

From Eyesore To Clean-Energy Source

Submitted by Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority
HARTFORD

For most of its 73-year history the Hartford landfill was called an eyesore. Soon it will be in the vanguard of Connecticut's energy future.

The Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority has awarded an \$11.6 million contract for the final phase of capping the 96-acre landfill. This final section — about 35 acres — will have photovoltaic panels mounted on top of a special artificial turf.

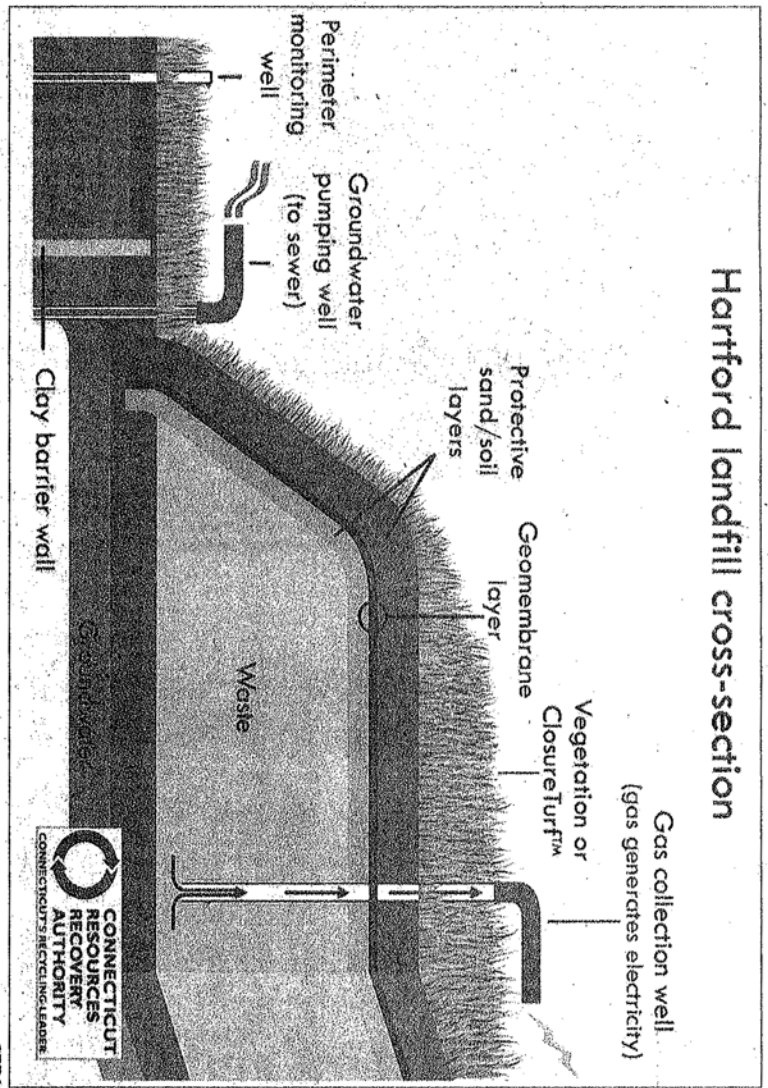
The project is expected to generate about one megawatt of electricity, or enough to power about 1,000 homes at peak efficiency. Solar generation is impacted by weather and the sun's position in the sky.

The Hartford landfill will be the first in the state — and one of only a handful in the country — to generate solar power.

"When we began working with the City of Hartford on the future of the landfill, we wanted to find innovative ways to use the land," said Thomas D. Kirk, CRRA president. "Solar energy was an idea we all agreed on right away."

E. T. & L. Corporation of Stow, Mass., will install the cap and solar generators under the contract, which was approved May 30 by the CRRA Board of Directors. CRRA expects the solar cells to be online by Oct. 1 and to complete the closure project in 2014.

Hartford landfill cross-section



THIS ILLUSTRATION SHOWS the environmental protection systems in place or under construction at the Hartford landfill. On six acres of the landfill, CRRA will build solar cells to generate electricity.

The City opened the Hartford landfill in 1940. In 1982, CRRA leased the landfill from the City and deposited trash there until it opened its Hartford trash-to-energy plant in 1988. Between 1988 and Dec. 31, 2008, CRRA delivered ash from the plant and waste that the plant could not process. CRRA began closing and capping the landfill in 2007, shortly after the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection issued a permit to begin that work and more than a year before the landfill accepted its final truckload of waste. In 2011, CRRA applied for, and DEEP approved, a permit modification to allow the installation of

solar collectors. In 2012, the project was selected to receive zero-emission renewable energy credits, or ZRECs, which will be sold to Connecticut Light & Power. The ZRECs add 11 cents per kilowatt-hour to the price of electricity generated by the solar collectors. The cost of the project will be covered by a CRRA reserve dedicated to the cost of closing and capping the landfill.

CRRA began closing and capping the landfill in 2007, shortly after the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection issued a permit to begin that work and more than a year before the landfill accepted its final truckload of waste. In 2011, CRRA applied for, and DEEP approved, a permit modification to allow the installation of solar collectors.

When the closure project is completed the entire 96 acres will be encapsulated in a synthetic geomembrane.

The six-acre solar field will sit atop a layer of sand and a layer of ClosureTurf™, an impermeable synthetic grass designed for covering landfills, while the remainder will be covered with soil and appropriate vegetation.

The cap will leave intact the landfill's environmental protection systems, including its gas-collection system that virtually eliminates odors while using the methane generated by decomposing waste to generate about 1.3 megawatts of power.

Hartford Courant, June 30, 2013

ENERGY



UNPLUG AND CONSERVE



Connecticut Eyes Landfill as Solar Energy Source

By [Maggie Wehri](#)

June 24, 2013

An abandoned landfill in Hartford is being repurposed as a recreational public park that will generate enough solar energy to power 1,000 homes.

After bringing the last garbage bag to the side of the curb, consumers often forget where their waste actually ends up. The majority of waste accumulates into landfills and ultimately becomes viewed as wasted space. These landfills are placed on the skirts of metro areas or even further remote areas so they are out of sight, and unfortunately become out of consumers' minds.

On December 31, 2008, [Hartford, CT](#), accepted the last delivery of waste to its 96-acre landfill located in the far northeast reaches of the city. Nearly five years vacated, the City of Hartford now is now collaborating with the [Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority \(CRRA\)](#) to not only create a renewable energy source, but also give back to the environment.

Hartford's 73-year-old landfill was often thought of as an atypical eyesore until the city decided to propose a resourceful afterlife for its largest area. Due to a gas collection site that utilizes vertical pipes coming out of the ground, a soccer or football field is not an ideal repurposing. At the very least, CRRA and Hartford hopes to create a recreation park and greenhouse, in addition utilizing 6 acres to install solar panels and place artificial turf beneath.



An aerial view of the Hartford landfill. Image courtesy of the CRRA.

Paul Nonnenmacher, Director of Public Affairs for CRRA, explains, “Everybody discussed the idea of some kind of renewable-energy generation. While researching the idea, we discovered the cost of installing would be a fair trade for the benefits. After making the numbers work financially, we knew this was the best decision.”

CRRA plans to begin the project in July 2013. Once the space is installed with solar collectors, the panels will collect energy from the sun that is then sold to the regional power grid in Connecticut. By October 1, CRRA plans to generate enough megawatts to power more than 1,000 Hartford homes. According to CRRA, Hartford’s weather patterns was one of the biggest concerns, which in retrospect is fairly minimal. The project is now full force ahead.

Nonnenmacher states, “People are actually going to be able to get an up-close look at the solar generation, which is still quite the novelty here in Connecticut. We hope this can serve as an educational opportunity yet generate clean power.”

There are thousands of closed landfills around the country serving no current purpose. Hartford’s eyesore is a great model for other communities that are looking for opportunities to utilize abandoned landfilled areas. In the near future, solar landfill power may be commonplace in other cities. However, each situation depends on the cost and benefit factors.

The EPA currently lists 15 landfills around the country that have been constructed into solar power fields. This type of energy harvesting is new and innovative, and encourages saving precious natural resources for energy. Residents are given the chance to see the negative impacts of landfills and reflect on their actions attributed to this large amount of waste. Solar power fields are a step in the right direction, and, if successful, an expected outcome for the future.



About the author

Maggie is currently a student at The Ohio State University. She is pursuing a bachelor's degree from the Fisher College of Business and plans to obtain art and entrepreneurship minors. She also enjoys designing and creating artwork in her spare time....

Learn more about [Maggie Wehri](#)

CRRA Schedules Electronic Recycling

LITCHFIELD — Residents who have old or obsolete electronics devices can recycle them at the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority collection from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, June 29, at Litchfield High School, 14 Plumb Hill Rd.

Since CRRA began its electronics recycling program in 1999, more than 53,000 families have recycled more than 6.4 million pounds of electronics.

CRRA contracts with RMG Enterprise, a state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection-approved electronics recycler.

RMG ensures that sensitive data is removed from devices before they are recycled, then dismantles items into raw materials, such as copper, steel, aluminum, glass and plastic.

RMG sells these materials to firms who turn them into new products.

The electronics collection is open only to residents of towns that participate in CRRA's Connecticut Solid Waste System: Avon, Barkhamsted, Beacon Falls, Bethlehem, Bloomfield, Canaan, Canton, Chester, Clinton, Colebrook, Cornwall, Deep River, Durham, East Granby, East Hampton, Ellington, Essex, Farmington, Glastonbury, Goshen, Granby, Haddam, Hartford, Harwinton, Killingworth, Litchfield, Lyme, Manchester, Marlborough, Middlebury, Mid-

dlefield, Naugatuck, New Hartford, Norfolk, North Canaan, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, Oxford, Portland, Rocky Hill, Roxbury, Salisbury, Sharon, Simsbury, South Windsor, Thomaston, Torrington, Waterbury, Watertown, Wethersfield, Winchester and Woodbury.

Electronics from businesses will be turned away.

Additional collections may be scheduled and a complete list of collections is available at www.crra.org/pages/schedule_electronics.htm.

The Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority is a quasi-public agency, which develops and implements environmentally sound solutions and best practices for solid waste disposal and recycling management on behalf of municipalities.



LITCHFIELD COUNTY TIMES
6/21/2013

The Almanac

EVENTS

CRRA: Held at Litchfield High School, 14 Plumb Hill Rd., Litchfield. "Electronics Recycling Collection." Open to residents of CRRA towns. June 29, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For information: www.crra.org.



TORRINGTON REGISTER CITIZEN
6/22/2013

RECYCLING

**Electronics recycling at
Litchfield High School**

LITCHFIELD » The Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority, Connecticut's recycling leader, will offer another electronics recycling collection at Litchfield High School, 14 Plumb Hill Road, on Saturday, June 29, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

CRRA contracts with RMG Enterprise, a Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection-approved electronics recycler. RMG ensures that sensitive data is removed from devices before they are recycled, then dismantles items into raw materials, such as copper, steel, aluminum, glass and plastic, and sells these materials to firms who turn them into new products.

These collections are open only to residents of towns that participate in CRRA's Connecticut Solid Waste System. Residents of other communities who want to recycle their electronics should call their local public works departments or electronics retailers or check with the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection for other recycling opportunities.

Electronics from businesses will be turned away.

Additional collections may be scheduled. The complete schedule is always available at http://www.crra.org/pages/schedule_electronics.htm.

BRIEFLY**Electronics recycling set**

LITCHFIELD — An electronics recycling collection open to residents of towns that participate in the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority's (CRRA) Connecticut Solid Waste System will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday at Litchfield High School, 14 Plumb Hill Road.

Participating towns include Barkhamsted, Beacon Falls, Bethlehem, Canaan, Colebrook, Cornwall, Goshen, Harwinton, Litchfield, Middlebury, Naugatuck, New Hartford, Norfolk, Oxford, Roxbury, Salisbury, Sharon, Thomaston, Torrington, Waterbury, Watertown, Winchester and Woodbury.

Additional collections may be scheduled. The complete schedule is available at www.crra.org/pages/schedule_electronics.



WINDHAM-MANSFIELD REMINDER
6/20/2013

Make a drum

MANSFIELD - Make a drum with the Trash Educators on Friday, June 28 from 2-3 p.m. at the Mansfield Public Library. All ages welcome. Can music and trash really go together? Yes! Gina Altieri, from CRRA's Trash Museum, will teach you about the importance of managing trash and recycling, and will show you how to make a drum from recycled materials. If you have a cylindrical container (such as an oatmeal box or large margarine tub) bring it along; we are also collecting as many as we can to hand out. This program is funded by the Connecticut Humanities Council. http://www.crta.org/pages/Trash_Museum



HARTFORD COURANT
6/16/2013

COMMUNITY NEWS

Make A Drum With The Trash Educators

MANSFIELD – Friday, June 28 from 2:00-3:00 PM -All ages welcome Can music and trash really go together? Yes! Gina Altieri, from CRRRA's Trash Museum, will teach you about the importance of managing trash and recycling, and will show you how to make a drum from recycled materi-

als. If you have a cylindrical container (such as an oatmeal box or large margarine tub) bring it along; we are also collecting as many as we can to hand out. This program is funded by the Connecticut Humanities Council. http://www.crra.org/pages/Trash_Museum.



SOUTHBURY VOICES WEEKENDER
5/25/2013

Calendar

MUSEUMS

CRRA Trash Museum, 211 Murphy Rd., Hartford. Permanent exhibits include Temple of Trash, a mural by Ted Esselstyn, and a display of a year's worth of trash. The museum offers a sky-box view of the adjacent recycling processing center. Free admission. Group tours available by appointment. Info: 860-757-7765 or www.crra.org/pages/Trash_Museum.htm.

City negotiates trash deal

5-year pact may save up to \$2 million over current hauler

BY PENELOPE OVERTON
REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

WATERBURY — The city has negotiated a five-year deal with a private trash hauler that would save taxpayers at least \$2 million when compared to the deal offered by the city's longtime contractor.

The proposed contract with Covanta Energy Corp. of Bristol would be at least

\$400,000 a year less than the bid by Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority, or CRRA, the city's long-time hauler, said adviser Garrett Casey.

Covanta is also offering a recycling incentive that city officials predict will save the city even more money over time. It will pay the city \$4.25 per ton of recyclables, as well as 75 cents a ton to fund a recycling education program.

The contract goes to the Board of Aldermen on Tuesday.

While the city is trumpeting the potential savings, Mayor Neil M. O'Leary is also upset about the savings that the city most likely lost out on because it didn't put the contract out to bid earlier.

He thinks the failure of his predecessor, Michael J. Jar-

See **TRASH**, Page 8B

TRASH TALK

The proposed contract would set a city tipping fee at \$59.93 a ton in the first year of the contract, going up every year after that to finish out at \$64.86 a ton in the fifth year. Covanta would pay the city \$4.25 a ton for recyclables.

TRASH: O'Leary blames Jarjura

Continued from 1B

jura, to bid the city trash contract not only cost taxpayers millions, but broke the city procurement laws, which require competitive offers for most contracts.

After O'Leary ousted Jarjura in 2011, the Board of Aldermen approved a 15-year deal with CRRA negotiated by Jarjura, who also sat on the board of directors for CRRA at the time. But O'Leary never signed the deal.

That is because a few days after the board vote, the city received a letter from an attorney asking why Waterbury had not bid the contract, Casey said. City officials told him they thought CRRA was a sole-source provider.

The city procurement law doesn't require the city to bid contracts if there is only one company that can do the job. But O'Leary believes that Jarjura, a CRRA board member, should have known about its competitors.

Jarjura says there was nothing nefarious about the deal. He said CRRA was not a private contractor, but a quasi-public government agency that falls outside the traditional bounds of city procure-

ment rules.

Furthermore, weakening CRRA would hurt taxpayers over time, he said.

"It would leave us at the mercy of the private haulers," Jarjura said. "They offered all 76 member cities and towns a good deal, lower rates. I think that keeping CRRA strong is in our best interest, in the city and the state."

This is the second big, multi-year contract that O'Leary has put out to bid that the Jarjura administration had awarded without a bid. The other one was for which carrier would handle the city's health insurance deal.

As a result of these two bidding "oversights," O'Leary is asking Board of Aldermen President Paul K. Pernerewski Jr., and the leaders of the majority and minority aldermen, to consider ways to tighten procurement laws.

For example, the city ordinances currently don't require the procurement officer or the director of finance to verify that all contracts are bid — only those that are brought to them. O'Leary wants to close that loophole.

In the meantime, O'Leary

is pushing the Covanta deal hard.

The proposed contract would set a city tipping fee at \$59.93 a ton in the first year of the contract, going up every year after that to finish out at \$64.86 a ton in the fifth year. Covanta would pay the city \$4.25 a ton for recyclables.

CRRA offered \$63 a ton in year one, with annual increases through year five, when it offered a \$67.92-per-ton tipping fee. Public Works Director Lou Spina said CRRA sometimes offers recyclable rebates, but not always.

Spina cited two other differences that make the Covanta deal sweeter — Covanta is only charging \$10 to pick up each mattress, while CRRA would charge \$30; and Covanta has a looser bulky waste definition.

The looser definition allows the city to deliver more of its waste as solid waste, which has a cheaper tipping fee, than as bulky waste, which is much more expensive to process, with Covanta than with CRRA, Spina said.

Contact Penelope Overton
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New Haven Register

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Covanta inks deal with Waterbury to handle municipal waste and recycling

Luther Turmelle lturmelle@nhregister.com / Twitter: @lutherturmelle 07/01/2013 - 8:02 PM EDT

WATERBURY >> The New Jersey-based company that operates three trash-to-energy plants in Connecticut, including one on Wallingford, has lured another community away from the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority.

Covanta Energy signed a five-year deal with the city of Waterbury, which went into effect Monday. The company will handle both the 40,000 tons of municipal waste that the city produces, as well as 5,000 tons of recyclables.

"After a considerable amount of due diligence and negotiation, we are confident that Covanta will be an excellent partner and service provider to the city of Waterbury," Mayor Neil O'Leary said in a statement. "The new agreement saves taxpayers at least \$2 million and we will be handling our waste in a sustainable manner by utilizing Covanta's Energy-from-Waste facilities and recycling services instead of land filling. We make these decisions with our taxpayers' best interest in mind." Waterbury will be served by Covanta's Bristol facility. In addition to the Wallingford and Bristol facilities, Covanta also operates a trash-to-energy plant in Preston.

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Because [it](#) included recycling in its deal, the city was able to save money both on direct disposal cost as well as getting rebate credits for the amount of material it is able to recycle, according to company officials.

"Covanta is proud to be able to now provide our services to the city of Waterbury, a well-respected and leading city in Connecticut," said Steve Diaz, vice president and regional [business](#) manager for Connecticut. "We look forward to a long and mutually-beneficial partnership

Waterbury became the 10th Connecticut community that Covanta has lured away from CRRRA since the end of 2011, including Guilford and Madison in Greater New Haven. This latest defection comes just weeks after Connecticut lawmakers approved an extensive audit of the Hartford-based quasi-public agency, which is having [financial](#) troubles.

The arrangement approved by state lawmakers also requires CRRRA to develop a transition plan for achieving long-term financial stability or a plan for the possible dissolution of the authority and disposing of CRRRA's assets, including the potential closure or sale of the Mid-Connecticut Resources Recovery Facility in Hartford.

CRRRA manages garbage and recyclables for 75 of the state's 169 cities and towns and has

warned it will have to close its trash-to-energy plant at the end of fiscal 2014 unless there's a viable alternative plan.

The power produced by Covanta's three trash-to-energy plants provides energy for more than 34,000 homes in the state. The company operates 44 trash-to-energy plants in all.

Call Luther Turmelle at 203-789-5706.



Covanta Energy Announces New Agreement with the City of Waterbury for Sustainable Waste Management Services

Municipal solid waste and recyclables now to be managed by largest sustainable waste management company in the state

Waterbury, CT – June 27, 2013—Covanta Energy Corporation (NYSE:CVA), a world leader in sustainable waste management and renewable energy, today announced a new agreement with the City of Waterbury for sustainable waste management services. Covanta is the largest owner and operator of Energy-from-Waste facilities in North America and the owner/operator of three facilities in Connecticut - Covanta Projects of Wallingford, Covanta Bristol and Covanta SECONN in Preston.

Covanta will provide sustainable disposal of the City's 40,000 tons of municipal solid waste at the Covanta Bristol Energy-from-Waste facility, in addition to handling 5,000 tons of recyclables. By bundling services, municipalities like Waterbury are able to save money on disposal costs and get credit back in the form of a rebate for recycling. The new five-year agreement is slated to begin July 1, 2013.

“After a considerable amount of due diligence and negotiation, we are confident that Covanta will be an excellent partner and service provider to the City of Waterbury. The new agreement saves taxpayers at least \$2 million and we will be handling our waste in a sustainable manner by utilizing Covanta's Energy-from-Waste facilities and recycling services instead of landfilling,” said Waterbury Mayor Neil M. O’Leary. “We make these decisions with our taxpayers’ best interest in mind. The critical importance of these value-added services cannot be overstated.”

Since the end of 2011, Covanta has added a number of new partner municipalities in Connecticut including East Hartford, Enfield, Guilford, Madison, Newington, Southbury, Vernon, West Hartford and Windsor Locks.

“We commend Mayor O’Leary and his team for their hard work to reach the best deal possible for their constituents. As the sustainable waste management leader in Connecticut, Covanta is proud to be able to now provide our services to the City of Waterbury, a well-respected and leading city in Connecticut. We look forward to a long and mutually-beneficial partnership,” commented Steve Diaz, vice president and regional business manager for Covanta.

As part of the agreement, Covanta and Waterbury have agreed to establish an educational outreach program for the citizens of Waterbury which will cover a variety of projects including recycling education and hazardous household waste collections.

Covanta's Energy-from-Waste facilities provide Connecticut communities with an environmentally superior

alternative to landfilling their municipal solid waste, generating clean, renewable energy for more than 34,000 homes in the state and recycling enough metal to build more than 12,000 automobiles annually.

About Covanta

Covanta Energy Corporation is an internationally recognized owner and operator of Energy-from-Waste and renewable energy projects and a recipient of the Energy Innovator Award from the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. Covanta's 44 Energy-from-Waste facilities provide communities with an environmentally sound solution to their solid waste disposal needs by using that municipal solid waste to generate clean, renewable energy. Annually, Covanta's modern Energy-from-Waste facilities safely and securely convert approximately 20 million tons of waste into 9 million megawatt hours of clean renewable electricity and approximately 9 billion pounds of steam that are sold to a variety of industries. For more information, visit www.covantaenergy.com.

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CONNECTICUT RESOURCES RECOVERY AUTHORITY

FOI Request Battle Continues

By **CHRISTOPHER KEATING**
ckeating@courant.com

HARTFORD — What does Tom Ritter do for the state's regional garbage agency?

That was the question Tuesday at a two-hour public hearing in front of the state's Freedom of Information Commission.

The hearing seeks some of the same information as a parallel lawsuit filed in civil court charging that Ritter's law firm has engaged in illegal lobbying on behalf of the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority, the regional trash-burning and recycling entity that serves about 70 municipalities.

Ritter, the influential former Speaker of the House, has worked for years as a consultant for the CRRA. His work has been part of a broader controversy as part of a freedom of information battle that has lasted longer than 18 months and has cost the CRRA more than \$100,000 as the agency refuses to reveal more than 1,000 emails by Ritter and others that the CRRA says are protected by attorney-client privilege, according to testimony.

The issue was still not resolved after Tuesday's hearing and will be the subject of future testimony, which has

not yet been scheduled.

The FOI hearing officer, staff attorney Kathleen K. Ross, seemed unclear at times during the hearing over exactly what services Ritter performs for CRRA.

"What is his job?" Ross asked at one point. "What does he do?"

Ritter himself has answered that question in detail — based on emails that have been released in the long-running FOI battle.

"I am on call whenever anyone there has an issue to review," Ritter wrote in an internal email to CRRA when asked to outline his duties. "I really do bring a lifetime of experience, which allows us to get things done fairly quickly." Ritter also said he has "spent a great deal of time in the community to make sure that the [landfill] closing has gone smoothly and that there was no adverse reaction by the city from their loss of revenue."

Meanwhile, Ritter also noted that "since CRRA cannot have a lobbyist, I was a pro bono lobbyist (with ethics commission approval) to lobby the state for money for the closure."

The backdrop of the hearing is an ongoing civil lawsuit by a consulting firm run by Hartford Democratic political strategist Matthew J. Hennessy against CRRA. Hennessy's firm was one of two bidders for a three-year contract

worth more than \$250,000 for consulting services that had been handled by the law and lobbying firm of Brown Rudnick, where Ritter is a partner in the Hartford office. Neither Brown Rudnick nor Ritter is named as a party to the lawsuit.

When Hennessy's firm failed to win the contract, he started asking why he lost in a public bidding process in which his firm was never interviewed. When he did not receive any answers, he started seeking information through FOI in the fall of 2011 in a process that has included at least five hearings and continues to this day.

Hennessy's firm, which was the high bidder, is seeking monetary and punitive damages, attorney's fees, triple damages under the state's anti-trust statutes, and an injunction "prohibiting CRRA from utilizing outside lobbyists."

In the lawsuit, Hennessy charges that Ritter has been involved in illegal lobbying because emails show that he spoke to state officials and legislators on obtaining money from the State Bond Commission to close the Hartford landfill and on appointments to the CRRA board. Ritter has stated that he does not lobby.

State law prohibits the quasi-public agency from lobbying.



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State's Recycling Efforts Praised

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By SHANNON O'CONNOR,
 shoconnor@courant.com
 The Hartford Courant
 5:38 p.m. EDT, June 26, 2013

HARTFORD —

State officials at a press conference Wednesday touted the state's progress in recycling efforts and waste reduction.

"Connecticut has a lot to be proud of," said Abe Scarr, director of the Connecticut Public Interest Research Group. "We have made some good progress; that said, we still have a long way to go."

Scarr cited Gov. **Dannel P. Malloy's** recycling working group and the passage of the nation's first mattress recycling law in May. That law will, according to Marilyn Cruz-Aponte, assistant to Hartford's director of public works, "in Hartford alone save about \$250,000 a year. Across the state it will save about \$1.3 million to towns and taxpayers."

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Scarr and Sen. Ed Meyer said there's more to be done, however.

"I do think we should set a more ambitious goal for recycling in the state. Our current goal is 58 percent by 2024 [and] I don't think it has been successful in motivating us as a state," said Meyer, who said the state's current recycling rate is 30 percent. "I think we need a more visionary policy saying it's your waste goal getting to 80 percent by 2030."

Scarr and Meyer disagree on whether regionalization of waste disposal in the state – a suggestion struck down by the legislature's environmental committee, of which Meyer is chairman.

"The argument has been made that regionalization is the direction that Connecticut should go in," Meyer said. "We have got 169 towns and if we deal with waste disposal town by town we are making a mistake."

FROM OUR CITYLINE BLOG

Segarra Supports SCOTUS Decision
 - Cityline
 06/26/2013, 11:46 a.m.

City Opens Cooling Centers
 - Cityline
 06/25/2013, 3:50 p.m.

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Meyer disputed a study done by the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection that concluded that regionalization is the best way to deal with waste disposal.

"The environment committee reached a different conclusion after talking to the waste disposal community," Meyer said. "We found that waste disposal is getting more efficient [and] that current waste disposal companies ... do think regionally [and] are not working town by town, but within regions of the state."

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[what's this]

Tweets section with four tweets from CT's Old State House, Wadsworth Atheneum, Andrea Wise, and ctlatinonews.com.

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Niagara Gazette

June 24, 2013

Effort under way to raise awareness of Covanta's plan to bring NYC garbage into the Falls

By Justin Sondel justin.sondel@niagara-gazette.com

Niagara Gazette

Niagara Gazette — Residents in the neighborhood next to a waste-to-energy facility in the Falls are trying to raise awareness of the company's plans to begin bringing New York City garbage in by rail to be processed.

Chris Kudela, a retired Niagara Falls firefighter, lives near Covanta Energy Inc.'s Niagara plant in the city's LaSalle neighborhood.

He has started to organize people in an effort to engage the company and seek answers regarding the effects that shipping the waste from New York City to Niagara Falls will have on his neighborhood.

"We just want to make sure that things are covered here," he said during a phone interview this past week.

Kudela said he has been following the issue, attending public meetings and reading up on the company, but he still has questions.

Kudela organized a meeting of neighbors and other concerned citizens at the Niagara Falls Vineyard Christian Fellowship, less than a mile from Covanta's Niagara facility, Wednesday night.

Kudela was only able to bring a handful of people together to discuss the terms of a rail spur project that was cleared by the Niagara Falls Planning Board. But he and the people who joined him plan on going door-to-door to spread information about the rail spur and other projects, he said.

He hopes to raise awareness quickly, as the comment period for Covanta's Title V air permit renewal — the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation permit that allows companies to emit a specified amount of pollutants like mercury and dioxins into the air — ends July 5.

Most of the people in the neighborhood have no idea that the company is going to be receiving New York City waste by rail, according to Kudela.

"We're trying to let the neighborhood know, give them an inkling as to what's going on," he said.

Kudela understands that the company employs Niagara Falls residents and does not want to stop Covanta from increasing business. But, he wants to know that the increase in rail traffic will not effect the quality of life in his neighborhood.

"We're all sensitive to the fact that there are jobs involved here," he said. "But, if it's a matter of (the

company) saving money or putting us through grief, they're going to spend the money.”

Amy Witryol, a community advocate who has researched public policy related to the waste industry in Niagara County for years, attended the meeting Wednesday night.

She has been a vocal critic of many aspects of Covanta's expansion.

One of the criticisms she has leveled against the company is that they have done a poor job of community outreach and have failed to meet state regulations that require companies that pollute in poor and minority neighborhoods classified as Environmental Justice Areas to work in those neighborhoods to ensure that the people most affected understand the nature and extent of the pollution.

“It was incredibly disappointing to see their treatment of an environmental justice area,” she said.

Witryol has been asking the DEC to require the company to again perform the environmental justice outreach, as she views their first effort to be out of compliance with the agency's policy, she said.

Covanta published public notices in local papers announcing a public information meeting that served as part of the environmental justice requirements for the renewal of the company's air permit.

Witryol argues that many poor families cannot afford a newspaper subscription and that those residents who did see the notice — it included a picture of a smiling Covanta employee with the company logo — would not have known that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss health risks associated with the expansion of the company's facilities.

Included in that expansion is the addition of a natural gas furnace that will operate as a back up for the company's new steam line that will supply steam energy to surrounding factories.

That gas furnace and the 190-foot smoke stack that comes with it were not mentioned in the public notice. Neither was the approved rail spur that will allow the company's Niagara facility to accept New York City waste.

At the April meeting, company employees and DEC employees were on hand in the banquet hall of a Niagara Falls Boulevard hotel to explain the expansions and permit renewal to interested residents. Only four residents — including Witryol and Kudela — and a handful of city officials attended the information session.

The banquet hall was lined with brightly colored posters and maps, some promoting the environmental virtues of waste-to-energy facilities. The permit application was available for review on another table running along the side of the room.

Witryol argues that the public notice and the materials at the information meeting seemed more like an advertisement for the company than the thorough explanation of public health risks associated with the company's expansion that the environmental justice policy calls for.

“Even if residents had got a flier on their door they would not have known that it was a meeting discussing taking garbage from New York City and installing a new smoke stack,” she said.

Witryol said that in communicating with the Region 9 DEC, which covers Western New York, it seems as though their permitting department rubber stamps environmental justice plan applications as a matter of

practice.

“They leave compliance with their own state environmental justice policy entirely to the discretion of the applicant,” Witryol said. “That’s the fox guarding the hen house.”

The Gazette reached out to the DEC’s Region 9 offices for comment, but none was offered by the agency.

James Regan, a Covanta spokesman, said the company went above and beyond the required measures for the environmental justice policy, publishing notice of the meeting twice and collecting all related documents on a website.

“We want residents to be informed about the project,” he said.

Witryol’s characterization of the public notice and materials for the meeting are unfair, added Regan.

“Everything in that session was factual in nature,” he explained.

Included on the website detailing the project are a telephone number (716-278-8520) and email address (dhanna@covantaenergy.com) where residents can submit questions and concerns.

Regan said the company will gladly answer any questions residents might have and the company encourages them to submit any concerns they may have.

“We’re not trying to hide here,” Regan said.

Contact reporter Justin Sondel at 282-2311, ext. 2257

China puts up a green wall to US trash

US recyclers are nervous about losing their largest market after China began enforcing new environmental laws this year.



A Chinese woman holds her baby as she strips labels from plastic soda bottles so they can be recycled. If she works hard, she can earn about \$15 a day.
(Peter Ford/The Christian Science Monitor)

By Peter Ford, Staff Writer / June 19, 2013 at 9:41 am EDT

Beijing

Have you ever wondered what happens to the soda can that you toss into a recycling bin?

Chances are high that it ends up in China – like 75 percent of the aluminum scrap that the United States exports. Or 60 percent of its scrap paper exports. Or 50 percent of its plastic.

But a new Chinese edict, banning "foreign rubbish," has thrown the international scrap and waste trade into turmoil and is posing a major new challenge for US recyclers.

Operation Green Fence, a campaign by Chinese customs to strictly enforce laws governing the import of waste, "could be a game changer," says Doug Kramer, president of Kramer Metals, an international scrap dealer in Los Angeles. "A lot of companies have used China as a dumping ground, getting rid of... substandard scrap and trash," Mr. Kramer says.

As China's government seeks to raise environmental standards, he says, "I understand China's need to take a hard look" at its imports.

That hard look, involving stepped-up inspections of containers filled with scrap metal, paper, and plastic at Chinese ports and a merciless application of the rules, has intercepted more than 800,000 tons of illegal waste since the campaign began in February, according to the customs

agency.

Now nervous traders are refusing to ship consignments of recyclables that might contain unacceptably large amounts of unrecyclable materials (anything from unwashed items to the wrong kind of plastic to random bits and pieces of garbage that get mixed in with the recyclables). And cities and towns across the US and Europe are finding there is no longer a ready market in China for their poorly sorted and often impure bales of plastics, paper, and other waste.

"A butterfly in China has caused a tornado in Europe," Surendra Borad, chairman of Gemini, the world's largest collector of waste plastic, told the Bureau of International Recycling (BIR), an international federation of recyclers, at its annual convention in Shanghai last month.

Why China needs the West's scrap

However, China is not bringing down the hammer on every kind of scrap (and "scrap" is the preferred term of art). The country has few resources of its own, and its fast-growing industry relies heavily on reprocessing other countries' plastic soda bottles into fabrics, or their junked metal into machinery.

"Making proper use of this scrap supplements China's resources, helps save energy, protects the environment, and boosts economic efficiency," Li Xinmin, a former pollution inspector at the Chinese Ministry of Environmental Protection, told a recent meeting of the China Metals Recycling Association.

But in China, much of the imported plastic scrap, for example, is recycled in primitive, family-owned workshops with no facilities to treat waste water before it flows into local rivers. And Chinese recyclers "have got used to expecting 20 percent trash" in the bales of mixed plastics they buy from the US, according to David Cornell, technical consultant to the Washington-based Association of Postconsumer Plastic Recyclers.

That trash has to be sorted from the recyclables, then buried or burned, further degrading China's environment.

Though Chinese regulations have long banned excessive levels of contamination in imports of recyclables, they were rarely enforced until Green Fence was launched, traders say. "Before, we were able to import dirty materials and bottles, but not any longer," explains Sun Kangning, who owns a small plastics recycling plant in the village of Laizhou in Shandong Province (see sidebar on the industry's woes).

Since February, he says, 24 shipping containers of plastic waste that he had bought from the US have been turned away by customs – about 20 percent of his business.

Because the government finds it hard to control all the mom and pop makeshift recycling workshops, it appears to have chosen to enforce environmental standards on imports at the pier.

Those imports have been skyrocketing in recent years. Scrap was America's top export to China by value in 2011 – worth \$11.3 billion, according to US trade figures. (Last year, record

soybean sales knocked scrap and waste into second place.)

Also in 2011, the US exported 23 million tons of scrap (a little less than half of everything that was collected for recycling). Two-thirds of it went to China, according to figures from the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI) in Washington.

'We don't have the capacity'

The international trade has boomed partly because the US cannot dispose of all the waste it generates; the country has neither enough recycling facilities nor sufficient manufacturing demand for all its scrap.

"If the US border were closed, most of the scrap that is exported today would go to landfill," says Robin Wiener, president of ISRI. "We don't have the capacity to absorb it all."

The rising overseas sales of paper, aluminum, copper, plastics, and steel also have to do with the nitty-gritty economics of America's trade deficit with China.

Because China exports so much more to America than it buys back, the shipping containers from Shanghai that are full of computers, mobile phones, and TVs on the journey to Long Beach, Calif., risk returning empty for the trip back.

Shipping companies, seeking to cut their losses, offer bargain rates on their westbound freighters: It is cheaper to ship a 40-foot container full of iron scrap from Los Angeles to a Chinese port than it is to send it by train to a foundry in Chicago. US and Chinese scrap merchants have not been slow to take advantage of the deals.

At the same time, sorting and recycling is a lot cheaper in China, where wages are a fraction of US levels. At Mr. Sun's courtyard processing plant, for example, women using box cutters to strip labels from plastic soda bottles before they are ground up earn about \$15 for a day's work.

Such factors have made the world "over-dependent on China" for scrap recycling and vulnerable to sudden changes in the rules, such as Green Fence, worries Mr. Borad. "That is a matter of concern."

Some traders say the new policy in China has forced them to sell their scrap in different countries, such as Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia, where it is either reprocessed or simply sorted and cleaned to the new Chinese standards and then shipped on to China.

"We've seen a pretty good uptick in shipments to Southeast Asia," says Joe Pickard, ISRI's chief economist. But capacity there "is not sufficient to take up the slack from China," he adds.

Nor are the new destinations likely to tolerate being the planet's trash can indefinitely, predicts Kramer, who sells American scrap iron and nonferrous metals in several Asian countries. "'If you can't send it anywhere else, send it here' is not the kind of message anyone wants to send," he says.

How long will this last?

Some businesses do not expect Chinese customs officials to go on being so zealous for long. Indeed, previous similar crusades have petered out in the past, and the General Administration of Customs in Beijing has announced that its current campaign to "reinforce inspection and prevention work in key areas" will end in November.

But well-placed observers do not think that the old lax habits will reassert themselves. "Before Green Fence, both companies and customs officials were unclear about the laws and regulations," says Wang Jiwei, secretary-general of the China Metals Recycling Association. "After the campaign, both sides will understand the laws better, and I think they will continue to be enforced."

The first four months of the campaign have certainly hit the Chinese recycling industry – raising prices for some recyclable materials that are now in shorter supply. "Our industry is really facing a very big adverse impact from the stricter environmental standards," complained Huang Chongsheng, chief executive officer of aluminum scrap smelter Ye Chiu Metal Recycling at last month's BIR conference.

US recyclers, too, are beginning to feel the effects, especially those who collect, sort, or trade low-end materials, such as the cheaper sorts of mixed plastics often extracted from household waste.

"The market for mixed rigids [such as plastic yogurt containers, margarine tubs, or buckets] has gone to hell in a handbasket," says Jeff Powell, publisher of Resource Recycling magazine. "Mixed paper and mixed plastics are being put into landfill" now that they cannot be sold to Chinese recyclers, he adds.

What next?

"We used to send garbage because it was the cheapest thing to do and because the Chinese would accept it," Mr. Powell explains. The new Chinese policy, he says, will force US recyclers either to sort recyclables more carefully, or to recycle more material in the US, or both.

"We are going to find ourselves forced to be much more innovative" in dealing with waste, predicts Michael Schipper, a scrap trader with International Alloys in Mendham, N.J. "We will have to find ways of processing that material here in a much more cost-effective way."

US processors "are beginning to dip their toes into" that future, says Mr. Schipper, but they are constrained by the cost of more sophisticated machinery.

Already, however, US businesses handling scrap are dealing with it more carefully, according to Steve Alexander, spokesman for the Association of Postconsumer Plastic Recyclers. "People who took the easiest route" before by baling and selling heavily contaminated material "may be running it through a second sorting step, putting it through optical sorters," he says, because that is what the market now demands.

That means that more of the plastic ends up where it is meant to be, and less gets thrown away or burned, either in the US or in China. "Environmentalists love Green Fence," says Powell.

"We are at a turning point in our business," Gregory Cardot of the French waste management firm Veolia Propreté told the BIR conference. "We have to seize this opportunity ... for a sustainable environment for our planet."

If the new Chinese policy lasts, predicts Borad, "the fly-by-night exporters will be eliminated. Green Fence will be a blessing in disguise for our industry."

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Next Up For Recycling: Paint

By: [THERESA SULLIVAN BARGER](#) | 11 HOURS AGO

Starting July 1, Connecticut retailers will charge customers a 75-cent surcharge when they buy a gallon of paint, and in exchange, they'll be able to drop off most unwanted household paint for recycling at participating paint retailers.

While customers won't get their deposit back like with the bottle bill, the surcharge is intended to cover the cost of safely recycling paint and paint cans.

It's all part of the state's efforts to reduce waste, increase recycling and help municipalities save money. It will also cut emissions of toxic paint fumes, called volatile organic compounds (VOCs), by 32 percent statewide, according to the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

This change is the result of Connecticut's extended producer responsibility (EPR) strategy. Under EPR, the financial obligation for disposal and recycling of products at the end of their lives shifts to consumers, so costs will be in proportion to how much paint an individual uses.

This practice benefits the environment and boosts the economy, said Scott Cassel, founder and chief executive officer, Product Stewardship Institute.



(<http://chit.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/files/2013/06/paint.jpg>) "You are bringing these materials to a better and higher use," Cassel said. "The economic impacts are very significant. These laws send a message to investors, particularly in recycling, that there will be an increased supply of a valuable natural resource. ... A number of studies show that recycling creates 10 times as many jobs as disposal."

The paint industry is just one of a growing list of industries that have accepted responsibility for their products at the end of their use. Connecticut has been recycling electronic waste for years, and

Gov. Dannel P. Malloy signed the nation's first mattress recycling bill last month.

With paint cans being recycled, less waste will be burned in the state's trash-to-energy plants. Half the material dropped off at household hazardous waste collection days is leftover oil-based paint, so eliminating it will save municipalities at least \$700,000 annually, the DEEP predicts.

For consumers, this will allow them to drop off leftover cans of household paint at participating retailers, saving time and aggravation. (Stores are required to charge the fee at the point of purchase, but retailers' participation as a recycling drop-off point is voluntary.)

With 34 Sherwin-Williams stores in the state, plans call for all stores to be collection sites, said Tom Kelly, Connecticut district manager.

At stores in states where the recycling law is already in effect, "it's very seamless," Kelly said. "I don't see any of this paint care stewardship as a negative for us." Sherwin-Williams stores will accept any brand of household latex or oil paint. "I want those customers. I want them to become our customers."

But the law could cut contractors' profits, because many will find it hard to pass the cost onto their clients, especially people in Fairfield County, who generally pay a flat fee for paint and labor combined, said Elliot Greenberg, vice president of sales and operations for Rings End, a home improvement retailer with 13 stores in Connecticut. Without understanding the reason for an added fee, these clients will balk at paying the recycling fee, he said.

PaintCare, a nonprofit created by the paint industry to manage the recycling program, has decided not to advertise the program heavily, to prevent a surge of people cleaning out their basements. So the paint contractor is faced with having to explain the law to his customer.

Rings End has worked to educate its paint contractor customers. "We put together fliers in Spanish, Portuguese, Polish, German," said Kevin Schilling, a Rings End senior paint purchasing manager.

Most homeowners keep leftover paint for lack of a viable option. An informal survey on the state DEEP's website shows that 91 percent of the 1,450 respondents had unwanted paint. Of those, 65 percent said they had at least five cans. DEEP estimates Connecticut homes hold some 5 to 6 million cans of leftover paint.

Municipalities' household hazardous waste collections will start accepting latex paint and continue taking oil-based paint, but the tab will be paid by PaintCare, which will use the fees charged to consumers to manage paint recycling.

Connecticut was the third state in the nation to pass the paint recycling law, after Oregon and California. Rhode Island, Vermont, Maine and Minnesota have since passed similar legislation, and New York is expected to pass it next year.

"I would say it's a roadmap for how to deal with materials at the end of their life," said Tom Metzner, environmental analyst with the DEEP and a board member with the Boston-based Product Stewardship Institute. The paint manufacturers association worked with the Product Stewardship Institute for several years to help draft a law that other states could emulate.

Connecticut has emerged as a leader in the producer responsibility movement, Cassel said. The "comprehensive" process is "inclusive," he said. "They have the support of the governor, the DEEP commissioner, local government, legislative support and many organizations in the state."

EPR aligns municipal and state interests and the political environment, Metzner said. "The [waste disposal] problem is a huge expense for municipalities. ... We'll be saving a lot of oil-based and latex paint from going in the garbage," Metzner said. Recycling not only keeps hazardous materials from the waste stream; it creates a commodity that can be sold, he said.

The paint industry sees EPR as "inevitable," said Paul Fresina, operations and communications director for PaintCare.org. "All the products in the world are going to be managed at the end of their life. ... The paint industry knows that paint is a big problem. Government agencies have been asking for help. We might as well get ahead of the curve."

e-waste

Connecticut was the eighth state out of 25 that have passed electronics waste recycling legislation that made it mandatory for municipalities to provide a free drop-off point for recycling e-waste such as televisions, computers, monitors and printers.

The state's first EPR law tackled e-waste because not only was disposal costly, consumers' computers and TVs were being shipped to developing countries where low-paid workers hired to retrieve valuable materials were being exposed to mercury, cadmium and lead. Meanwhile, these toxic materials were leaching into the environment.

Municipalities saved \$270,000 in disposal costs between February 2011 and February 2012, and during that time, nearly 9.7 million pounds of e-waste, or 2.7 pounds per capita, were recycled, according to Mark Latham, environmental analyst with DEEP.

Mattresses

When the mattress recycling law goes into effect, consumers will pay an estimated \$8-\$12 surcharge for each mattress and box spring at purchase, but they'll be able to dispose of their unwanted mattress at no cost. The mattress recycling council has until July 1, 2014 to submit a plan to DEEP for how mattresses will be recycled, but the law requires that provisions include municipal transfer stations as free drop-off locations.

Hartford and other cities pushed for the legislation because illegal dumping of mattresses creates a financial burden on cities. Hartford paid over \$200,000 in fiscal 2012-13 to recycle mattresses, said Marilyn Cruz-Aponte, assistant to Hartford's public works director.

Collectively, the state's municipalities spent \$1.2 million to recycle or dispose of mattresses in 2011, the most recent year available. The new law allows consumers to drop mattresses off at their transfer station at no cost to them or the town, and the mattress industry will cover the recycling cost with the recycling fee charged at time of purchase.

The mattress industry opposed the initial bill introduced last spring without industry input, but last fall representatives worked with state and municipal mattress recycling advocates to craft legislation that could serve as a national model that the industry could live with.

"Once we were able to come to an agreement, we supported it," said Christopher Hudgins, with International Sleep Products Association. "We're glad it passed."

Based on municipalities' input and industry cooperation levels, the DEEP plans to work toward extended producer responsibility for batteries, pesticides, fertilizers and carpets.

Recycling fees vary by paint can size. For information on fees, paint recycling guidelines and paint drop-off locations click [here \(http://www.paintcare.org/connecticut/index.php\)](http://www.paintcare.org/connecticut/index.php).



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At 25, Bridgeport energy plant weathers market shifts

By: [Patrick Gallagher](#) Posted date: June 19, 2013 In: [Energy](#), [Fairfield](#) | comment : 0

As the state's largest waste-to-energy conversion plant marks its 25th year of operations in Bridgeport, its operators say they face increasing pressure from the rapidly expanding natural gas industry.

Wheelabrator Bridgeport L.P. processes more than 2,200 tons of waste daily – generating enough energy to power the plant and more than 64,000 homes – and serves about two dozen municipalities in Fairfield, Litchfield and New Haven counties. The facility is one of 17 waste-to-energy plants owned and operated by Wheelabrator Technologies Inc., which is a subsidiary of Houston-based Waste Management Inc.

"This facility here is without a doubt a regional asset," said Vincent Langone, vice president of Wheelabrator for the New York and Connecticut region. "Typically we average 750,000 tons (processed here) on an annual basis. I don't know of any other technologies out there that can handle volumes of that magnitude."

However, Langone said the company has felt the impacts of the rush of cheap natural gas to the marketplace.

For its first 20 years of operation, Wheelabrator Bridgeport operated under a power purchase agreement with United Illuminating (UI) Co., by which it would sell any power it generated to UI under contracted rates. Since that agreement expired at the end of 2008, the Bridgeport facility has sold its power on the day-ahead market based on the daily market price per kilowatt hour.

"The fact that some of our waste-to-energy facilities have rolled off of their 20-year power purchase agreements, and with natural gas prices being as low as they are today, it's affected the energy markets accordingly," Langone said. "That being the case, we have realized a substantial decrease in energy revenue. The past couple years haven't been as good to the company from a profitability standpoint."

Additionally, Langone said the facility competes with out-of-state landfills that jockey for Connecticut towns' waste. Connecticut itself does not have any municipal solid waste landfills.

"We are in competition with some of the bigger landfills from a disposal pricing standpoint," he said. He said the bigger landfills can lower their disposal prices, which in turn makes it easier for trash haulers to deposit their refuse there. "It's not just us, but any waste-to-energy company out there is in the same situation."

The facility generates energy by processing waste through a utility-grade boiler and by transforming the chemical energy in the waste to thermal energy, which in turn generates turbines that produce electricity.

Langone said Wheelabrator Bridgeport adheres to the "strictest EPA and local regulatory agency guidelines."

"Over the course of the last 10 or 15 years with the changes in the air standards, we've been required to upgrade our emissions system accordingly," Langone said. "So we're considered one of the cleanest technologies out there."

Langone, who previously served as facilities manager of Wheelabrator Bridgeport, said the company has enjoyed strong ties with the city of Bridgeport. "We've been here 25 years working hand-in-hand with the city, and we've had a very good relationship with the city over that period."

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