

Waste Management Challenges and Solutions

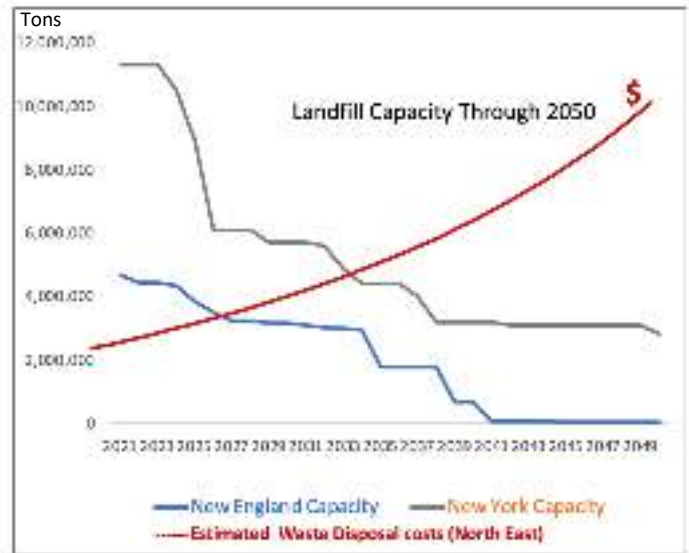
National Waste Crisis

Landfill capacity in New England is expected to drop to **zero** as early as 2041.

The capacity crisis is not just limited to New England. In 1990, the US had over 6,000 landfills. Today there are just over 1,000 landfills remaining.

Along with landfilling, we also incinerate our waste. Only 1 new incinerator has been built in the US in the past 32 years (Florida in 2015). As facilities close, new ones do not open.

No one wants a waste disposal facility built in their backyard. Without building new landfills or incinerators, the cost to dispose of our trash is increasing dramatically.



Unit-Based Pricing (UBP)

Since we are running out of affordable disposal options, we need to reduce the amount of trash we dispose of. Unit-Based Pricing (UBP) is a proven trash reduction method that treats trash like a utility with residents paying based on the amount they throw away through a special bag fee.

This method gives people control over their waste costs and is a common way to reduce waste. UBP programs paired with food scrap collection could reduce waste in Connecticut by nearly 70%.

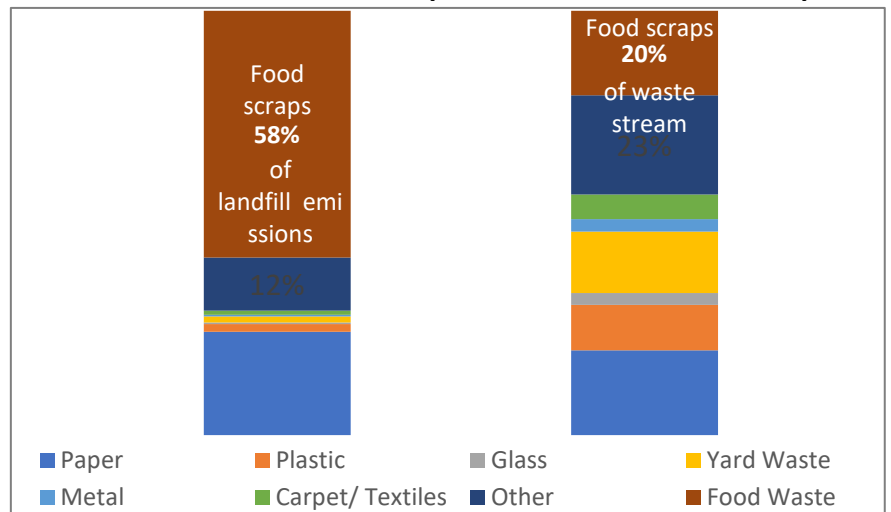


There are over 550 UBP programs in New England and New York Combined. Over 40% of Massachusetts residents live in communities with some type of UBP regulation. About 50% of residents in New Hampshire and Maine and all of Vermont are part of UBP programs.

The Importance of Removing Food Scraps from the Waste Stream

Food scraps make up about 20% of the waste stream but contribute to 58% of all Green House Gas (GHG) Emissions from landfills. Over 1/3 of Connecticut's waste is currently shipped out of state to landfills in Pennsylvania and Ohio, contributing to additional vehicle emissions as well as environmental justice issues to communities where the waste is landfilled or incinerated.

GHG Emissions from Landfill Compared to Waste Stream Composition



Town of Woodbury Transfer Station Waste and Food Scrap Program

Why are we using standardized bags?

The bags are the “unit” in “unit-based pricing.”

Standardized bag sizes are easier and more cost-effective for the transfer station than weighing.

How will it work?

Residents will buy orange bags where they usually do— grocery stores, convenience stores, etc.

Fill the bag up as much as you can and drop it off at the transfer station!

Residents can reduce the amount of trash in their orange bag by recycling as much as they can and separating out food scraps.

Will it be mandatory?

Yes. Only Town designated trash bags would be allowed at the transfer station.

Separating out food scraps is also mandatory. Given that food scraps make up 22% of the waste stream, residents can save money on trash bags by participating in food scrap drop off.



Why would Woodbury switch to UBP?

This type of waste management has associated economic, environmental and equity benefits.

Economic: In the near future, tipping fees will rise astronomically and require the Town to increase taxes to budget for waste disposal. Reducing trash means sparing residents from future tax increases for disposal.

Environmental: Food scraps are a valuable resource that can produce renewable energy - sending them to a landfill or incinerator means we need to use fossil fuels to generate that energy instead. It also means the fertilizer, water, and land used to grow that food was wasted. Woodbury can significantly cut greenhouse gas emissions by sending food scraps to an anaerobic digester.

Fairness: In the current system, households pay for trash through their taxes rather than on how much trash they make. Could you imagine if we did this with other utilities? What if everyone paid an annual, flat rate for electricity – they probably wouldn’t have any reason to turn off the lights when they leave the room, or use efficient appliances. Connecting the amount of trash you make, to the amount of money you pay, is proven to reduce waste at the point of generation.

Why do the bags cost more?

The price of the bag includes the price to dispose of what’s inside of it.

The bags are tax-exempt, and stores are not allowed to mark them up.

Bag locations,
resources, and an FAQ
will be available at
[www.woodburyct.org/
waste](http://www.woodburyct.org/waste)

