

SOLID WASTE COMMITTEE REPORT – 2008

The year was marked by the celebration of 20 Years of Recycling in Walpole, the retirement of Rick Cooper, who has managed operations for most of that period, his replacement by Paul Colburn, unusual volatility in prices for recycled materials and the continuing efforts of our volunteers who have since its beginning been the backbone of Walpole's recycling program.

At the October Celebration, a picture history reminded viewers of recycling's start in 1988 at the Walpole landfill and its difficult operating conditions compared to those in the present building which opened in November 1992. We are indebted to the Grange, who served lunch, the Girl Scouts, who manned the recyclables receiving line, Chris Fisher, who was the Tin Man, and to the WRAP Committee members who planned the affair, set up the exhibits and ran the games. It was a fitting celebration.

In July Rick Cooper gave notice of his retirement in September. The WRAP Committee discussed his replacement and recommended that the Selectmen appoint Paul Colburn, the then Operating Foreman, which they did. Subsequently the Committee interviewed four candidates to fill Paul's job, and in October Selectmen appointed Paul Clark as Operating Foreman. Selectmen reappointed Phoebe Reynolds to the WRAP Committee for a term ending March 2011.

Flooring was built above the Northeast door from the building office to a storage area above the bathroom. This will provide storage for and eliminate double handling of redeemable cans and bottles. The Recycling Center building was painted. The roof of the old landfill shed, which is used for recyclables storage, collapsed. With help from insurance money, a new shed, expandable in the future, will be finished in early 2009. A start was made on replacing our unsatisfactory waste oil receiving system using a grant from the State.

Prices for recyclables varied tremendously over the year. In February cardboard brought \$135/ ton but by December it was down to minus \$20. Similarly, clear milk and water jug plastic dropped from 39 cents/pound to plus or minus 5cents, scrap metal from \$210/gross ton in February to \$25 in December and steel cans from \$350/gross ton in June to \$75 in December. In spite of these falling prices, our income for the year was \$180,286, which is above what was forecasted. The tonnage increase in recyclables over 2007 of 3.4% helped. Operating expenses at \$284,735 were once again within the budgeted \$295,190.

We increased the cost of Walpole solid waste bags when we got a stronger bag. In doing so we replaced the plastic ribbon closure with a tie, a matter which is under review for future purchases due to user comments. We stopped taking plastic tubs as the plant that processed them shut down. For a limited time, with excellent user response, uncrushed one-gallon jugs were sent to a company which paid one and a half times the going price for crushed jugs. We changed our paper receiving system to one

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box for newspapers and one for mixed paper and magazines, improving efficiency and income. Glass processing was cut from two crushing operations to one. The glass is put into a roll-off which Alstead removes and returns empty. The popular Re-use Center was again opened in April and closed late in December. Cash donations by customers were again given to the Fall Mountain Food Shelf.

The Staff works Fridays to complete work not finished during regular operations. In part this reflects time they spend on the receiving line when volunteers can't show up. We really depend on our volunteers who are and always have been a major part of Walpole's Recycling operations. Please consider becoming one.

Selectmen and Town Staff have once again been helpful on various issues and we thank them for their efforts.

Respectfully submitted,
George Watkins, Chairman



Old Catholic Church in Walpole

Before Remodeling