012 (Expires November 29, 2022).
- 2010 - The Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee ([LPRI](#)) of the General Assembly released a [report](#) on Solid Waste Management Services in CT. It recognized that CT had a well-established infrastructure for yard waste composting, but lacked infrastructure within the state that enabled large scale recycling or composting of food wastes. It also noted that there were recycling requirements for food containers, but not food itself, and that the state should periodically update which materials are mandated recyclables.
- 2010 - DEP proposed legislation to require the recycling of certain commercially generated organics, specifically food residuals. The impetus for this proposal was to provide incentives for organics recyclers to locate anaerobic digestion (AD) and composting facilities in CT in order to fill our food residuals processing gap. If you build it, certain generators must come, providing much-needed feedstock certainty for facilities and their investors. The proposed organics language was stripped from [H.B. 5301](#), although other portions of the bill eventually became [P.A. 10-87](#), an act that significantly [advanced key elements](#) to mainstream recycling.
- 2010 - DEEP launches the Connecticut Materials Trader, and on-line materials exchange for reuse, which included organics. This website morphed into a regional web exchange in 2012 called the [Reuse Marketplace](#), and administration of the website was transferred from DEEP to the Northeast Recycling Council.
- 2011 - DEEP proposed legislation again to [require the recycling of food residuals by certain commercial generators of organics](#) if they have a projected annual generation rate of 104 tons per year of source separated organics, and are within 20 miles of a licensed facility that is able and willing to accept it. [P.A. 11-217](#) passed.
- 2011 – DEEP receives positive media attention about P.A. 11-217 and begins to see activity by processing companies based on passage of the new law (inquiries, pre-application meetings, application submittals, requests for speaking engagements and articles, etc.).

- 2011 - Provisions included in the [General Permit for Stormwater Associated with Industrial Activities](#) to include small-scale composting. (See Section 5(f)(10) pgs. 63-65)
- 2011 - DEEP updated and expanded the [GIS Mapping Study](#) which identified and quantified food residual generators and permitted food residual recycling facilities in Connecticut. The Food Residual Generator Map was upgraded from a PDF to a GIS interactive map.
- 2012 - DEEP proposed legislation to clarify certain ambiguous implementation language in P.A. 11-217, and to expand requirements to 52 tons per year in 2020. [P.A. 13-285](#) passed. (See Section 4)
- 2012 - [CEFIA](#) offers 6MM in financing mechanisms per Sec.103 of PA 11-80 through an [RFP process](#) for anaerobic digestion projects up to 3 MW in size. RFP was revised and reissued in 2013. RFP Mentions consistency with organics strategies in Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP). Rolling RFP expires in February 2015, but could be extended if CEFIA Board decides to do so.
- 2013 – DEEP is recognized by US EPA with an [Environmental Merit Award](#) for their efforts on waste transformation, which included organics recycling.
- 2013 - DEEP receives the first food residual Anaerobic Digestion facility application.
- 2014 – Although organics information was already present on the DEEP website, it was reorganized into its [own section](#) and significantly expanded.
- 2014 – DEEP becomes the [first state government agency to join](#) the [USDA Food Waste Challenge](#) and is recognized for its long-standing on-site [office composting program](#).
- 2014 - DEEP receives two additional food residual Anaerobic Digestion facility applications.

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