

**Agency of Natural Resources  
Department of Environmental Conservation**

**Waste Management Division  
West Building  
802-241-3888**

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Department of Public Safety  
Solid Waste Facility Owner/Operators, Solid Waste Transporters, and Affected  
Municipalities

From: Solid Waste Management Program

Date: May 18, 2011

Subject: Flood Debris Management

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The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR), Vermont Emergency Management (VEM), and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are proactively approaching the management of debris generated from this spring's heavy precipitation and ensuing flooding. As of this date, estimates of the quantity and type of debris are very preliminary, and likely only after Lake Champlain levels recede will we know the scope of the problem. We can assume, however, that substantial amounts of woody debris from the lakeshore, and construction and (particularly) demolition waste from damaged residents and businesses, will be generated from the towns along Lake Champlain.

Although we anticipate urgency to the remediation efforts, and a correspondent spike in waste generation over the next few months, the ANR believes that, with additional time and labor, the existing solid waste collection, transportation, recycling, and disposal infrastructure is sufficient to manage the increase. If there is a need for temporary staging areas, prior written approval must be obtained, such as an Insignificant Waste Management Event Approval (IWMEA); contact Dennis Fekert directly for such approvals. The ANR does not expect major deviations from solid waste facility certification conditions, facility management plans, and best management practices, and any such deviations will need pre-approval. If you think there is a need to extend operating hours and perhaps open on days when normally closed, please contact us as soon as possible. As with all solid waste, flood debris is to be managed to minimize threats to human health and the environment, and, whenever possible, to conserve natural resources. To the extent practicable, Vermont's waste management hierarchy applies; that is, a concerted effort to reduce waste, then, if possible, reuse and recycling of the waste produced, and finally, disposal of the residuals.

As a reminder, Vermont law bans a number of items from landfill disposal, and the bans apply to flood debris, also. Materials banned from the landfill are:

- **Batteries** - *rechargeables, lead-acid*
- **Electronics** – *computers, monitors, TVs, printers, audio components, DVD players, video game consoles, phones...*
- **Hazardous Waste**
- **Liquid Waste**
- **Regulated Medical Waste**
- **Mercury-Added Products** – *fluorescent bulbs, thermostats, thermometers...*
- **Used oil**
- **Paint** – *oil based paints, stains, thinners, strippers, varnishes...*
- **Gas Cylinders** – *Propane, natural gas...*
- **Tires**
- **White Goods** – *refrigerators, stoves, washers, dryers...*

**Asbestos waste** cannot be commingled with other wastes, cannot be collected at the curb, and cannot be brought to a transfer station or drop-off center. Disposal options are limited to direct hauling to an approved landfill, or management by a certified asbestos abatement contractor. Further information on asbestos removal may be obtained from the Vermont Department of Health, Division of Health Protection, 1-800-439-8550, <http://www.healthvermont.gov/>. Further information on transportation and disposal of asbestos may be obtained from the Solid Waste Management Program, 802-241-3444.

Structures built before 1978 may be painted with **Lead Based Paint (LBP)**. Federal Rules require that contractors disturbing LBP in homes, day care centers, and schools to be certified and follow specific work practices. LBP debris from certified contractors is to be “contained” at the jobsite before transporting. These rules do not apply to homeowners, or whole structure demolition. Debris coated with LBP is a normal solid waste and can be managed at any certified solid waste facility. Information on lead certification and lead management may be obtained from the Vermont Department of Health, Division of Health Protection, 1-800-439-8550, <http://www.healthvermont.gov/>.

The ANR strongly encourages the segregation and proper management of **Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)**; that is, common household products that contain hazardous constituents, such as garden chemicals, automotive and boating fluids, and many cleaning products. Permanent HHW collection centers exist, or periodic collection events are held in the area, so that disposing of these wastes with flood debris is unnecessary.

**Scrap Metal** of all types is recyclable, and metal salvage prices are at levels that foster segregation of almost any quantity. On the economic value alone, scrap metal from flood debris should not be disposed of.

**Woody Debris** will be a major component of the flood waste stream. This material will likely be contaminated with small quantities of non-wood or treated wood, and these contaminants must be carefully screened before the woody debris can be processed or beneficially used. The ANR encourages beneficial use of clean wood as mulch for landscaping or compost, or as biomass fuel, and discourages landfill disposal. Clean, untreated, unpainted wood may also be burned at locations approved by the Air Pollution Control Division, but the Agency believes that preferred management options exist.

The Agency of Natural Resources is committed to providing technical assistance to allow coordinated, environmentally sound, and economically responsible management of flood debris. Please call the Solid Waste Management Program at 802-241-3444 for additional information or with any questions.