

Acadia Disposal District Annual Report 2025 for 2024

The Acadia Disposal District (ADD) is an independent quasi-municipal, tax-exempt solid waste corporation with its main office located in the Town of Mount Desert. It received its Certificate of Organization from the State of Maine in 2003. The purpose of the ADD is to assist with the cost-effective, environmentally friendly, efficient, and lawful management, disposal, and recycling of municipal solid waste (MSW) materials on behalf of its member towns. The ADD has an adopted set of by-laws by which the district is operated, and each member community has signed an interlocal agreement as a requirement for joining. Charter Members of the ADD include the Towns of Cranberry Isles, Mount Desert and Trenton; Frenchboro and Tremont have since joined; Southwest Harbor rejoined in 2023. We would welcome additional member communities.

A. Board of Directors: In conformance with the town's member interlocal agreements, the Board of Directors consists of one representative from each one of the member towns. Each director has one vote regardless of the population or evaluation of the town they represent. We encourage anyone with solid waste related questions or comments to contact their local director. The members are:

Cranberry Isles: Director Jim Fortune at james@cranberryisles-me.gov

Frenchboro: Director Richard Turner at rladdturner@gmail.com

Mount Desert: Director and Chair Tony Smith at 29parsonscounty@gmail.com

Southwest Harbor: Director Jim Vallette at sb2@southwestharbor.org

Tremont: Director and Clerk Carey Donovan at carey3d@gmail.com

Trenton: Director Martha B. Higgins at atlmainiac@comcast.net

Treasurer, Kathryn Mahar

B. ADD Website: The ADD website went online in February 2019. We are working with our web site provider to improve the site. As with last year, we look to update the site by including more information related to solid waste and recycling on it. Draft minutes of our meetings can now be found on the web site once they are prepared and before the next meeting. We can be found at <https://acadiadisposal.org>

C. Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)

a. MSW

MSW from ADD member towns is taken to the Juniper Ridge Landfill outside of Old Town while the Hampden facility is being redesigned and reconstructed. Most of the ADD member's MSW is taken to the EMR transfer station in Southwest. EMR continues to provide excellent service. The owners are a great resource for the history of MSW in our area as well as insight into DEP requirements, current procedures and trends.

In addition to MSW, EMR accepts waste green wood, metals, construction demotion debris, bulky waste, inert fill, tires, stumps, and freon removal.

b. Recycling

Most towns who had opted for the Hampden facility "One Bin All In" program have restarted their own program following the closure of that facility in May 2020. The process was doing what it was designed to do but a lack of funds and insufficient management lead to the closure, achieving greater than 50% diversion in accordance with its DEP permit and state goals on a number of occasions while it was open. The technology worked.

MWS will accept single sort or source separated recyclables and will also be pulling recyclables from the MSW that is delivered from member towns. It is anticipated that the facility will offer “One Bin All In” when it reopens with an anticipated start date of 2025.

c. Municipal Review Committee (MRC): The MRC is a nine-member Board of Directors which works for its 115 member towns, cities, and solid waste districts, who, in groups of three, are elected to staggered three-year terms by the member communities. All members of the Board serve the entire membership on an at-large basis with a focus on implementation of the MRC mission for the benefit of the entire MRC region. The MRC mission is to help provide access to safe, sustainable, efficient, and affordable management of MSW with a maximum diversion of materials away from landfills. Board members are not paid as some people seem to believe but are volunteers. The Board is typically comprised of town and city managers, public works directors, finance directors, former bankers, members of their local selectboard or council, managers of solid waste facilities and folks retired from jobs or who participate in volunteer work that lends itself to being a productive Board member. An executive director, an assistant to the executive director who was added in 2024, consultants, and legal counsel assist the Board with their duties and responsibilities. Additional information about the MRC can be found at www.mrcmaine.org.

d. MRC and the Hampden Solid Waste Processing Facility

In August 2022, after many months of negotiations between the Bondholder Trustee, the Receiver, Lienholders, and the MRC, the sale of the waste processing facility in Hampden to the MRC was approved and the purchase was made. The facility was renamed Municipal Waste Solutions or MWS.

It had been estimated that \$20 million would be needed to successfully restart the plant and cover operating costs until the facility achieved profitability. Rather than asking MRC members to provide this level of funding, MRC solicited proposals from potential private sector partners. MRC identified and agreed to terms with a company called Innovative Resource Recovery (Innovative), a leading resource recovery company that specializes in transforming waste into valuable resources. Innovative is committed to advancing sustainable waste management practices by implementing advanced technologies and fostering collaboration with industry stakeholders.

In June of 2023, the MRC and Innovative announced the signing of a landmark agreement to become co-owners of the MWS Hampden facility. This collaboration marks a significant step forward in advancing sustainable waste management practices and promoting a circular economy in Maine.

The Hampden plant has long been recognized as a crucial hub for effective waste processing and recycling in the region. By bringing together the expertise and resources of MRC and Innovative, this partnership aims to enhance operational efficiencies, expand recycling capabilities, and further reduce the environmental impact of municipal solid waste.

Since the partnership was formed, MWS continues to advance engineering and development activities to support a re-start of the Hampden facility in 2025. As part of the due diligence process, the equipment was previously turned on and run as part of Innovative’s due diligence process related to their purchasing a portion of the facility. Since the formation of the partnership, trial runs of the facility were conducted using MSW chosen from a cross section of MRC members representing different recycling approaches, including communities that engage in mixing and sorting, those utilizing curbside recycling, and those relying on local transfer stations for recycling. DEP and the facilities equipment manufacturer were in attendance.

The primary objectives of the trial runs were to verify equipment functionality as well as obtain samples of the organic and fiber streams that will be processed in the expanded anaerobic digestion system. Those feedstock samples were shipped to MWS’s anaerobic digestion technology partner for a series of lab tests to further support the overall modifications to the facility. In addition to the engineering activities, we continue to advance various commercial and regulatory elements of the re-start plan, including key workstreams such

as working with the DEP on permitting, identifying additional sources of feedstock that will allow us to fully utilize the facilities capacity, and developing markets for the various products that will be recovered at the facility. MWS expects to construct process modifications this year and commencing commercial operations in 2025.

D. Highlights of MWS' Path to Start-up:

Following are excerpts from Newsletters and updates sent to members and others on our mailing list that describe the process, and great progress, to date that MWS has achieved towards getting the facility open and operational.

January 2024 Newsletter

a. Waste Running Through the Plant Again! Last month (December 23 at that time), we received formal approval from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to commence our test runs at the plant. These crucial runs started earlier this month and will span the next six weeks. During this period, we anticipate delivering approximately 1,000 pounds of waste to the plant each week. So far both Brewer and Carmel's waste has run through the plant. The primary objective of these test runs is to assess the volume and quality of gas that MWS can produce through anaerobic digestion. This milestone brings us one step closer to realizing the full potential of our project and its positive impact on our communities. Three individuals from the UMaine Process Development Center toured the MWS facility. They have come over to Hampden to work with us in the lab on some testing of the processed waste too. This all gives us more information as we look toward reopening in 2025.

b. Voice in Augusta! Over the last several weeks the MRC has been active in Augusta because of the reports and potential regulatory changes that could impact us. MRC is working closely with the Department of Environmental Protection officials and legislators on the ENR Committee to address bills and rules, ensuring that our 115 member voices are understood in Augusta. The ENR Committee held two workshops on January 4 on LD 1660, SP0665 "An Act to Provide That Advanced Recycling Facilities Are Subject to Solid Waste Regulation and That Advanced Recycling Does Not Constitute Recycling" as well as LD1908, HP0645 "An Act Regarding the Reduction and Recycling of Food Waste". Our testimony in May influenced amendments to LD1660, and the bill has been amended. Senator Carney even mentioned at the start of her presentation to the committee that the amendment narrows the scope due to many concerns the MRC raised in the last session. You can watch the video including Senator Carney's statements here. MRC was represented at the ENR Committee meeting on January 11 on the State's Materials Management Plan, including the 2024 State Waste Management and Recycling Plan Update and the 2022 Waste Generation and Disposal Capacity Report. Link here. You may recall that the MRC submitted comments on the report that are available on our website (https://mrcmaine.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Maine-DEP-SWP-2024-MRC_comments.pdf)

c. Materials Management Task Force MRC Executive Director Mike Carroll represented members on the Maine Climate Council's Materials Management Task Force. The Maine Climate Council was created by law in 2019, and the work of the Council and its task forces is crucial to meeting the state's goals. MRC was asked to participate in the upcoming climate planning process for waste and materials management. The MMTF co-chairs are Commissioner Melanie Loyzim from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and Dr. Cindy Isenhour, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Climate Change at the University of Maine. MMTF members will serve a six-month term and meet monthly via hybrid meetings (with the option to attend in-person or virtually) between January 2024 and June 2024.

March 2024 Update: MWS Waste Processing Facility Update

We wanted to share a formal update on the ongoing efforts to reopen the Municipal Waste Solutions (MWS) facility in Hampden. Since establishing our partnership with Innovative Resource Recovery (Innovative) eight months ago, MWS has made substantial progress toward its redevelopment plan. Innovative is actively

engineering a retrofit of the plant, focusing on enhanced production of renewable natural gas. Most recently, on January 1st, MWS received formal approval from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP) to conduct weekly waste test runs. Since that approval, MWS has safely conducted multiple weekly system trials to obtain key data points that will further support the overall system design.

This campaign marks the second set of test runs, with the previous one conducted in July 2023 to ensure the operational readiness of equipment. Over the past nine weeks, small amounts of waste from various locations, including Bangor, Brewer, Orono, Eddington, Clifton, Carmel, and Hampden, have been brought into MWS for processing and testing. The objective of these trials was to assess equipment performance and procure samples that are being used to evaluate gas production potential and refine the system design of the planned anaerobic digestion system.

MWS utilized multiple technical consultants to facilitate these trials, including the University of Maine Process & Development Center, which supported the laboratory work required to properly conduct lab testing and to analyze results of the waste processing. Innovative on-site process engineer oversees all activities and manages the various third-party technical parties to advance the design of the waste processing equipment and anaerobic digestion system, as well as the regionally based technical service providers MWS has engaged in the project, such as Mid-South Engineering of Orono and Haley Ward of Bangor.

In addition to the technical aspects, coordination with local gas utilities is underway to ensure the safe and reliable injection of Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) into the local distribution grid.

The MRC acknowledges that the reopening of MWS will take time but is very pleased with the depth of expertise Innovative is bringing to bear on this project and the progress that it has made within such a short period of ownership. We commend the Innovative team for its transparency, direct approach, and financial stability. The MRC fully agrees with the Innovative approach and commitment to getting the project done correctly the first time. Their focus is on addressing plant bottlenecks, refining designs, and ensuring the long-term economic viability of the Hampden facility while diverting waste from landfills.

MRC is excited about our partnership and knows that together, we are positively impacting waste management, economic sustainability, and environmental stewardship. The reopening of this facility will not happen overnight, but it will happen.

April 2024 Newsletter: MWS Facility Update

MRC and Innovative Resource Recovery are focused on the Municipal Waste Solutions (MWS) facility in Hampden reopening. With approval from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, MWS has been conducting waste test runs to assess equipment performance and refine system designs. Technical consultants and local service providers have been involved in these trials, and coordination with gas utilities is ongoing for the safe injection of Renewable Natural Gas into the local pipeline. The MRC is impressed with Innovative's expertise and transparency, emphasizing the importance of addressing plant bottlenecks and ensuring long-term economic viability while diverting waste from landfills. The partnership aims to positively impact waste management, economic sustainability, and environmental stewardship, with the facility's reopening being a gradual but promising process. More information about the progress toward reopening can be found in our March update available on the MRC's website.

July 2024 Newsletter: Facility Design Update

Last month, MWS conducted an onsite meeting with our key technology suppliers and design engineers to advance engineering activities kicked off in May. A team of over ten people flew in from locations both domestically and from Canada and Europe. The objective of the two-day meeting was to review progress to date, agree upon key design aspects, and refine the near- and medium-term project engineering schedule and deliverables. This was an important step toward reopening the facility. We then provided the DEP with an

up-to-date overview of our project to facility dialogue around key design considerations needed to be addressed during the permit revision application process. This will help make for a smoother permitting process to facility proven technological advances in waste processing and recycling.

October 2024 Newsletter

a. Financing Approved: Phase 1 funding for the updates and design changes to the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF), requested in September, has been approved, and finalized by the White Oak Financial LLC, who are providing financing for the project. This funding, exceeding \$20 million, will initiate revisions to the MRF construction (layout). In late August and early September, Innovative placed a significant deposit on critical equipment for the MRF, including machines designed to open bags at the start of the recovery process, capitalizing on a unique opportunity. The next funding request will cover the investment needed for the Anaerobic Digestion (AD) system. While the design and engineering for the AD system are still being finalized, a substantial amount will also be requested for this project.

b. Additions to the Team: Municipal Waste Solutions is excited to announce two key additions to its team. Gary Hartmann has been hired as Chief Operating Officer (COO) and started on-site on September 9th. With over 20 years of experience in the waste industry at companies like Waste Connections and Waste Management, Gary will oversee day-to-day operations and lead the restart of the MRF. His appointment allows CEO James Condela to focus on strategic initiatives, including the Anaerobic Digestion (AD) project. Additionally, Kasey Fisher, a senior process engineer with extensive facility development expertise, has joined on a consulting basis to provide vital technical support for the MRF project. Kasey previously collaborated with James at Continues Materials, delivering their first commercial-scale plant

January 2025

a. Leading the Way In Safety: We are thrilled to announce a game-changing advancement in fire safety at our facility – the installation of the Fire Rover system! This cutting edge technology represents a major leap forward in protecting our operations and team members from one of the waste industry’s most pressing challenges. The Fire Rover is like having a vigilant guardian watching over our tipping floor 24/7, using advanced thermal detection to spot potential fires before they can take hold. At a time when lithium battery fires are becoming an increasing threat to waste processing facilities, we are proud to be the first in our region to implement this state-of-the-art protection system. What makes this particularly exciting is the system’s ability to detect temperature changes and signs of combustion in real-time, allowing for immediate response to potential hazards. This means we can stop fires before they start – protecting our facility, our workers, and our community’s essential waste processing infrastructure. This investment demonstrates our commitment to staying ahead of emerging challenges in our industry, particularly the growing risks posed by improperly disposed lithium batteries. The Fire Rover system is not just an upgrade – it is a complete transformation in how we approach fire safety in waste management. We are setting a new standard for safety and innovation in our region, ensuring we can continue to serve our community while protecting our valuable resources and infrastructure. Welcome to the future of waste facility fire protection!

b. Strengthening Connections & MWS Progress: Big things are ahead for the Municipal Review Committee (MRC) as we prepare to solidify our role as a hub for waste management solutions and collaboration among our 115 member communities. In the coming months, MRC will unveil a rebranding effort that highlights the value we bring to local communities, with a focus on educational materials and advocacy. We are not just updating our look, strengthening connections, and enhancing understanding of MRC’s role in managing waste and advancing the circular economy. As we step into 2025, we are excited to share more about this transformation. Exciting developments are also happening at the Municipal Waste Solutions (MWS) facility! MWS is gearing up for the arrival of trucks, loaders, and material-handling equipment in February, with waste processing set to begin shortly after. These advancements will establish MWS as a hub for municipal waste solutions, benefiting the communities we proudly serve. Stay tuned for more updates!

E. MWS FAQ's that are also on the MRC website at www.mrcmaine.org

1. What is the management and governance of the MRC?

The management of MRC includes an [executive director](#) and a nine member volunteer [Board of Directors](#) (the “Board”). The Board is typically comprised of town managers, public works directors and finance directors from member communities that are elected to staggered three-year terms by the membership. The Board meets regularly on a quarterly basis, with additional meetings and subcommittee meetings scheduled as needed. All members of the Board serve the membership on an at-large basis with a focus on implementation of the MRC mission for the benefit of the entire region.

Support services are provided by an outside bookkeeper, Maine-based counsel ([Eaton Peabody](#) with a principal office in Bangor, Maine), a solid waste industry consultant with technical and financial expertise (Commonwealth Resource Management Corporation of Boston, Massachusetts), a civil engineering and environmental firm ([Haley Ward, Inc.](#), of Bangor, Maine); and specialists in public relations and governmental relations. MRC also maintains relationships with the Maine Municipal Association, the Maine Resource Recovery Association, the University of Maine at Orono and other Maine-based regional and public-sector organizations involved in solid waste management. The MRC operating budget is supported by [dues assessed](#) on the members; fees from counterparty business arrangements; and support for special projects from reserve funds.

2. Acronyms and Brief Definitions

MRC: Municipal Review Committee, Inc. is a non-profit corporation dedicated to ensuring the long-term affordable, environmentally sound disposal of municipal solid waste for its members.

MWS: Municipal Waste Solutions, the new identity of the Hampden facility.

Crossroads: Crossroads Landfill located in Norridgewock, Maine.

WM: Waste Management, Inc., the owners of Crossroads, is a waste management company headquartered in Houston, Texas.

JRL: Juniper Ridge Landfill, owned by the State of Maine and operated by Casella.

Casella: Casella Waste Systems, a waste management company based in Rutland, Vermont.

MSW: Municipal Solid Waste.

Bypass Waste: MSW being sent to an alternative site on an interim, short-term basis after the facility has been in operation is referred to as bypass waste.

3. Who is the MRC?

The MRC, which stands for Municipal Review Committee, Inc., is a non-profit corporation dedicated to ensuring the affordable, environmentally sound disposal of municipal solid waste (MSW) in the long-term for its members. The MRC membership is currently comprised of the 115 communities that have contracted to send their MSW to the MWS waste processing facility in Hampden, Maine.

Our nine member volunteer board is elected by the membership and is made up of municipal officials and experienced individuals with extensive knowledge of the MSW industry. Our decisions are made in public meetings. We have been proactive about ensuring that our members will have an affordable and long-term solution to MSW disposal. We recognize that when we work together we are all in a better position to address the waste handling needs of the region.

Click these links to learn more about the [MRC](#) and its long and successful [history](#).

4. How can I receive updates from the MRC?

Sign-up for e-mail updates from the MRC [here](#). We will not share your e-mail address. Attend MRC [board meetings](#), which are always open to the public. Like the MRC on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#).

5. What is MRC's role in the MWS facility?

MRC owns the land on which the facility sits and leases the property to MWS. MRC has all the rights of a landlord over its tenant consistent with the terms of the [Site Lease](#). MRC and Innovative Resource Recovery co-own the MWS facility.

6. What are the advantages of the MWS?

The technology at MWS has many advantages compared with other alternatives reviewed by the MRC. Of particular note are the following:

- The facility converts organic wastes into high-value Refined Natural Gas (RNG) without needing a new region-wide system to collect organic materials separately from other wastes.
- The facility uses an anaerobic digestion for organics but also optical sorters to recover recyclable materials. Recovered recyclable materials will be clean with little contamination, thereby maintaining Maine's tradition and reputation for producing high-quality recyclable materials.
- As a regional facility, it offers the capability to make use of technologies, market opportunities, and environmental control measures at a scale that is not available or feasible for use by individual communities or groups of communities in the MRC service territory. By continuing to work together through the MRC, communities can accomplish far more than if each were to pursue an individual solution. Likewise, the more there are that join together, the more successful the project will be.

7. What is the process for recycling and processing?

The facility involves specialty, custom built front-end processing equipment for the incoming MSW that recovers recyclable materials and converts organic materials to RNG. While strides have been made to increase recycling, there are still a number of recyclables that remain in household MSW even after diversion by local recycling programs. We expect that as additional investment is made it will enhance the capture rate for recovering materials and will have a large impact on the ability of our member communities as they strive to meet the State of Maine's proposed recycling rate, which has stayed stagnant for over 20 years despite repeated efforts to raise it.

Following the capture of recyclables, the facility capitalizes on the organic material that makes up approximately 40% of MSW. Through a proprietary accelerated anaerobic digestion process – cooking or boiling down in a manner of speaking – the facility converts the MSW to RNG. Our goal is to have over 50% of incoming material recycled or converted to energy or other saleable products. This amount will likely increase as some of the residuals that were originally thought to be of no value can now be used, for example, as an additive to processed plastics to make briquettes for use as boiler fuels.

8. Who is the owner of the Hampden facility?

MRC and Innovative Resource Recovery co-own the MWS facility.

9. What materials will the facility accept?

MWS handles municipal solid waste (MSW) from member communities, some commercial haulers, and, potentially, other cities and towns in Maine if capacity is available. The facility will accept solid waste that meets the definition of [Acceptable Waste](#) found in Exhibit A of the [Master Waste Supply Agreement](#). This definition is identical to that included in communities' previous contracts with PERC. MWS will not accept any out-of-state waste for processing. MWS will not receive any construction and demolition debris (CDD) or out-of-state waste for processing.

10. What material does MWS NOT accept?

Joining Members are precluded by contract from delivering [Unacceptable Waste](#) to the facility. Joining Members that make such deliveries despite the contractual prohibition will be required to pay the cost of removing and of providing an appropriate manner for disposal of such materials. This type of contractual provision is standard in the waste industry and is substantially the same as that included in the expired PERC contracts.

11. Is out-of-state trash being used at the facility to fulfill volume?

No. Out-of-state waste is not allowed per contract language in the [Master Waste Supply Agreement](#) and the [Site Lease](#). In addition, the facility's DEP permit does not allow for out-of-state deliveries – the MRC and Fiberight did not ask for it to be permitted.

12. Does MWS accept single stream recycling?

MWS will accept and process single stream (no-sort) recyclables. Member communities must contract separately for this service.

13. My community wants to change our recycling program and implement new diversion programs. Who should I contact?

Contact the MRC [here](#). Fill out the simple form and the Executive Director will respond with an answer to your question.

14. What is my town's current tipping fee?

As of January 1, 2025, the tipping rate is \$87.62 per ton which comes from the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics CPI Adjustment. Per Section 5.1 of the [Master Waste Supply Agreement](#), the tip fee is subject to adjustment as of each January 1 of the term of the agreement to reflect any annual percentage increase in the consumer price index (CPI).

15. How many years is the tipping fee for?

There is a possible 40-year horizon on the contracted tip fee. The base fee of \$70/ton is for an initial contract term of 15 years. Joining Members have the option of terminating the contract at the end of the 15-year period or contracting for up to five additional 5-year extensions.

16. I am a commercial hauler and want to deliver MSW to MWS. Who do I contact to sign-up?

If you, your hauler, or you are a hauler looking for general information, please contact MRC Executive Director Michael Carroll at 207-664-1700 or execdirector@mrcmaine.org.

17. Will municipalities still be able to use the "one bin, all in" model to collect MSW?

Yes.

F. DEP's 2024 Maine Materials Management Plan

As anticipated in last year's ADD annual report, the "Maine Materials Management Plan ("the Plan"): 2024 State Waste Management and Recycling Plan Update and 2022 Waste Generation and Disposal Capacity Report January 2024" prepared by the Maine DEP was released in January 2024", both under one cover. Reprinted below from the Plan are its "Executive Summary" and "Introduction." We encourage you to review the Plan on the DEP's website. Its "Table of Contents" is a great outline of the contents of the report

which, in my opinion, is a great overview of our management of solid waste in the State. If you need assistance accessing the information, please contact us and we will see what we can do to help you.

Executive Summary (from the Plan)

38 M.R.S. § 2122, requires the Department of Environmental Protection (“Department”) to update a Statewide Waste Management and Recycling Plan (“Plan”) every five years. This update includes an analysis of, and a plan for, the management, reduction, and recycling of solid waste for Maine. While not required, this year’s Plan also includes information about existing disposal capacity in order to plan for projected capacity needs. Information in this Plan includes the 2022 data normally included in the Waste Generation and Disposal Capacity Report (38 M.R.S. § 2124-A) which is not due again until January 15, 2026. While this Plan includes the key elements required by statute, many additional elements are included in this Plan to paint a broader picture of how solid waste is managed, handled, and disposed of in Maine. All of these factors combined are complicated and intertwined with geography, transportation and logistics, business and economics, and policy. This report evaluates some of those intertwined factors and also highlights steps that are being taken to better understand these complexities, and what the Department can do to enhance management of waste streams in Maine.

Maine is currently faced with difficult challenges regarding waste management, ranging from the sufficiency of long-term disposal capacity to infrastructure gaps and inconsistent access by Maine communities to programs such as recycling or composting. All of these challenges play an important role in Maine’s ability to meet statutory goals of the solid waste management hierarchy including waste reduction and waste diversion. As a path forward to finding solutions to these challenges, multiple comprehensive assessments are currently underway that will provide significant insight into Maine’s waste streams, the results of which will lend certainty and credibility to future planning efforts. These studies are described in greater detail within the Plan and include a comprehensive analysis of food loss and waste, the components of municipal solid waste and construction and demolition debris, and sludge capacity and management solutions. It is critical the comprehensive data from these studies allow for appropriate solutions to be identified for Maine’s challenges.

The key takeaways from this Plan include the following:

- Maine is currently grappling with a shortage of waste disposal options for the Eastern Maine Region.
- The expansion of Juniper Ridge Landfill (“JRL”) in Old Town will be necessary to ensure there is adequate capacity for the entire State of Maine over the next 10 years.
- Assuming an expansion of JRL takes place, Maine has between 15-20 years of capacity left for its statewide waste disposal (with the exception of Aroostook County which has about 40 years capacity remaining).
- To best manage the waste disposal capacity concerns the Department will plan for enhanced waste reduction and diversion programs as well as evaluate key infrastructure needs for waste disposal.
- Increases in waste disposal capacity for Maine will likely need to include expanding landfill space, full operation of incineration and waste processing facilities, and/or implementing new technologies to treat waste streams to either reduce volume or prevent the need for landfilling.
- Current assessments underway will help inform the Department of how to best enhance waste reduction and diversion programs. One of these assessments is complete, while the others are anticipated to be completed in 2024, 2025 and 2026

.

- Implementation of the product stewardship program for packaging materials will play an important role likely beginning in 2026 in waste reduction and reuse, while simultaneously supporting recycling efforts at municipalities by 2027.

This Plan is based on the best available data at the time of its release, including input provided by the public, and other publicly available information. Prior to development of this Plan, the Department hosted a series of five regional stakeholder meetings seeking input for updating this Plan. The meetings were held from late June to early August of 2023 in Presque Isle, Machias, Orono, Augusta, and Portland. Meetings were accessible both in-person and remotely, ensuring all interested parties were able to participate. As a result, the Department received valuable feedback that is discussed in this Plan.

Introduction (from the Plan)

This 5-year update to Maine’s Materials Management Plan has been prepared in accordance with 38 M.R.S. § 2122, which states: “The department shall prepare an analysis of, and a plan for, the management, reduction and recycling of solid waste for the State.” 38 M.R.S. § 2123-A requires that, “[t]he State Plan [to] include the following elements:

1. Waste characterization. The state plan must be based on a comprehensive analysis of solid waste generated, recycled, and disposed of in the State. Data collected must include, but not be limited to, the source, type, and amount of waste currently generated; and the costs and types of waste management employed including recycling, composting, landspreading, incineration or landfilling.
2. Waste reduction and recycling assessment. The state plan must include an assessment of the extent to which waste generation could be reduced at the source and the extent to which recycling can be increased.
3. Determination of existing and potential disposal capacity. The state plan must identify existing solid waste disposal and management capacity within the State and the potential for expansion of that capacity.
4. Projected demand for capacity. The state plan must identify the need in the State for current and future solid waste disposal capacity by type of solid waste, including identification of need over the next 5-year, 10-year and 20-year periods.

38 M.R.S. § 2122 also requires that each plan update must be based on the priorities and recycling goals established in 38 M.R.S. §§ 2101 and 2132 and must provide guidance and direction to municipalities in planning and implementing waste management and recycling programs at the state, regional and local levels. The Department published its initial statewide Materials Management Plan in January 2014, and updates it every 5 years to incorporate changes in waste generation trends, changes in waste recycling and disposal technologies, development of new waste generating activities and other factors affecting solid waste management.

The Department views this Plan as an opportunity to comprehensively evaluate and provide information regarding materials management throughout the state. Stakeholder meetings were convened in Presque Isle, Machias, Orono, Augusta, and Portland to assist in this Plan’s development and content. Recordings and transcripts for the stakeholder meetings are available on the Department’s Materials Management Plan for Solid Waste and Recycling webpage. The Department thanks all stakeholders who attended these meetings virtually or in person for their participation and input to this Plan.

Based on an analysis of current waste management practices in Maine and guided by Maine’s Solid Waste Management and Food Recovery Hierarchies (see Appendix A) this 5-year update includes strategies and actions focused on:

1. Increasing waste reduction, food rescue, goods repair (electronics, clothing, furniture, etc.), and reuse initiatives;

2. Continued focus on increasing the diversion of organics from disposal;
3. Diverting materials from landfill disposal;
4. Exploring potential pathways to broaden the economic feasibility and appeal of materials recovery such as green jobs training programs or small business opportunities not yet widely developed in Maine; and
5. Evaluating strategic needs for expansion of waste disposal capacity (landfilling and incineration) and waste processing technologies.

This Plan highlights key challenges with meeting Maine’s statutory solid waste disposal reduction and diversion goals and suggests areas of potential exploration and action to determine their suitability for implementation in Maine. Such action will require investments in additional waste management and recycling infrastructure.

The MMMP will also provide guidance in regard to the DEP’s Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Program for Packaging implementation, a summary of which follows here.

G. DEP’s Stewardship Program for Packaging (Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Program)

In July 2021, the Maine legislature passed a law establishing a [stewardship program for packaging material](#) or, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program. The program's purpose is to reduce the volume and toxicity and increase the recyclability of packaging material. Producers – generally the brand owners – make payments based on the amount and the recyclability of the packaging material used to contain, protect, deliver, present, or distribute their products in or into Maine. Producer payments are used to reimburse participating municipalities for recycling and waste management costs, invest in infrastructure to improve the management of packaging material, and educate Maine residents on what and how to recycle.

On December 5th, 2024, the Maine Board of Environmental Protection adopted the [rules for the program](#). The program rules allow the Department to implement, administer, and enforce the program, with the goals of reducing the burden to municipalities of managing packaging material and improving the design and management of packaging material. Additionally, the rules characterize packaging material, provide a method for determining municipal reimbursement and producer fees, provide a method and criteria for investing in infrastructure and education, detail alternative collection programs, and provide mechanisms for ongoing assessment and updates to the program.

The program, which is expected to be fully operational in 2027, is operated by a stewardship organization (SO) selected by the Department following a competitive bidding process. The SO is responsible for day-to-day operations of the program while the Department provides oversight. Producer payments fund SO operations and Department oversight. It is anticipated that the DEP will execute a contract with the selected SO in April 2026 for what is anticipated to be a 10-year contract. .

This program shifts the cost of managing packaging material from taxpayers to producers. Because producer payments are based on the amount of packaging material sold in or into Maine and adjusted to incentivize environmentally preferable attributes, such as lower toxicity and higher recyclability, this program provides incentives for producers to choose more readily recyclable packaging and use less packaging. The program allows for participation by municipalities, producers, recyclers, and other interested parties. Municipalities are not required to participate in this program.

Reimbursements to participating municipalities reinforce Maine’s Solid Waste Hierarchy and reflect the median cost of managing packaging material, thereby providing incentive for improved efficiency. Funds paid into the packaging stewardship fund that are not used for municipal reimbursements or program administration are used to improve recycling infrastructure and education in Maine.

This program does not ban or create construction standards for packaging material. A producer can continue to package its products in ways that align with product needs and other regulatory requirements. However, some packaging material – due to its volume, toxicity, or lack of recyclability – will require higher payments into the packaging stewardship fund.

The MRC has been closely watching and actively participating in the DEP’s EPR program law implementation and rulemaking process and will continue to assist with the program. Representatives of the Board of Directors have taken the lead for the MRC in this process. They have conducted meetings with representatives of the DEP in Bangor and participated in the EPR’s Producer Exemptions and Municipal Reimbursement stakeholder meetings.

H. Household Hazardous Waste & Universal Waste Collection Day

The ADD sponsored another HHW&UW (Household Hazardous Waste & Universal Waste) collection event on September 21, 2024. Once again we were at MDIHS. Our HHW contractor had two tractor-trailers and additional staff to sort, pack and haul off our waste materials because they have learned that they will achieve or get close to single day collection volumes from us. They have done so three times in the past. As before, this year’s collection was open from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM for truckloads of materials from the outer islands then from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM for the general public. Financial assistance from the League of Towns, use of the MDIHS parking lot, the donation of two roll-off containers from Gott’s Disposal, the work of our volunteers and waste vendors we have successfully worked with in the past, helped make this another very successful event. We thank them all. Materials were delivered to us from the same towns as last year.

a. Universal Waste (UW): The comparison summary of universal waste collected in 2023 and 2024 is shown below. Some of the waste is measured per each item; some by weight. This is the second year flat screen televisions have been collected separately from non-flat screen ones and broken out and reported separately. We were informed that Northcoast Services, the contractor we have worked with for many years to collect our UW is now under new ownership. We were told that there will be minimal change on our end of how they do business.

UW Summary	2023		2024	
Item	Units	Weight	Units	Weight
	Each	Pounds	Each	Pounds
Fluorescent Lights	542	NA	1,240	NA
Batteries:				
Alkaline	NA	267	NA	273
Lead Acid	NA	1,331	NA	1,937
Lithium ion	NA	106	NA	47
Lithium	NA	NA	NA	37
NiCD	NA	78	NA	64
NiMH	NA	10	NA	36
Button Cell Battery	NA	4	NA	4
Compact Fluorescent Lamps	0	NA	266	NA
U lamp	0	NA	0	NA
CPU's and Laptops	NA	675	NA	1,191
Miscellaneous: Circuit Boards, Drives, Monitors	NA	1,724	NA	3,579
Monitors	NA	487	NA	495
Printers	NA	654	NA	1,217
Televisions – non-flat screen	NA	673	NA	2,121
Flat Screen Televisions	NA	392	NA	2,428

Air Conditioners	NA	0	NA	0
Microwaves for recycling	NA	0	NA	0
Smoke Detectors	NA	31	NA	22
Wire and Cable	NA	0	NA	0
Cell Phones	NA	0	NA	0
Freon containing	NA	0	NA	0
PCB Ballasts	10	NA	6	NA
Non-PCB Ballasts	35	NA	0	NA
Hg Containing Devices	3	NA	6	NA
Totals	590	6,432	1,518	13,429

b. Household Hazardous Waste (HHW): There were 854 units of HHW items collected in 2023 compared to 967 in 2024 with one unit being equal to five gallons or twenty pounds, as applicable. This was another very good collection day for all concerned. The waste materials included oil-based paint, turpentine, varnish, stains, auto fluids, paint removers and strippers, swimming pool and photo chemicals, adhesives, solvents, fertilizer, oven and drain cleaner, fungicides, herbicides, pesticides, acids, and linseed oil. We do not record exact amounts of the specific waste material; we work with the vendor to estimate the number of units of each.

Our HHW has traditionally been collected by EPI (Environmental Products, Inc.) from Auburn, Maine. In January of this year, we were contacted by EPI and told that as of January 1, 2025, EPI had been bought by EnviroServe, a company from Utah, and from now on would operate under their name. EPI told us they do not anticipate any substantive changes to the way they do business at, for example, our annual collection events.

EnviroServe owns about 48 similar companies across the country and they chose to acquire EPI because they are impressed with how they operated. Other states do not have regional annual HHW collection events like we do. EnviroServe would like the former EPI staff to show other states in which they conduct business how they can effectively gather HHW at events similar to ours and keep such things out of the environment. EPI noted that like the former EPI, EnviroServe operates under both State and Federal Regulations with the more stringent of the two taking precedence. Any transportation of the HHW materials over public roadways is governed by the DOT.

I. Regional Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility: As reported last year, the ADD was considering the development of a local regional household hazardous waste (HHW) collection facility. Working with members of our congressional delegations, we were successful with our application for funding, being awarded \$350,000 towards the costs of our proposed project. It was, and still is, the opinion of the ADD that the more opportunities there are for people to properly dispose of such materials, the greater the amount of materials would be that are properly managed and disposed of and not end up in the regular trash or other places it should not go.

To date, we have not finalized a site for a HHW facility. We ran into some local political opposition about a site we had planned to investigate but have put it on hold. We had a cursory review of the ADD geographical area done by our consultant to see if any prospective sites might be readily identified using GIS along with a discussion of their work. Based on the results, we have put any further research for a HHW site on hold as well. We are now investigating the possibility of using the funds we received for a project other than the one we were awarded the funds for. This alternate project would not address HHW but would still be solid waste related. A change in the use of the funds, even for a solid waste related use, would likely be difficult. We will keep you apprised of any developments we have.

J. Student Grants: As reported in the past, the ADD established a student grant program for schools located in ADD member towns. The grant must be applied for before implementation of a project and there is no deadline for our receipt of an application. We do not have a formal application form but the request for a 2-24-25/ADD/TS

grant must be made to us in writing. If you have any questions about the grants or the process, please contact Chair Tony Smith at 29parsonscounty@gmail.com

K. Insurance: ADD purchases volunteer, property and casualty and workers compensation insurance from the Maine Municipal Association (MMA). We are required to carry the workers compensation insurance even though we do not have any employees; the volunteer directors are considered as employees when rates are calculated for coverage. The insurance is to cover any lost time suffered by a volunteer should they be hurt while participating in an ADD function e.g., a Board of Directors meeting, the HHW&UW collection, etc. Each year we have received a rebate from MMA for not having filed any claims.

L. Financial Audit: We had another successful audit for FY-2024 using the services of James W. Wadman CPA in Ellsworth. Thanks to Treasurer Mahar for her management of our accounts and her preparation of audit materials provided to the auditor. She is key to our audit success.

M. Summary: In summary, the Board of Directors of the ADD would like to encourage all residents and taxpayers in our member towns to become active in learning about solid waste issues. We particularly encourage our municipal officials and officers to do so. Even though each director works with the understanding that they would like to become the solid waste expert in their community, nothing can replace firsthand knowledge.

Our meetings are open to the general public in person or by Zoom and, as of this date, are held the third Monday of the month at 9:30 A.M. in the Town of Southwest Harbor's town office located at 26 Village Green Way. The Zoom link is included on each agenda.

Thank you very much for your continued support.

Yours truly,

Tony Smith, ADD Chair

Note 1: Sources for some of the information in this report include, but are not necessarily limited to, the DEP and MRC websites, some of which is copied and reproduced here; and attendance at various meetings.

Note 2: Non-substantive formatting and editing were occasionally done to maintain flow of the printed material.

Note 3: References to appendices: the appendices are not included in this report but are in the actual reports themselves that we used as sources for preparing this report.