

Westford Recycling Commission

55 Main Street, Westford, MA 01886
www.westfordma.gov/recycling



April 12, 2020

To: Board of Selectman, Town of Westford from: Westford Recycling Commission
Re: Westford Recycling Composition Audit

Waste Management (WM), our recycling vendor, conducted a composition audit of Westford's recycling collection from January 29, 2020 through February 12, 2020, eleven days in total at the WM Billerica MRF (Materials Recovery Facility). The overall intent of the audit was to verify if the estimated composition of Westford's recycling in our contract with Waste Management was accurate. The results would determine if we were paying too little or too much. One of the key factors was the % of residue (non-recyclable material which would need to be disposed of) which was estimated in the contract as 10%.

Each day of the audit, the review was of sample materials collected on the previous day (January 28 through February 11). At least 1 member of the Recycling Commission, Recycling Commission volunteers or Westford town staff acted as the observer for each review. (Please remember what it was like back in this time period when we could travel without a concern. The MRF is a place none of us would voluntarily visit today).

- Each review was conducted by a WM staff person who manually sorted between 250 and 300 pounds of material (samples from each day's collections) taking between 2 and 3.5 hours each day.
 - 11 samplings totaling just under 3,000 pounds in aggregate
- The observers did not touch the materials but were able to be close to the sorting and ask questions, particularly on those items determined to be residue (examples in Appendix 2 of this document).
- The observers were able to identify mailing materials in each load to verify that the source was Westford.
- We also were able to see the documentation of the totals measured each day and received a complete file from WM of pictures of the vehicles the samples were taken from and the actual sample of the load to be audited
- As previously noted, our WM agreement allows for a 10% contamination (residue) tolerance. The audit determined the actual to be 8.41%.
 - The composition change will result in a savings of \$24.00 per ton for an estimated savings of \$3,559.76 per month (see detailed composition breakdown in Appendix)

Based on the composition audit the Recycling Commission wants to congratulate the town on the very strong results but also will use the findings to communicate opportunities for improvement so that we can reduce the residue even further and make the collected materials even more valuable.

The Recycling Commission will be pleased to appear at an upcoming Select Board meeting and address any questions you may have.

On behalf of the Westford Recycling Commission,

Charles Stark
Chair

Kris Erickson
Vice Chair

CC: Jodi Ross

Appendix 2

Residue Examples:

