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Tuesday July 29, 2008
Large-scale composting

By Jane Lindholm



Two of Vermont's large-scale composting operations -- Intervale in Burlington and Vermont Compost Company in Montpelier - have faced questions this year about their environmental impact. Composting facilities like

these divert huge quantities of waste away from landfills and they are utilized by some of the largest organizations in the state, including hospitals, colleges and businesses. But their potential risk to waterways and public health has to be managed carefully. We talk with VPR reporter John Dillon, Cathy Jamieson of the state's Solid Waste Division and Bob Foster of the Composting Association of Vermont about the important role of large-scale composting and what regulations are needed to protect the environment.

Also, the Health Department says its Burlington district office has run out of vaccine for shingles, an illness that can develop in people who have had chicken pox or chicken pox vaccine. We talk with Don Swartz, the Health Department's medical director, about who is affected by the shortage and how the vaccine works. Also, a percussion group from Brooklyn, NY, is preparing for live performances in southeastern Vermont and they give us a preview of their commissioned work.

Comments on composting:

Brian Jerose, board member of the Composting Association of Vermont:

Comment from John Dillon on Vermont Compost Company description - John stated VCC is a concern to neighbors as they "process industrial waste" or are "industrial scale composting". Manure, woodchips and foodscraps handled at the site are not industrial wastes. 2. H.873 applied to sites that have a solid waste permit - VCC was deemed by ANR DEC to be exempt from requiring a permit as the are a farm, do not operate at a industrial scale and their foodscraps are used as feed for chickens which produce 15,000 dozen eggs annually. It seems a circular argument to say VCC needs a permit for H.873 moratorium to apply.

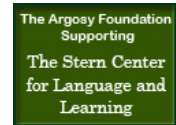
Lastly as part of the CAV stakeholder meetings process was described early in program - one commonly held view of participants is that VCC provides a model that can most easily be replicated as a means of sustainable farming and organic residuals recycling in Vermont.

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