

SWAC Subcommittee on Organics Recycling and Composting Meeting Notes from 4-22-08

Stakeholders Present: C.J. May, Ann Berman, Bill Nelligan

DEP Staff Present: K.C. Alexander, David McKeegan, Gene MacGillis, Joe Schiavone, Kevin Sullivan

Introductions: Please see attached list for complete and revised member contact information.

Old Business: Status on Permit Priority Policy, Monies for Home Compost Bins, Yale, Markets

- Status quo on the permit policy and bin money. Nothing to report.
- Yale is getting closer to becoming a partner with NERC and DEP in an event composting pilot. C.J. has had positive feedback from upper management and Yale athletics.
- C.J. said that City Seed would be happy to have our home compost brochure as a handout at the Farmers Market.

New Business and Discussion: Home Composting Brochure, Industrial Stormwater General Permit.

- DEP intern, Bethany Dunbar, has been working on a new home composting brochure with KC. It will be much shorter and more basic than the old brochure in an attempt to make it easier to download and reproduce. Resources will be provided so that readers can seek more in-depth information.
- DEP is modifying and reissuing their "General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater Associated with Industrial Activity". It may affect small composting facilities not on farms, particularly those handling manures. It is still in internal review and will be public noticed.

Share: Vac Truck Experiment, Cirque Du Soleil, Yale Dining Hall "Trash Talk", Feet to the Fire

- Yale will be starting a food waste collection program pilot this summer, and then move into full scale this fall. Their hauler experimented with evacuating the food waste from the roll-out carts with a vacuum truck (like those used for cleaning catch basins). Albeit slow, it worked fairly well on loose food scraps, but not so well on food scraps that had been put into compostable bags. It just picked-up the whole bag, which could not fit through the vacuum hose. It is questionable whether the vacuum method would work in the winter when the food will likely be frozen into a giant block.
- KC went for a kitchen tour of Cirque Du Soleil, which has been performing in Hartford for a few weeks and has been separating food scraps for composting during this year's North American tour. Hartford is their first venue, and although they are trying, Cirque has apparently had issues with contamination in the organics collection container, and with hauler communications. Their solid waste management company will work with all parties in getting this done better for the rest of the tour. Good example of how education and communication can make or break an organics recycling program.
- C.J. talked trash to 250 Yale dining hall workers in an orientation/training day. He talked about recycling, where the trash gets disposed, and the upcoming food waste separation/composting program (2 tons/day). He incorporated magic tricks about recycling and composting to drive home their importance.
- Wesleyan will be holding its "Feet to the Fire" festival on May 10th at Veteran's Park in Middletown. It is a carbon-neutral global climate change/sustainability event. They will be collecting food scraps for composting. Some will be going to the school's composting site at Long Lane Farm, and some will likely go to the City of Middletown's vermicomposting project. We are all invited to the festival!

Next Steps: Finalize home composting brochure, find \$ to print, get them to New Haven area Markets.

Next Meeting: We are skipping the May subcommittee meeting, however you are all still welcome to attend the full committee meeting that month. Our next subcommittee meeting will be Tuesday, June 24, 2008 at 10:45 following the main SWAC meeting. Room TBA.