



### **Single Stream Recycling Comes to Colchester**

Many Colchester residents have recently received a new blue 65-gallon container to be used in conjunction with the standard green 90-gallon waste container for curbside household waste collection. This new container is being distributed by Willimantic Waste Paper Company to the households they service as part of their contracted curbside collection program. Willimantic Waste, along with All Waste Control, Inc. of East Haddam, are the two certified haulers providing curbside collection to Colchester residents. The blue containers replace the small 14-gallon totes people previously used.

The new containers are part of a movement to a new recycling program called “Single Stream Recycling”. Single Stream Recycling is intended to boost recycling percentages (compared to other household waste) and to address concerns expressed by residents participating in the existing recycling program. Residents have requested that recycling programs be expanded and that the program be made easier to implement. Chief complaints are why some plastics are considered recyclable while other plastics are not, and, it is cumbersome to have to have so many different containers for cans, bottles, plastics, papers, cardboard, and so on. With this new program and the larger containers, all these accepted products can be disposed of in the same container.

Single Stream Recycling helps reduce collection costs by automating the collection process. New sorting equipment speeds up the separation process. By decreasing the collection and sorting costs, the cost to produce these “raw” materials decreases making them more attractive for reuse as a market-driven commodity. As a result, additional products can now be accepted thereby expanding the recycling program. By including them in the same container, less space is used and materials do not have to be separated, thereby making the program easier to use.

Diane Duva, Assistant Director of the Connecticut DEP believes, from the DEP’s perspective, anything that increases the amount diverted from the waste stream and increases participation in recycling programs is a good thing. The biggest challenge to any recycling program, including Single Stream Recycling, is the quality of the end product. If the end product is not marketable, then the program fails.

Changes will also be made at the Colchester Transfer Station to accept the additional recyclable materials when residents self-dispose of their household waste. By increasing the types of materials accepted into Single Stream Recycling, the quantity of solid waste disposed of should theoretically be reduced, therefore reducing the waste disposal costs to families/individuals.

Questions regarding Single Stream Recycling can be directed to the Public Works Department at 537-7288. A full listing of accepted materials is available under the heading “Accepted Materials List – Single Stream Recyclables” on this web page.