



LRSWMD Annual Report

Fiscal Year 21: July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021



District Profile: The mission of the Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management District (LRSWMD) is to reduce the quantity and toxicity of the trash generated and going to the landfill while maintaining or improving overall environmental quality (air, water, and soil), treating customers and employees with respect and operating within a balanced budget.

The LRSWMD is comprised of 12 towns; each community either appoints or elects a representative to serve on the Board of Supervisors. The District guides member communities towards compliance with Vermont state solid waste regulations, hosts collection facilities and a commercial composting operation, provides annual household hazardous waste collections, delivers outreach and education on materials management in District communities, offers free use of collection receptacles for community events, and sells recycling and composting bins at subsidized costs.



Facilities: LRSWMD operations are comprised of five drop-off locations across the District, one commercial composting facility located in Johnson and the administrative office located in Morrisville. Services vary by location but include bagged trash for disposal, mixed recycling, and organics collection at minimum. Management of other difficult-to-dispose-of items like tires, electronic waste, and appliances are also provided at several locations. Each site is somewhat unique in what types and how each material is managed.

The effects of the pandemic persisted into this year; we continued to struggle with staffing and consequent last-minute closures. We acknowledge that these unexpected closures caused our customers to experience inconveniences and sometimes disappointment, but we were grateful for the overwhelming amount of patience and understanding we experienced from our communities. Our priority was and will continue to be the health and safety of all staff and customers. All customers are encouraged to call ahead before arriving to a facility to avoid disappointment. Looking ahead, we will continue to do what we can to keep our facilities open and safe; however, expect there will be unpredictable last-minute closures. We request your continued understanding and patience when these occur. Despite the interruptions, we were able to face these challenges head on and achieve significant progress at our facilities over the course of the fiscal year.

CRAFTSBURY: Open Saturday, 9am – 1pm. Congratulations and **THANK YOU** to the volunteers who continue to support the users of this facility. The volunteers are there dutifully first thing each Saturday morning to help Craftsbury residents access the stairs for ease of off-loading recycling and food scraps. Our appreciation extends to the Gutzman family for allowing this site to operate on their property.

EDEN: Eden residents transitioned to using the Johnson Transfer Station six miles south or the Casella Transfer Station eight miles south when the LRSWMD Drop-off station closed at the start of the pandemic. Funding for the Eden Drop-off location was discontinued in the Board of Supervisors approved FY22 budget, largely attributed to chronic staffing limitations compounded by COVID-19. The absence of a Drop-off location does not preclude Eden’s residents, schools and businesses from receiving the myriad of



District benefits such as continued support and resources provided by the LRSWMD to maximize landfill diversion and attain the goals of the Solid Waste Implementation Plan.

JOHNSON: Open Fri. Sat, & Sun., 8:30am – 3:30pm. Historical data on customer use and revenues, and the necessary decision to close the Eden location on Sundays supported continuing to operate this location on Sunday. When it became necessary to limit the materials we were able to accept at Stowe, due to reduce staffing availability and unknown COVID risks, this location remained open for all materials and rarely experienced unexpected closures. Our appreciation to the Town of Johnson crew for providing some repairs to the driveway and yard leading into the site. It is partnerships like this that continue to allow for provisions of necessary community service availability

MORRISVILLE: Open Saturday, 8:30am – 1:30pm. This location experienced frequent closures because of staffing challenges throughout much of this fiscal year. Despite that, this location continued to run well when it was open. The Town of Morristown has been an exceptional partner supporting us through allowing the use of their property and maintaining this location with use of their time and equipment for plowing and grading.

STOWE: Open Wed – Mon., 7:30am – 3:00pm. The Stowe Electric Department and the LRSWMD initiated an agreement in November 2020 for the lease of the SED Garage to be able to offer an expansion of materials management services. The new space now contains office space, a textile collection and management area, and new equipment to bale source-separated materials. The Reuse Room remained closed throughout the fiscal year; however, textiles were still collected and diverted through Helpsy, *“The largest clothing collector in the Northeast US, with over 1,800 collection containers and growing, we collected over 25 million pounds of clothes last year!”* This location incorporated Town guidance on masks into daily operations with ease. The Town of Stowe continues to provide strong and positive support for our operations and the Highway Department crew does a terrific job getting the snow moved in the early hours of winter to help us open the gate on time.

WORCESTER: Open Saturday, 7:30am – 1:00pm. After making the initial COVID-related accommodations here in 2020, there has been no disruption in services thanks to our dedicated staff at this location. Collection of food scraps was contracted out to GROW Compost to reduce the time and miles required to manage them at Lamoille Soil. We continue to search for a local beneficial use for the 40-60 gallons of high-quality, source-separated food scraps collected here each week rather than transport them long distances and at worst, out of the region.

LAMOILLE SOIL: In FY21, 290 tons of food scraps were diverted from the landfill. This more than doubles the entire amount captured last year. And the previous year, we more than double what we processed in the entire first two years of operation. 169 tons were delivered by residents to our drop-off facilities in 25,000+ five-gallon buckets which was a 218% increase compared to FY20! 121 tons were delivered from commercial haulers directly to Lamoille Soil in totes or by the trailer load. This was also double the quantity from FY20 despite some pauses in hauler pick-ups at the start of the pandemic.

A total of 130 yards of compost was sold to our local communities in a variety of forms; 113 bulk yards for \$50 per yard, three hundred \$5 pre-filled, repurposed 5-gallon buckets; and four hundred \$3 self-serve bucket refills. We once again found ourselves sold out of finished compost by June of this year. We anticipated this increase in popularity after having this same experience last year.

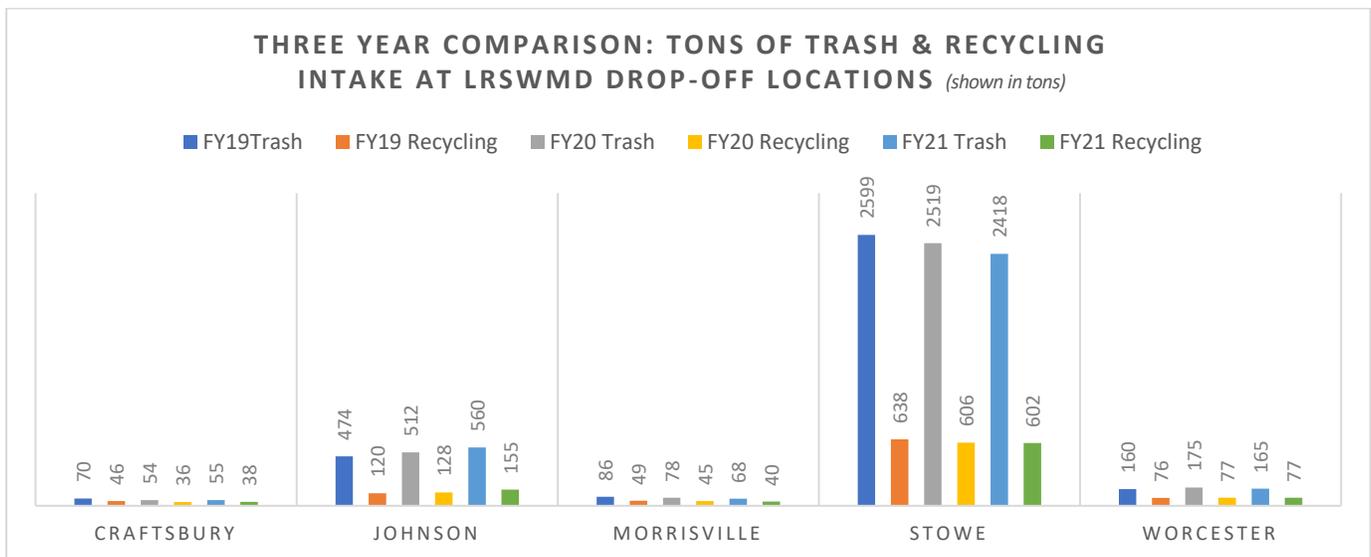
There were a number of significant changes at Lamoille Soil this year including the departure of Chris Duff who came on board to help get



Lamoille Soil off the ground in 2017. Chris was superseded by willing, in-house site attendants who participated in necessary trainings to become compost site certified and take over the making of a high-quality compost product for which Lamoille Soil has come to be known.

In addition to becoming familiar with the compost processing and operations role, a number of grant funded site changes took place requiring adaptability and collaboration from the newly minted compost team. Some of these changes included: regrading of the compost pad, the purchase of compost sox to control leachate, changes to the delivery method of facility-collected food scraps, diligent vector patrol and control protocols, modifications to the receiving area, adjustments to the ASP modalities to better expedite the decomposition process, and general rearrangement and overhaul of site materials and layout.

MATERIAL GENERATION: The table below depicts the annual tonnage of waste and recycling from all five drop-off sites, comparing the two previous fiscal years to the current FY21. A total of 3,266 tons of solid waste was collected, down 72 tons from last year, while recycling increased 20 tons this year to 912 tons. Some of our locations experienced intermittent closures during the final quarter of the year which may have impacted the amount of material brought in this year, similar to what we saw last year.



**Please note that Stowe is the only facility that is open six days a week; Johnson is open two days a week. All other locations are open one day a week.*



Hazardous Waste: With funding assistance through a grant from the State of Vermont, Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Conservation, three Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection events were held. The collections are an effort to directly support the mission of the District to reduce both the volume and toxicity of materials going to landfills. The events were held in Stowe, Jeffersonville and Craftsbury. The event usually held in Morrisville was cancelled due to COVID restrictions.

These three household hazardous waste events supported 796 total residents and ten businesses. PaintCare, in concert with these collections, captured 31 cubic yard boxes of used paint. All materials collected at these events will be recycled or responsibly disposed.

Special Waste: ‘Special wastes’ are materials that are not collected with regular trash or recycling. Many of these items are not collected by curbside haulers or by privately run facilities either. Below are examples of special wastes that we were able to be diverted for proper recycling, reuse, or disposal this year:

- 973 refrigerant-containing appliances
- 17 tons of textiles and books
- More than 27,000 feet of fluorescent tube bulbs
- Over 1,700 CFL & other mercury-containing bulbs
- 1.3 tons of household batteries
- More than 38 tons of tires
- Over 5 tons of film plastics
- 57 tons of e-waste
- 1096 propane tanks
- 328 tons of scrap metal

Green Up Day: Green Up Day is organized locally in each of our twelve District towns. LRSWMD contributed \$1,200 to Green Up Vermont on behalf of our member towns to support the statewide event. Contact your local Green Up representative to get involved.

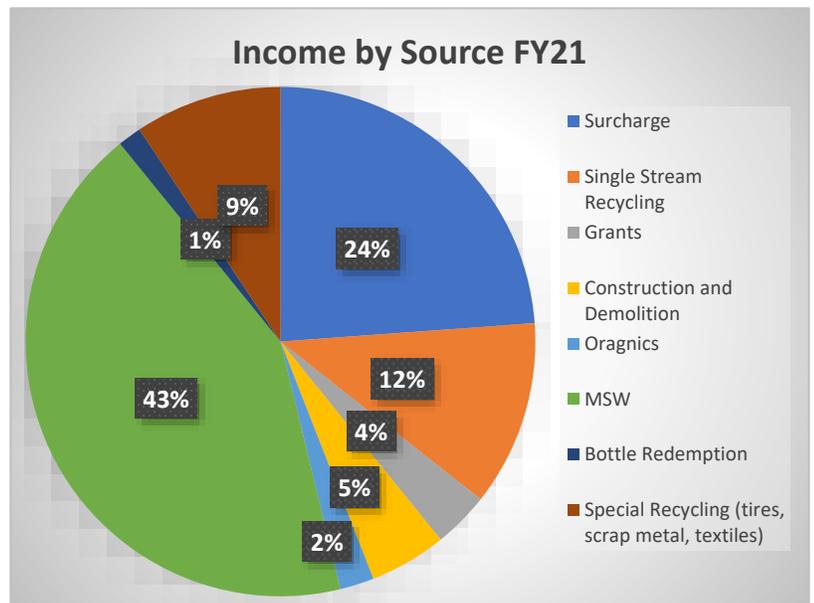
Collection Item Sales: LRSWMD continues to offer all District members easy and convenient ways to reduce the amount of organic waste they send to the landfill. Backyard composting receptacles are available all-year. Eighty-one Soil Savers and 75 Green Cones were sold along with 396 5-gallon buckets with gamma seal lids. This was a significant increase in all compost items compared to last year and especially in Green Cones and lidded 5-gallon buckets. A slight decrease in the number of recycling bins were sold at forty.



Donations: Through the bottle redemption donation program, \$11,500 was split evenly between the United Way of Lamoille County and the Lamoille Community Food Share. These two organizations encompass a large portion of the District region.

Annual Budget: There was some challenge in preparing the FY21 budget as it was impossible to anticipate our ability to operate facilities during a global pandemic. Lacking a crystal ball, we developed a budget that largely ignored that very real, yet highly unpredictable reality. With that in mind the LRSWMD Board of Supervisors approved the budget, understanding the potential for a mid-year adjustment. Fortunately, that did not happen as our operations continued to run close to full capacity providing a stable revenue stream.

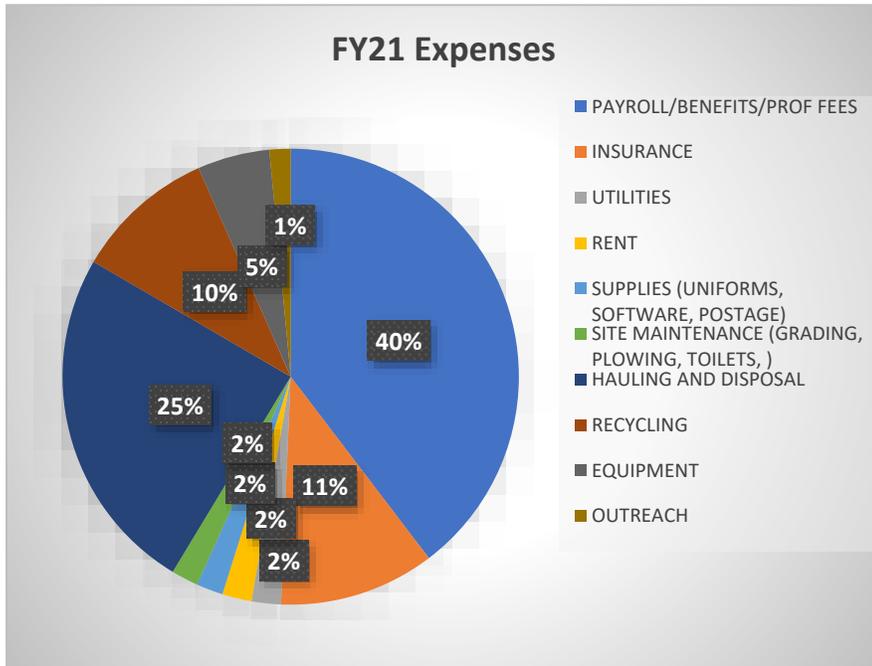
District assets increased by \$15,195 in FY21 for a total of \$1,107,228. A net income of \$67,013 was realized with considerably higher income from organics, blue bin recycling, scrap metal, and hauler surcharges. While we paid more for contracted services such as our Household Hazardous Waste events our payroll was down due to staffing shortages and Covid-related closures. LRSWMD invested in capital assets including a cardboard baler and an organics hauling trailer both partially funded by grants from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources.



The District continues to fund its entire budget from two sources: disposal surcharges and user fees. The surcharge has remained at \$21/ton since 2014 and is applied to every ton of trash generated that is landfilled

from our 12 towns. This fee is embedded in hauler charges and remitted to LRSWMD each month. FY21 surcharge income of \$427,553 supported administrative staff, outreach and education to schools and businesses, community programs, newsletters, social media, AmeriCorps members, and professional memberships.

The second source of income is derived from user fees that are intended to cover both direct and indirect costs associated with managing our drop-off locations which include payroll and associated insurances and taxes, utilities, site maintenance and upkeep, etc. These drop-off facilities provide cost effective and convenient waste management options for the approximately 28,000 District residents and include special materials not included in curbside service such as tires, computers, mercury containing lamps, white goods and other landfill-banned items.



When opportunities arise, District staff take advantage of available grant funding opportunities to support programs and activities as well as cost-share on equipment. Successful grants for FY21 include:

- VLCT Health and Safety Grant
- State of Vermont Solid Waste Implementation Grant (HHW events)
- Agency of Natural Resources Organics Infrastructure Grant (Fall 2020)
- Agency of Natural Resources Infrastructure Grant (Spring 2021)
- Vermont Covid-Reimbursement and Hazard Pay Grant

Outreach Accomplishments: The State Solid Waste Implementation Plan encompasses a swath of outreach requirements to achieve over the course of the calendar year. The COVID-19 Health Crisis was a game changer to outreach strategies this year with little relief from the State for meeting those requirements. Combined outreach efforts and collection at our facilities resulted in a District waste disposal rate of 2.47 pounds/person/day which exceeds the goal of 2.69 pounds/person/day.



While schools were shuttered and conservative on allowing visitors to enter the buildings, we were able to achieve the SWIP School outreach requirement through one in-person composting education session and several virtual classroom visits during America Recycles Day in November. The majority of this education was conducted by the ECO AmeriCorps member who was serving with us at the time.

Given the economic climate and hardships on so many of our local businesses during the pandemic, we were not actively conducting business outreach. We were able

to achieve satisfactory milestones for the State SWIP and provided useful resources to 32 local businesses. The primary topic was around diverting food scraps to meet the ACT 148 July 1 ban.

In order to satisfy the Multimedia Outreach requirement within the SWIP, we continue to mail 15,000+ Collection Connection newsletters to all business and residential mailboxes within the twelve District town zip codes. We utilize a paid subscription to nine Front Porch Forum communities (\$1400/yr) and a free subscription to MailChimp as monthly methods of communication with the public. If you are listener of our local radio station, WLVB, you may hear the Thursday afternoon, six-minute segment covering timely topics about materials management, facility updates, and breaking industry news each week.



Through teamwork, flexibility and some creative programming pivots, it is with pride and pleasure to report that the 2020 SWIP was approved without hesitation by the State of Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation.

Thank you for making it truly rewarding for us to provide waste management services to our communities. The smiles, thanks yous and small gestures of appreciation have gone a long way over these difficult pandemic-ridden months and have made challenging days that much easier - especially for our hard-working essential site attendant workers. Always feel free to ask any of our staff members questions or offer suggestions if you have them. Your valued input is what continues our service improvements and adaptations.

Action Shots of our Essential Workers:

