

Course Syllabus

Talking Trash in Today's world

In April 2021, the Brunswick Landfill will close. This course will examine the current efforts in Brunswick and the state of Maine to handle and reduce municipal waste after that, and to redirect what is left to recycling and composting efforts. We will look at the issues surrounding public policy on trash, the collection and processing of municipal waste, how recycling and compostable materials are handled, how to determine what can be recycled, how to separate the various items at the curb, how we can compost effectively at home, and how to handle special and hazardous wastes. While the information is geared towards Brunswick, it can be equally applied to any town being serviced by Casella systems, and has a place in any town with a recycling program.

Session 1: We will start the course with a hard look at the concept of Sustainability with a guest speaker who is especially well qualified and has taught an entire course on that topic alone.

Session 2: This session will examine the impacts of the closure of the town landfill on our handling of municipal solid waste.

Session 3: The third session is to look at recycling in town, How it's done, how we can do it better, how the materials are processed, how we can make that go better, and what we need to do as citizens.

Session 4: This week, we will look at some of the state and federal rules that pertain to recycling and solid waste disposal, and how they impact our decisions as citizens and as a town.

Session 5: In our final meeting, we will look at how to deal with organic wastes, which comprise about 30% of our waste, by weight. It turns out, there are some excellent ways to deal with this problem!