

## Message from Chris Thatcher received via email on June 8, 2023

**Transfer Station "Swap Shop"/Take and Give area.** I've looked into this and there are no laws regarding a town setting up a section at the transfer station for a take and give area for items to be recycled by the public. In fact my research has indicated that many towns across NH have set up "Swap Shops", these towns include but are not limited to:

- Hampstead NH - [https://www.hampsteadnh.us/sites/g/files/vyhlif661/f/uploads/swap\\_shop\\_flyer\\_2023.pdf](https://www.hampsteadnh.us/sites/g/files/vyhlif661/f/uploads/swap_shop_flyer_2023.pdf)
- Merrimack NH - <https://www.merrimacknh.gov/solid-waste/pages/swap-shop>  
<https://patch.com/new-hampshire/merrimack/second-hand-shop-coming-to-transfer-station>
- Deerfield NH - <https://www.townofdeerfieldnh.com/transfer-station>
- Northampton MA - <https://www.townofdeerfieldnh.com/transfer-station>
- Northwood NH - <https://www.northwoodnh.org/entity/Transfer-StationRecycling-Center-27>
- New Boston NH  
- [https://www.newbostonnh.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif4756/f/uploads/rules\\_regulations\\_for\\_the\\_transfer\\_station\\_and\\_recycling\\_center.pdf](https://www.newbostonnh.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif4756/f/uploads/rules_regulations_for_the_transfer_station_and_recycling_center.pdf)
- Nashua NH - <https://www.nhbr.com/city-landfills-recycling-center-a-victim-of-own-success/>
- Gilford NH - <https://www.gilfordnh.org/recycleright>
- Lee NH - <https://www.leenh.org/transfer-station/pages/swap-shop>
- Bedford NH - <https://www.bedfordnh.org/975/Second-Chance-Swap-Shop>

While many of these are town/volunteer operated several operate as a for profit, including Merrimack NH, which operates a Swap Shop operated by a 3rd party and which the profits are then used to support activities of the transfer station, adding to it's overall budget and profitability, I believe I read that the 3rd party leases the space and pays a monthly rent to the Town Transfer Station: <https://patch.com/new-hampshire/merrimack/second-hand-shop-coming-to-transfer-station>. In the case of Nashua the program was so successful that they had to shut it down due to crowding and fights though, something to consider. In my research reasons for implementing such a program was for both an environmental reason but also that it reduced waste being put through transfer stations which reduced overall costs as well. I will continue to research this more and present information as I find it, however there could be a case made that by implementing such a program there could be a financial gain/reason for doing so, along with the sustainability and environmental reasons.

General Article on Dump Treasures and Recycling: <https://www.nhmagazine.com/finding-treasure-at-nhs-transfer-stations/>

**Composting Information:** I've looked into this a little but have not had the time to really dig into it. There are not many composting services which service the Southern New Hampshire area anymore. One of the most reputable organizations was Offbeat based out of Lowell, which was purchased last year by Bootstrap out of the Metro Boston area, however this past week they announced they will be leaving Southern NH. Nashua does have a composting program but only services Nashua, I have spoken with them prior to being a member of the Sustainability Committee, as I was looking for services at my house. They would like to extend services to areas like Hudson and other neighboring towns, however the primary hinderance is lack of volunteers to handle the volumes and travel, as the program is not funded for such services.

One interesting thing I did find while researching the Transfer Station Swap Shops, was that some towns host their own composting drop off at the transfer station. This is either facilitated and run by the town or, more commonly it is partnered with a composting company, such as the ones below:

- Mr. Fox Composting servicing many Seacoast towns: <https://mrfoxcomposting.com/>
- Elm City Compost servicing Keene NH Area: <https://www.elmcitycompost.com/>

Some composting services offered at transfer stations are set up for free services while others, charge a per pound rate to drop off.

Another interesting item which came up was that a slew of towns have set up composting services for yard waste, leaves, grass etc. They create large compost piles which are then sold to the public, one example is Amherst, which is set up to sell composted material from Transfer Station to public such as in Amherst NH for a profit (See link below). This not only reduces material going into the dump but assists in clearing space at the transfer station as well as bringing in potential profit.

- Here is a list of some towns that have set up composting services at transfer stations.
- Bedford NH - <https://www.bedfordnh.org/951/Food-Waste-Composting>
- Nashua NH - <https://www.grownashua.org/composting>
- Durham NH - <https://www.ci.durham.nh.us/publicworks/composting-durham-transfer-station>
- Hampton NH - <https://www.hamptonnh.gov/291/Transfer-Station>
- Dover NH - <https://www.dover.nh.gov/government/city-operations/community-services/waste-recycling/recycling-center-composting/>
- Amherst NH - <https://www.amherstnh.gov/transfer-station/faq/compost-sale-transfer-station-if-so-how-much-it>
- Lee NH  
- [https://www.leenh.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf776/f/uploads/lee\\_compost\\_flyer\\_1.pdf](https://www.leenh.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf776/f/uploads/lee_compost_flyer_1.pdf)

- Keene NH - <https://keenenh.gov/public-works/rates-fees>

One area I want to explore more is the possibility of involving the Alvirne Forestry/Natural Resources Program: <https://www.sau81.org/cte/programs/natural-resources> in recycling wood waste brought to the Town Transfer station. Having seen a lot the wood brought into the dump, much of which could be cut up, split and used for campfire wood or for burning in a stove during the winter as cord wood, it's another potential avenue to reduce waste as well increase profits at the transfer station. I spoke with one of the teachers at Alvirne during the farm days. The class actually harvests and splits wood for their program, that wood is usually sold at a discounted rate or given to faculty of the school or others for use. There is a huge potential to partner with the Alvirne program to sort, cut and split wood brought to the dump in order to resell it to the public. I would really like to explore this more.

I feel I still need to do some more in-depth research into this before we propose posting and information out on the website. However so far, I believe there is some interesting materials out there that could be educational and beneficial. I believe looking more closely, and potentially implementing, programs like a Swap Shop and composting services in Hudson could potentially have a positive impact on the profitability of the Transfer Station by reducing the amount of waste processed but by also increasing potential revenues but will have a positive impact on the environment.

**Potential Tours and Meetings:** I have reached out to several towns to discuss their Swap Shops as well as composting programs. In particular Bedford NH's Environmental Coordinator Jerome Spooner has invited me to come up to Bedford to tour their facilities and discuss their programs. I would like to ask the permission of the Committee to pursue this meeting as well as invite others interested to attend with me.

I'm also intending to reach out to both Elm City Compost and Mr. Fox Composting to discuss how services for Towns works and the costs associated with them. Again, I'm seeking the Committees approval to do this as well as inviting anyone interested to participate.

This is were I am now, I will continue to review and provide updates. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,  
Chris Thatcher  
Hudson NH Sustainability Committee Member