



# NH Composting Regulations: Then & Now

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# Background



- ▶ SB 251 (2015) – directed NHDES to update composting facility rules
- ▶ 2017 – 2018 NHDES held several stakeholder meetings
- ▶ HB 413 (2021) – Specified deadline for initiating rule updates
- ▶ New Rules Adopted March 23, 2022 (First major overhaul of the rules since 1997)

# The Old Rules...



- ▶ Composting of meat/dairy food scraps prohibited under permit-by-notification
  - ▶ Only allowed under standard permit
- ▶ Composting facilities required to meet Landfill Siting Requirements
- ▶ Outdated classification system for finished compost with complicated sampling and testing requirements
- ▶ No provisions for “small scale” food scrap collection & composting (e.g., community composting)



# The New Rules...



- ▶ Composting meat/dairy now allowed under permit-by-notification
  - ▶ Emphasis on BMPs
- ▶ New siting requirements (existing facilities grandfathered)
- ▶ Compost classification system replaced with universal minimum quality/maturity standards
- ▶ New permit-exemptions for small-scale collection and processing
  - ▶ Food waste drop-off collection sites
  - ▶ Community composting facilities



Source: [www.Pixabay.com](http://www.Pixabay.com)

# New Permit-by-Notification Requirements



- ▶ Eligible to compost food waste, compostable packaging/paper, manures, crop residuals, yard waste, bulking agents
- ▶ BMPs to ensure efficient aerobic composting conditions:
  - ▶ Initial carbon-to-nitrogen ratio at least 25:1
  - ▶ Moisture between 50-60%
  - ▶ Bulk density < 1,100 lbs per cubic yard
  - ▶ Prevent/Manage odors
    - ▶ Waste incorporated into active process within 2 hrs of receipt (otherwise stored in closed containers)
    - ▶ Cover piles with biofilter as necessary
    - ▶ Adjust recipe and/or turning procedures as necessary

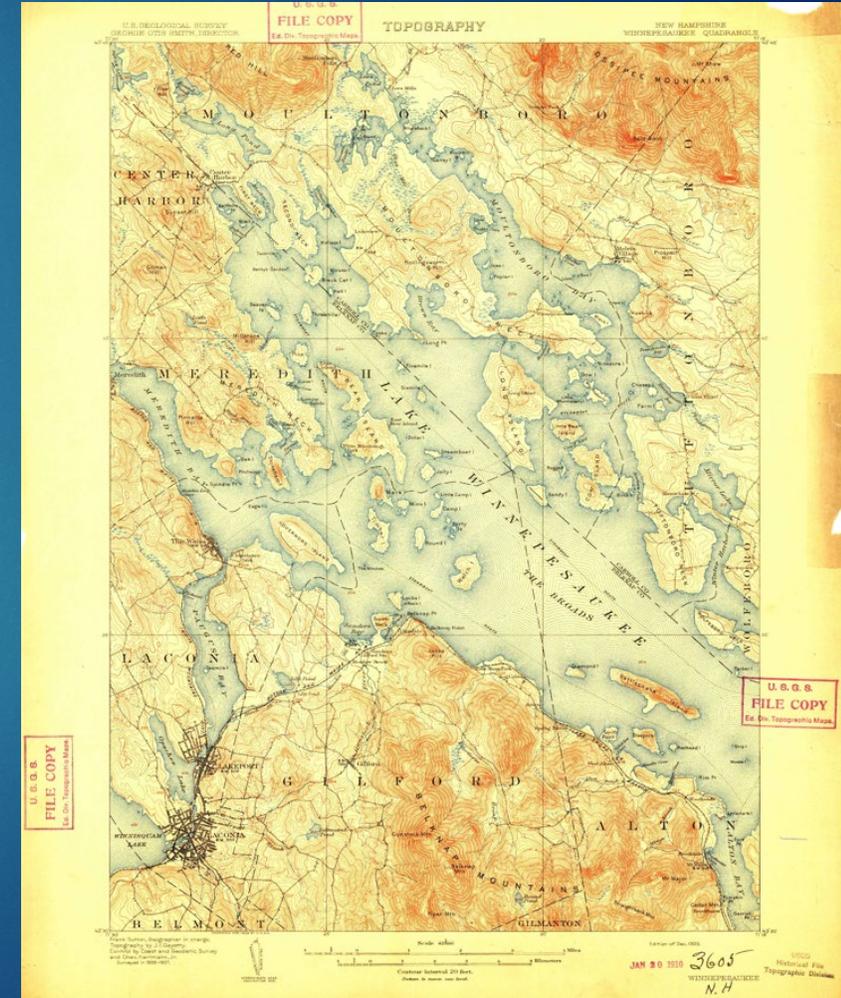


Source: [www.Pixabay.com](http://www.Pixabay.com)

# New Siting Requirements



- ▶ A composting facility's waste collection, storage and processing areas need to be located:
  - ▶ 75ft from any private drinking water well, and not within the protective radius of a public water supply well
  - ▶ At least 75ft from surface waters and wetlands, and not within protected shorelands of public water bodies (rivers/lakes)
  - ▶ On a surface at least 2 feet above seasonal high water table
  - ▶ On a surface at least 2 feet above bedrock or sand/gravel deposits (does not apply if facility uses impermeable pad)



Source: United States Geological Survey (USGS)

# New Quality Requirements



- ▶ Quality restrictions for
  - ▶ Heavy metals
  - ▶ Bacteria (salmonella, fecal coliform)
  - ▶ Man-made inert matter (glass, plastic, metal, etc.)
- ▶ Maturity thresholds to ensure compost is “finished”
  - ▶ Measures for microbial respiration & ammonia concentration
- ▶ Testing required at least once annually



Source: Northeast Resource Recovery Association

# New Permit Exemptions



## Food waste drop-off collection sites

- ▶ Can store up to 1 cubic yard
  - ▶ Roughly (40) 5-gallon buckets or (3) 64-gallon totes
- ▶ Stored no longer than one week from date of receipt before being transferred off site
- ▶ Intended to increase access for food waste diversion by enabling community centers to function as collection points without needing a solid waste facility permit
- ▶ Enables food scrap haulers to develop distributed networks of collection points (helpful in rural areas)



Source: National Co-Op Grocers -- [www.ncg.coop](http://www.ncg.coop)

# New Permit Exemptions



## Community Composting Facilities

- ▶ Can accept up to 5 cubic yards of food waste per month
- ▶ Composting site footprint up to 600 square feet
- ▶ Composting process conforms with accepted BMPs
- ▶ Intended to provide option for small scale, localized composting – can expand to permitted facility as operations grow



Source: North Woods & Pleasant Valley Camp, Tuffonboro, NH

# Questions



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