



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
1021 Redmond Road
Williston, VT 05495

EMAIL info@cswd.net
TEL (802) 872-8100

www.cswd.net

June 17, 2019

The Honorable Paul Monette
Mayor, City of Newport, Vermont
222 Main Street
Newport, VT 05855

Dear Mayor Monette:

Thank you for your letter of June 3, 2019 with respect to the NOAV date April 12, 2018 and recent media coverage regarding allegations related to the NOAV. I appreciate the opportunity to respond, since many of the statements that have been repeated in Vermont Digger, the Vermont Public Radio coverage and elsewhere are not accurate.

First and foremost, I assure you the Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD) is committed to encouraging and supporting waste diversion, recycling and beneficial reuse of recycled and waste materials, and managing solid waste in an environmentally beneficial and economic manner. Regionally and nationally, glass is a challenging material to manage for many reasons.

The State of Vermont, through the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR), adopted a Processed Glass Aggregate Policy (PGA Policy, last revised in January 2002), which approves the use of processed glass aggregate in place of natural aggregate. ANR recognized, as others across our region and the country have recognized, that market prices for cullet--recycled glass suitable for making new bottles--were decreasing, and not expected to reverse. Current markets show that forecast was correct.

ANR, through their PGA Policy, encourages alternative use of recycled glass in place of natural aggregate (such as gravel, crushed gravel, or crushed stone). That is what CSWD did. The material was not "dumped" or "stored," as news reports may have stated. CSWD used the PGA to support an embankment to prevent and control potential erosion and support the road that CSWD uses for access to the closed landfill at Redmond Road. As we reported, this was a local project.

Many states use PGA in local road projects, generally as a substitute for natural aggregate. Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Ohio all have programs using PGA in road projects, for sub-base, drainage, embankments and even asphalt. The U.S. Federal Highway Administration recognizes the benefits of using PGA in road applications and ANR has been working with the Vermont Agency of Transportation to support such use. Using collected and processed glass aggregate reduces landfill disposal, is an

alternative to natural aggregate, and saves the public money. Converting what would otherwise be waste into a beneficial, useful product is the underlying principle behind recycling.

CSWD has invested more than a million dollars in equipment specifically to make PGA from the glass brought to our Materials Recovery Facility in Williston. We continue to work with ANR, the Agency of Transportation, and the University of Vermont to explore more options for use of recycled glass. Right now, our PGA goes to Whitcomb Construction in Colchester or to 2M Ressources Inc. in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu. We pay to send PGA to these businesses and receive no revenue for the material.

CSWD recognizes that the residents, businesses, and municipalities that use the CSWD Material Recovery Facility are concerned about increasing recycling fees. We are mindful that trucking PGA great distances to chase possible alternative uses would increase costs, wear and tear on public roads and highways, and environmental impacts. We think there's a better way to manage glass in Vermont and would love to work with you on a solution.

One idea that we've discussed with Senator Bray (D-Addison) is to modernize Vermont's bottle bill by transforming it into a glass-only redemption system. I'm talking about as much food and beverage glass as possible: beer, wine, cider, and soda bottles, pickle jars, mustard jars, etc. We'd need to revisit the deposit, because \$0.05/item isn't enough to incentivize and support an effective system.

Thanks to Act 148, Vermonters across the state now have access to recycling all kinds of materials, including those covered by the bottle bill. Universal Recycling largely solved the problem of access in rural areas. Now we face a new and bigger problem: Thanks to global market pressures, Vermont's Material Recovery Facilities are struggling to survive. Over 95% of Vermonters have access to recycling more materials than ever, yet the very facilities we need to manage those materials are in crisis. Soon rising costs will bring most communities to a breaking point. Bringing more of the materials that have value--plastic bottles and aluminum cans--back to the MRFs and moving glass out is a win-win.

There is a tremendous opportunity, right now, to take Vermont's recycling system into the 21st Century. We can stabilize the statewide recycling system while funding clean water and much needed recycling infrastructure. CSWD's Board of Commissioners and staff are committed to waste diversion and cost effective and environmentally sound practices and programs, and we know our sister Districts feel the same. We'd like to work together towards achieving the goal of sustainable materials management for the benefit of all Vermonters.

I appreciate your letter and would be happy to discuss any additional concerns or questions.

Sincerely,


Sarah Reeves, Executive Director