

storage or disposal facilities in the state in 1991, only two were permitted by DEC. Enforcement action against many facilities was expected.

Recycling

Both these trends are forcing municipalities around the state to start or expand recycling programs. Moreover, by September 1, 1992, New York State municipalities must adopt ordinances to separate recyclable or reusable solid waste at the source.

Such programs increase demand for the collection, transport, and processing of recyclables. Ever more municipalities are instituting household source-separation and curbside collection. This creates demand for the following kinds of items: trucks for collecting and transporting recyclables, boxes in which households put out recyclables on the curbside ("blue boxes"), and bins at drop-off centers.

The DEC's "Low Technology Resource Recovery Program" (described below) provides funds to municipalities for the purchase of equipment for recycling and materials recovery.

Materials Recovery Facilities

Materials recovery facilities (MRFs) process the recyclables into secondary materials so they can be sold or reused. They are also known as recyclables handling and recovery facilities. They use manual or mechanical means to sort, clean, and bale the recyclables or to make them denser. These facilities vary widely, depending on types of recyclables handled, quantities collected, and types of separation and processing used.

According to the Biocycle Guide to Collecting, Processing, and Marketing Recyclables, their capital construction costs range from \$10,000 to \$46,000 per ton of daily capacity. The MRFs purchase separation and processing equipment, drive-on scales, front-end loaders, conveyor belts, baling equipment, shredders, and transportation vehicles. As more and more of the state's municipalities institute recycling programs, they (or their private contractors) are building numerous MRFs around the state.

Composting

About 40-50% of municipal solid waste is organic and could potentially be composted. Three conventional systems for composting are windrow, aerated static piles, and in-vessel composting. As more municipalities invest in composting, some are turning to the most sophisticated technology: in-vessel composting, which is capital- and technology-intensive.

According to the NYS Solid Waste Management Plan, such systems cost \$180-270 per dry ton, as compared to \$20-27 per dry ton for windrow. Still, factors of composting space, labor cost, and type of waste stream may make in-vessel composting more economical for some communities. Some of these systems control air and water flow in enclosed, computer-controlled environments to accelerate decomposition.