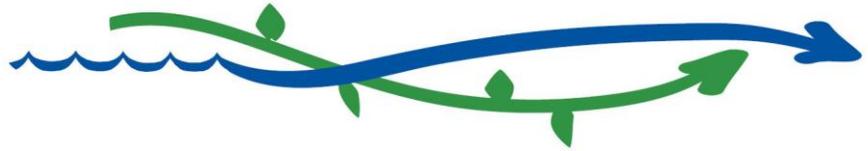




# Environmental Dashboard

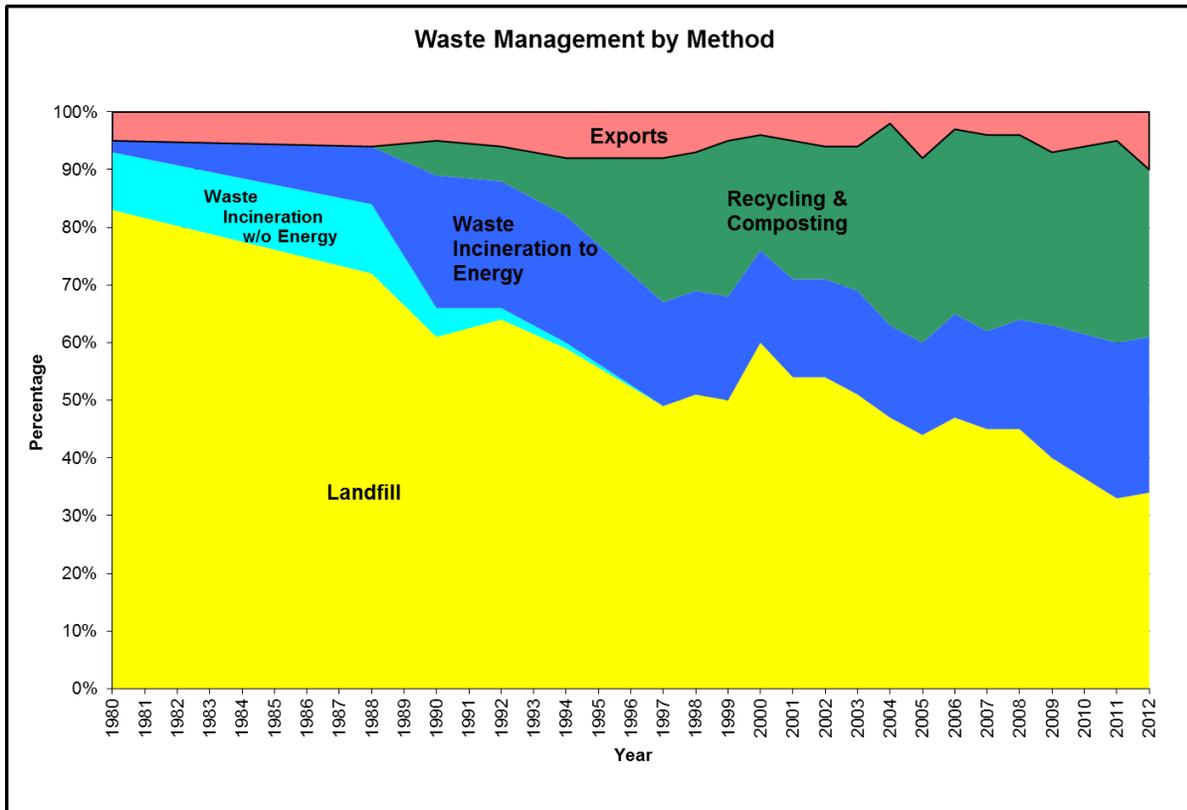


## Trends in New Hampshire's Environment Waste Management: Generation, Recycling & Disposal

Approximately 1.5 million tons of solid waste is generated each year in New Hampshire. Much of that waste is incinerated or landfilled right here in our state. State law establishes a goal to divert 40% of this waste away from landfills and incinerators through recycling and composting, and it makes sense both economically and environmentally to recycle as much waste as possible. Unfortunately, many recyclable materials in trash are still being buried in landfills or burned in incinerators and lost. Recycled materials have value as commodities, and recycling and composting save money through avoidance of disposal costs. At the same time, siting of new landfills or incinerators is increasingly challenging.

### Current Condition

Currently, 10% of New Hampshire's solid waste is exported; 29% is recycled or composted; 27% is incinerated for purposes of energy recovery; and 34% is sent to landfills.



SOURCE: DES Solid Waste Program

### **Explanation of Indicator and Trend**

The New Hampshire rate of recycling and composting from disposal has improved from 6% in 1990 (see chart), but has remained relatively flat since mid-decade, falling short of the statutory goal of 40%. The rate of recycling has not been increasing, and the reasons for that are not clear. From 2011 to 2012, reported recycling decreased by 6 percent and non-recycling exports increased by 5 percent which may indicate that it was less expensive to export wastes than to recycle.

While the prices for recycled materials vary from year to year, municipalities can still garner significant revenues from the sale of their collected recyclables. Further, municipalities can reduce substantial trash disposal fees by recycling as much waste as possible. Composting organic waste, whether on a large scale by municipalities or on a small scale by individuals, also reduces disposal fees and creates a valuable byproduct that can be used around the yard or for municipal landscaping projects.

### **How Does DES Address This?**

DES works closely with municipalities to encourage proper solid waste management by permitting facilities, and licensing and training facility operators. DES also promotes public awareness campaigns that encourage homeowners to properly dispose of household hazardous wastes, household medicines and medical "sharps," and unwanted vehicles, to name a few. In addition, DES makes every effort to explain the advantages and encourage the habits of recycling, composting, buying products with minimal packaging, and other practical, cost-effective and environmentally sound practices. These DES programs and others work to protect the environment and the public from the mismanagement of waste.

### **For More Information, Including What You Can Do to Help**

Solid Waste Management Bureau [link to

<http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/waste/swmb/index.htm>]

Disposal Tips for Household Generated Sharps (DES fact sheet WMD-SW-31) [link to

<http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/factsheets/sw/documents/sw-31.pdf>

Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs and Mercury: What Consumers Should Know (DES fact sheet CO-19) [link to

<http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/factsheets/co/documents/co-19.pdf> ]

"Report to the Governor's Task Force on Solid Waste," 2001 [link to

[http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/publications/wmd/documents/sw\\_taskforce\\_report.pdf](http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/publications/wmd/documents/sw_taskforce_report.pdf)

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Events

<http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/p2au/pps/hhwp/index.htm>

10/14/2014