

Waste Stream Policy on Septic System Usage, Recycling, Trash and Composting

Principles

Waste is essentially unknown in natural systems. As a community living on land, we accumulate and modify a large amount of material which becomes potential waste. That portion of it which can not be reused onsite, biotransformed or recycled offsite we call waste. A guiding principle of our community, that of sustainability, is generally best achieved by emulating natural systems wherever possible. Our commitment as a community is therefore to minimize waste and to treat the unavoidable waste which we do generate with awareness and skill to minimize its impact on the health of our land, its soil, its plants and animals, ourselves, our community and the larger biosphere.

Two aphorisms capture much of the philosophy of our waste management approach; "reduce, reuse and recycle". and " follow your own waste stream".

Our recycling and trash systems will be organized around individual households initially because we feel that it is the best way to make a quantitative assessment of our own habits in regard to the generation and conversion of potential waste.

General

A Waste Management Committee will be responsible for handling practical matters associated with these CR&As. This committee will monitor ongoing efforts of the community to implement these rules, revise them as needed and present changes to the community for approval, oversee maintenance of the septic system, distribute current regulations from our recycling center, announce special collections of waste materials, keep up with new markets for potentially recyclable materials and report to the community at regular intervals.

Septic System

I. As a community we will minimize the effluent through our septic system by using only that amount of water needed to accomplish the cleaning and washing functions in our sinks and will be frugal in our use of water for showers and bathing.

2. We will use environmentally benign cleaning products. These include phosphate free soaps, and simple surface cleaners such as vinegar and ammonia in preference to strong detergent based cleaners.
3. Sanitation should be accomplished without the use of Chlorine bleach (unless mandated by law for business applications)
4. Non-degradable insoluble materials such as bones, grease, manufactured plastic and paper products such as tissues and tampons must not be allowed to enter the septic system.
5. Diapers should be either disposable, cleaned offsite or very carefully cleared of fecal material into our composting toilets before being washed in washing machines.
6. Disposal of liquid toxic materials in the septic tank must be avoided. Strong bleach, acids, paints, mineral oil and other solvents, motor oils, pesticides, herbicides, antibiotics, photographic chemicals must not be disposed of in the septic system or through the basement drains. They must instead be taken to local facilities which are charged with their safe disposal.
7. Any business using the common septic system shall produce a waste management plan detailing any materials that may enter the system which will satisfy requirements of the Environmental Conservation Agency and Act 250 permitting. Businesses will also need to furnish solid waste and recycling plans to the community if they generate a significant amount of trash, compost or recyclables.
8. Regular inspection and maintenance (pumping) of the septic tanks should be performed under guidelines drawn up by a Waste Management Committee.

Recyclables

1. We will minimize waste by carefully choosing what we bring into the community paying special attention to packaging. Whenever possible we will purchase in bulk or choose reusable, compostable or recyclable forms of packaging. We will also favor products that have been made from recycled materials and/or can be reused onsite.
2. Each individual household shall be responsible for sorting potential waste into those categories of materials that can be accepted for recycling at The Hartford Community Center for Recycling. Guidelines for preparation of recyclables (washing, rinsing, compression etc.) shall be in conformance with recommendations of the HCCFR.

3. A current copy of the above guidelines will be furnished to each household by the Waste Management Committee. Each household will keep these guidelines in a readily accessible place for reference by household members and guests.

4. Toxic materials and hazardous wastes should be disposed of according to Hartland Community rules. The waste management committee will notify residents of special collections and toxic roundups as they are announced.

5. Individual households are encouraged to share trips for recycling and trash disposal.

Trash

1. Each household will store its trash in appropriate sealable containers within its own building.

2. Individual households within a pod (no more than 5 households) may choose to store their combined household trash in animal proof containers in an area designed for this purpose. No more than one outside receptacle per household of less than 40 gallons capacity is allowed. These receptacles should be of a size and number that they can be transferred to a receiving facility by a vehicle which is available to members who use them.

3. Residents are responsible for assuring that no trash accumulates outside their own structure or the shared containers.

4. Trash shall not contain recyclables, compostables, liquids or hazardous materials.

5. Construction and demolition waste generated by common community actions will be disposed of as soon as possible.