PWG Meeting #95

NH Network Plastics Working Group
Sunday, November 15, 6 pm
NEXT MEETING: Sunday, January 17, 2027
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87209928697
Dial by your location
+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)
Meeting ID: 872 0992 8697
SUP Presentation Links:
Full Toolkit
Shorter Speakers Notes
Plastics Working Group Slide Deck Link (all may add resources)
Ten Towns Toolkit website Link
2027 Meeting Schedule
PWG Action Tracking Spreadsheet or 2026 Google Form to Enter Completed Actions
2024-26 PWG Priorities Table
2026 Legislative Tracking Sheet (click on 2026 tab)
NH Network Bills Resource
Ten Towns Ten Actions Promotion Pieces

Attending
(KEEP THIS LIST INTACT AND EDIT EACH MEETING - USUALLY SIMILAR ATTENDEES SHOW UP EACH TIME)
NOTE: *Names in* ***bold*** *were in attendance.*
Mark Berry, Patsy Beffa-Negrini, Cindy Heath, Kathy Manfre, Janet Perkins-Howland, **Ann Podlipny, Susan Richman**, Cynthia Walter, Nancy Ladd, Jack Hurley, Peggy Ueda (Jaffrey)**, Nick Germana (Keene), Scott Burns (Franklin); Erin Costello (Hampton),** Bill Davis (D NH Campaign Coord. Surfrider), Deb Lievens (Londonderry), **Mindi Messmer, Bridget Hansel, Caeln (Third Act), Carol Sullivan (Center Harbor), Bill Paxton**

1. Land Acknowledgment, Norms, Leader in Every Chair, Welcome New Attendees

2. Presentation - Dr. Mindi Messmer, Research Scientist, Author, Former State Rep.

- Serves on S. NH PFAS and HB 1171 Commission - Env. Triggered Chronic Disease Commissions
- St. Gobain - Makes grill sheets, toaster belts, plastic fabric; closed in 2023
- Contamination still exists; concealed chemical contamination
- St. Gobain paid $1.7 million to install water remediation in Merrimack
- PFAS & Plastics are the same; camera film, non-stick cookware
- Min. of 12,000 - 16,000 PFAS strains, but health impacts unknown b/c held secret by companies
- PFAS not labeled on packaging, jugs, products - goes into waste stream
- PEER discovered PFAS in pesticides coming from jugs, EPA ordered company to stop, but appeals court threw it out because they've been using PFAS since 1998
- PLASTCHEM project looked for every known chemical in plastics - 16K, 10K unknown
- 4,200 are chemicals of concern - toxic, persistent, show up in our bodies
- Food packaging releases plastics into food, bisphenols, phalates, flame retardants
- Industry shifting to plastics as the demand for fuel declines
- NEJM 2024-Italian study 58% of participants had plastics 20% died in 4 years; 4.5x more likely to die; measurement methods not really mature; (Marfella)
- Under 2 mg/ml; 2-20 mg/ml = exposure; over 20 mg/ml = high exposure leads to cancer
- Messmer Doctorate: AI Enabled PFAS Detection and Surveillance in US Drinking Water; Northeastern 2025

    - Federal Water protections lowered so that only 2 PFAS chemicals banned nationally
    - VT is working on new legislation - NH looking at medical monitoring for so. nh residents
    - Consumers have the power - Locally we can adopt PFAS free purchasing policies
    - Expand reuse & refill systems
    - Push for regulation by one PFAS class of chemicals, not individually
    - Protect people already exposed

- Q & A
- **Europe?** More proactive, but have had some set backs - refrigerants were banned, but replacements are just as bad; HFOA leaks and transforms to TFA - hard to remove from water; found all over the world, comes down in the rain; EU has led the charge relating to F gases; US may move forward with the new Congress; industry compliance
- **HB 1649** restricts products with PFAS, rulemaking in progress by DES, goes into effect in 2027
- **Can you get rid of PFAS?** Public water systems (Merrimack, Pease) have technologies to remove legacy compounds; more difficult to remove TFAS (smaller molecules); NH is looking at soil standards, but technology is very expensive; carbon bond is the strongest chemical bond we know about; St Gobain had catalytic burners that partially broke down the molecules; no viable tech for soil or product break down
- **Where is the largest concentration in NH?** Cokely landfill, Dummer Yard (Berlin), Pease AFB, 20 superfund sites in NH (more than our share); 350-400 unlined landfills in NH, may find PFAS in those; sampling is ongoing; DES might be able to come and speak to PWG
- **Can we turn this around to get people on board with a new message for a better future?** Hard to be negative when we discuss PFAS; public pressure was significant in Merrimack - press, protests, commissions pressuring St. Gobain; pressing DES to comply; Textiles Coating Intl in Amherst is fined $4.5 million for PFAS judgment with more to come
- **Sources of PFAS - Are there other systems that put PFAS in the air?** PFAS foam used in a fuel truck fire, firefighter training sites; solvents for tool cleaning
- **Of landfill contents, is it known where PFAS comes from?** In the 70's Cokely Landfill took everything - haz waste, chemical waste from Pease, trucks from MA, no controls; shut down in 1985; couches, pesticides, all uncontrolled; leakage happens if the landfill isn't lined; groundwater gets contaminated with sea level rise
- **Compostables contain PFAS?** Green Screen analyzes products; Washington Post article on contamination in take-out containers tied to youth colon cancer rates
- **Cradle to Cradle - circular economy to insure biodegradable or infinitely recyclable, any thoughts?**
- Viable substitutes are in development, but PFAS is everywhere
- **Are there any legislative models in other states that support reuse?**
- Not yet, more research needed
- **What about laws on being able to bring your own containers?**
- OK in restaurants, but not at the deli counter; need additional legislation
- Have Manch & Nashua had muni water testing for microplastics & PFAS; law passed in 2018 requiring PFAS testing; must report on annual reports; results available on state website or annual report
- EPA tests every 5 years on PFAS & Lithium (ECMR 6)**;** Moorehead Industries developing a microplastics test;

3. PWG Community News Updates Note Readers! Please add your activities on plastic waste & pollution!

- A**nn (Chester) -** Met Marion Stoddard - Groton, MA; helped establish the Clean Water Act, now cleaning up Nashua River in MA; Nashua River Watershed Council; working with youth paddling on river education; presenting w/ Susan on Feb 26 at OLY; publishing article on meeting Marion Stoddard; presentation at Westside HS; seeking one at Nashua Library for their remodel adjacent to Nashua River; Overlook Estates on Lake Massebesic; wants to cut down 21 acres of oak forest for housing units; cuts into watershed; leaching into the lake; campaign in development; tour of Merrimack & Manch waste water treatment plants; more partnerships in progress

- **Caeln (Third Act) -** energized/mobilized post election; elders coming together - national organization; NH group together for 3 years; climate finance projects; simplify solar permitting process; 'It's Warming' demonstration displayed connected messaging signs
- **Kathy (Peterborough) -** Presentation in Rindge; met Rep. Tom Soucy who wants to help with bag ban legislation; disposable s & p shakers at college campus-will be contacting; Monadnock PWG meeting - Bridget, Patsy, Keene, Dublin, Walpole, Mary; Erin; SUP out of town property/events ordinance pending; Westport CT water refilling stations model; has one, maybe adding two more; Black Earth compost pending for restaurants' food waste; BPI certified compostables OK; providing list of acceptable compostables to vendors via ordinance
- **Patsy (Nelson) -** working with Kathy; please tell Patsy what you've accomplished in 2026 using spreadsheet **-** we need to know your success stories
- **Mark (Bedford) -** clean sweep of Democrats in Bedford; talking with them about PWG efforts; goal to develop baseline information - white papers; recent paper on PHA; wants to research baseline information; planning a talk to Bedford Rotary; plastics engineer background is helpful
- **Scott Burns (Franklin)** - campaign for Rep. successful; will be submitting a Skip the Stuff bill
- **Erin (Hampton)** - developing a website; will be pursuing Mr. Fox on food waste; textile recycling; styrofoam not possible at the moment in Exeter, but pending
- **Cindy (Cornish)** - 100,000 lbs of EPS diverted from landfills & incineration to date; still working on Restaurant Reusable project, working with K. Brennan, new Rep. on toxics in food packaging legislation
- **Susan (Durham)** - Black Earth (MA) wants to set up smaller facilities, may negotiate curb side pick up and at schools for free; needs 2 acres of land and Black Earth might establish a site; they discount if they pick up a lot in the area - schools, retirement, restaurants; Beyond Plastic's new position on EPR has transitioned to 'turn off the tap' - no longer supports EPR; UNH students working on BYO mug for coffee
  Erin (Hampton) - Working with Peterborough, seeking to announce styro collection at Exeter when they are ready

3. Info of Note:

- **Beyond Plastics** no longer supports EPR legislation, as in practice the legislation has been undermined by industry loopholes. Here is information on their new recommendation, The Protect Our Health From Plastics Act. "Johnathan Berard, our Policy Director, provided an in-depth review of the bill, the states targeted for campaigns, and how it compares with existing EPR legislation that has already been passed. You can find the fact sheet **here** and watch the presentation & discussion in the recording **here**.
- **"Compostables"**
    - General info on the topic: https://umaine.edu/spire/2025/04/19/okie_harris/ Why Compostable Packaging Isn't a Silver Bullet Solution
    - Entity that conducts testing of products, with spreadsheet of items they deem safe: **GreenScreen Certified® | GreenScreen® For Safer Chemicals** (more info at **GreenScreen** and at **ceh.org** Center for Environmental Health)
    - Here are the two articles about compost from food scraps at the Unity Fair in Maine: "Assessing PFAS Contamination in Compost Derived From Food Serviceware Feedstocks" (Goossen, MOFGA Crop Specialist, Sept. 2023) easy to read
    - More scientific language: "Evidence of compost contamination with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) from "compostable" food serviceware" (Biointerphases, Volume 18, Issue 3, May 2023) The Danish ban sets an intentionally-added PFAS indicator value of 20 000 μg TOF per kg of material (20 ppm). This is 5× lower than the 100 000 μg/kg TOF (100 ppm) certification maximums set by the Biodegradable Products Institute and the Compost Manufacturing Alliance (BPI, and CMA, respectively). Biotransformations; precursors

4. Collective Actions to Take

- **Mesh Bag Mamas**
- **Statewide Screenings of The Plastic Detox**
    - Durham - Oct. 20 Plastic Detox Screening
    - Claremont/Lebanon - February or March 2027
- **Restaurant Reuse Pilot - Upper Valley & Monadnock regions**
    - Option to collaborate with managers on training staff to ask customers if they want reusables
- **Conscious Cafeteria Coaching Initiative**
    - ConVal is putting food scrap management in the budget

BILLS OF NOTE: TBA

Help Us Track Your Local Actions

AND please enter activities on our spreadsheet or google form: PWG Action Tracking Spreadsheet or 2026 Google Form to Enter Completed Actions

- **Collective Action Updates**
    - **Clean River Project (Ann)** Rocky Morrison CEO, working for 20 years to clean up the Merrimack River; grant funding available for education (Ann);
        - $121K grant has been received to continue cleaning up in southern NH
            - Additional funding might be used for clean ups; water sampling
            - **ACTIONS:** Ann will contact Community Action Works or Sling Shot for help developing a campaign eva@slingshotaction.org; max@communityactionworks.org; leigh-anne@communityactionworks.org
            - Kayla will support an initiative when ready

- **Environmental Justice & Lead Issues (Ann Podlipny)**
    - Will report back on funding for water clean ups
    - Golden Connections Club - kids learning from seniors; summer camp idea (Ann)
        - Sustainable living, reusables, less consumption

- **Federal Legislation (Carol Sullivan & Ann Podlipny)**
    - **Resources**
        - Full Report - Mobilizing Federal Action on Plastic Pollution
        - Fact Sheet - Biden-Harris Administration Releases New Strategy to Tackle Plastic Pollution, Takes Action to Reduce Single-Use Plastics in Federal Operations
        - Beyond Plastics - Working to End Single Use Plastic Pollution
        - Kayla Stoll TED Talk

5. PWG Priorities Action Plan

- **LINK TO SURVEY RESULTS**
- **SUMMARY**
- **2024-26 PWG Action Steps**
- **Link to Discussion on Sept 8 - PWG Meeting #70**
- **ACTION: Ask an environmental legislator to host an environmental caucus and invite our list of environmental legislators -** wait until after election for this to invite those who have been elected
- **ACTION: Susan to contact Nick Germana, Karen Ebel for advice on environmental caucus - may have a weekly phone call with Peter Bixby (family friend)**

6. Open Space Topics

- Free Staters Influence on Our Work

- Read the Privateers by Josh Cowen; The Last Bake Sale Andru Volinsky
- Follow Garry Rayno articles
- Follow In Depth NH, NH Bulletin
- Facilitation Training Resource - Interaction Institute for Social Change

7. Resources:

- **Usefull** (large scale recycling/waste at arenas/universities)
- **Citizens' Climate Lobby Website Correction** - Percentage of Climate Change Caused by Plastics
- **Climate Action Tracker**

8. Future Agenda Items

Recycling Discussion - NH Recycles is focused on recycling; how do we navigate the discussion about revenues and the business of recycling? What is the current state of plastics recycling? Do most towns realize revenues from recycling? Companies like this are out there making plastic bricks

Microplastics Legislation Worksheet

- Presentation to NH Legislative Committee on the environment
- Road map tour of NH legislative website
- Connect with Businesses for Social Responsibility
- EPR Toolkit & Solid Waste Event - EPR:"Breaking It Down" Link to Working Slide Deck - Cindy
- Article by Ann Podlipny

Below this Line: Resources in General (not agenda items)

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9. Legislative - Past

- **Bag Ban introduced by Laurel Stavis (Lebanon)**
- **Enabling Legislation introduced by Marge Shepardson (Marlborough)**

10. Legislative - Future

- **Toxics in Food Packaging -** Link to Working Document
  - Should be a separate bill from container deposit law - who will champion this? NHHCA?
  - Contact Wendy Murphy & Karen Ebel to co-write and sponsor; Bill Palmer will be involved
  - Strategizing on Future Legislation with Gretchen Salter

- **Microplastics in Water** - Link to Working Document

11. Resources

- **NHLA Sustainability Book List**
  - NH Library Association's Sustainability Committee has created a spreadsheet of titles and resources (not just climate change). Send additional titles to Nancy Ladd? Linked at the bottom of their web page: https://www.nhlibrarians.org/Pages/Index/226518/sustainability-home-page

- **Food Security**
  - **NH Food Hub Network**
  - **https://www.newhampshirenetwork.org/resources/agriculture-food-and-public-health#h.w9g0yko055hg**
  - **Messaging about Policy**
  - **https://www.10towns.org/actions/policy-actions/testify-about-plastic-pollution**
- **Film - The Politics of Beauty - about Stewart Udall**
- **Reuse Resources**

        - **Upstream Article: Reuse vs. Single Use: Economics**
            - Brief on "anchor venues" and "wash hubs."
        - **Foodware To Go**
        - **Reusable Packaging Association**
        - **Reuse Seattle**, **Reusables**, **Zero Waste USA**
        - As You Sow - environmental investing group; puts pressure on companies for issues like plastic reduction and use to influence shareholders; try to harness shareholder power to change companies
    - **350 NH**

    - **Fossil Fuel Investments Webinar**
        - 99% of Americans are forced to invest in fossil fuels in their retirement plans.
        - Almost 20% of investments in fossil fuels come from retirement savings.
        - If you took 12 companies including Adobe, Amazon, Apple, Google, Intuit, Meta, Microsoft, Netflix, Oracle, etc: the employees have lost $5.1 billion due to their companies investing in fossil fuels.
        - If you took $10,000 and invested in fossil fuels 10 years ago, guess how much money you'd have today? $10,004.
        - If you took the $10,000 and invested in the S&P 500 minus the fossil fuels, you'd have $34,851!
        - Google has invested $1.7 billion in fossil fuels through their retirement savings. If they hadn't done that it would be like taking 700,000 cars off the road.
        - An explanation of why fossil fuel companies are desperate to turn to plastics.

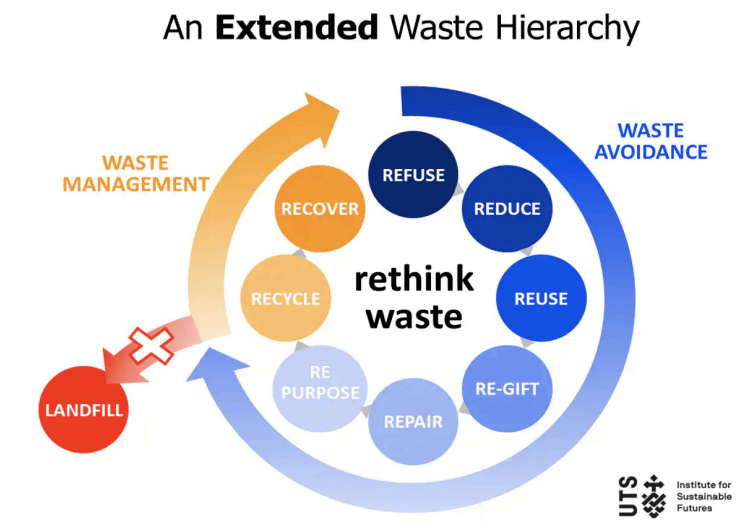
12. Links & Resources

- **Bloomberg** Law Article - *US Senators Highlight Environmental Justice in Plastics Process*
- Beyond Plastics Tabling Kit
- **Grist** Article - *Democrats Unveil Most Comprehensive Bill to Address Plastics Problem*
- Beyond Recycling Plastic (draft document created by Kristine Baber)
- Biomimicry Website with Real World Solutions - Ask Nature
- Link to NH Network Brochure for Copying
- PPT by Susan Hodges with good material on alternatives to SUP
- Bloomberg Philanthropies - Beyond Petrochemicals Initiative
- UN Report on Chemicals in Plastics
- Recycled and Reused Food Contact Plastic Are Vectors for Toxics (Swedish meta analysis)
    - Corresponding author: Birgit Geueke; Email: birgit.geueke@fp-forum.org
- Project Drawdown (Paul Hawken)
- Low Carbon Diet (You Tube - David Gershon)
- "Thicker Than Water: The Quest for Solutions to the Plastic Crisis" by Erica Cirino

Community Action Works Notes and Future Planning

- Campaign Planning Principles, Decision-Making Chart, Kick Off Meeting Notes
- #2 October 17 - Goal Setting & Timeline Notes
- #3 November 14 - Messaging Workshop Handbook
- #4 November 14 - Messaging Notes
- #5 November 28 - Messaging & Slogan

- #6 January 3 - Communications Work Group Meeting Docs
- #7 June 5 - Updates and Legislative Planning, Campaign Planning PDF, Visioning Workshop



Waste hierarchy. (Image credit: UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures,)



Previous PWG Meeting Notes

Meeting Notes #1 - August 1, 2021
Meeting Notes #2 - August 15, 2021
Meeting Notes #3 - August 29, 2021
Meeting Notes #4 - September 19, 2021
Meeting Notes #5 - October 3, 2021
Meeting Notes #6 - October 17, 2021
Meeting Notes #7 - October 31, 2021
Meeting Notes #8 - November 14, 2021
Meeting Notes #9 - November 28, 2021
Meeting Notes #10 - December 12, 2021

Meeting Notes #11 - January 9, 2022
Meeting Notes #12 - January 23, 2022
Meeting Notes #13 - February 6, 2022
Meeting Notes #14 - February 20, 2022
Meeting Notes #15 - March 13, 2022
Meeting Notes #16 - March 27, 2022
Meeting Notes #17 - April 10, 2022
Meeting Notes #18 - April 24, 2022
Meeting Notes #19 - May 8, 2022
Meeting Notes #20 - May 22, 2022
Meeting Notes #21 - June 5, 2022
Meeting Notes #22 - June 19, 2022
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Meeting Notes #40 - April 16, 2023
Meeting Notes #41 - April 30, 2023
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Meeting #88 - December 2025
Meeting #89 - January 2026
Meeting #90 - February 2026
Meeting #91- March 2026

Community Action Works Notes

Campaign Planning Principles, Decision-Making Chart, Kick Off Meeting Notes

#2 October 17 - Goal Setting & Timeline Notes

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