

Draft Vision Statement and Goals

Rhode Island Solid Waste Management Plan

In 2035, responsibility for sound solid waste management is shared-we all understand that each of us has a role to play. We have made strides in reducing the amount of waste each of us generates as individuals, we have implemented statewide Pay as You Throw, and ever curbside community uses automated collections systems with 95-gallon carts for recyclables. Yet there is still more to be done.

Our landfill is nearing closure and our recycling facility is at the end of its useful life. The next stage of sustainable waste management is upon us, and difficult decisions must be made.

To be truly sustainable, Rhode Island must invest in full-scale residential composting facilities. We must make organics management a top statewide priority. This will remove 30% of the waste from the waste stream, and will generate much needed energy. We must continue to invest in manufacturing processes that use recyclables as feedstock and provide long-term high-quality jobs. We must implement the best state of the art technologies and public policy practices to maximize the remaining years of the central landfill, increase the remaining usefulness of the Materials Recycling Facility, and begin the transition to the solid waste management practices that will take Rhode Island into the 22nd century.

This plan will describe the path to the 22nd century, using the following guide posts:

Goal 1: Significantly reduce the amount of Rhode Island generated solid waste requiring disposal through increased source reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting.

Goal 2: Manage the solid waste that ultimately must be disposed in an efficient, equitable, and environmentally protective manner, consistent with the statutory solid waste hierarchy.

Goal 3: Adopt stable, long-term funding mechanisms that provide sufficient revenue for state, regional, and local programs while providing incentives for increased waste reduction and diversion.

