



**CONNECTICUT
RESOURCES
RECOVERY
AUTHORITY**



BACKGROUND

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The Facts about the Future of the Garbage Museum

The Garbage Museum opened in 1993. (We “green” before “green” was cool.) The Garbage Museum provides recycling and environmental education programs to children and adults through Museum tours, in-school programs and exhibits at public events such as Stratford Day.

For three consecutive years, the Garbage Museum has broken its own records for participation in these programs. In 2008, we totaled 32,219 participants, topping the record of 31,174 participants set in 2007. Since its opening, over 306,000 people have taken part in its programs. In 2002, the Garbage Museum was awarded the prestigious Beth Brown Boettner Award for Outstanding Public Education by the National Recycling Coalition.

Until June 2009 the Garbage Museum and its educational programs were funded by revenues from the sale of recyclables delivered from a collective of area cities and towns to the regional recycling facility at 1410 Honeyspot Road Extension, Stratford. The Garbage Museum is housed in the same building, and tours include a skybox view of the recycling facility’s operations. The Garbage Museum’s budget for the fiscal year running through June 30, 2010, is \$199,000.

Our long-term contracts to sell the Stratford facility’s recyclables expired June 30. In late 2008, the global recession caused commodity prices to crater. Further, six towns left the collective as of June 30, so the reduced tonnages for sale at the lower prices on sales contracts that took effect July 1 will not generate enough money to cover any of the Garbage Museum’s costs.

Seeing that changes were coming, in 2007 CRRA began trying to find a way to continue to run the regional recycling facility and fund at least some of the Garbage Museum’s programs. Recognizing that the Museum will need other funding, last September we began charging modest fees for visits, tours and outreach programs so that we would have some money in the bank on July 1, 2009, to smooth the transition to a new business model. However, the changes in the economy were swifter and more drastic than anyone anticipated.

This month, the Southwestern Connecticut Regional Recycling Operating Committee (SWEROC), which sends its recyclables to the regional recycling center, gave the Garbage Museum \$100,000 – about a half-year of operating expenses – to keep the Museum on its feet while it becomes self-sustaining. But for the foreseeable future, with revenues from recyclables gone the Garbage Museum will have to raise all its own funds.

We have requested and received from the IRS a ruling that contributions to the Garbage Museum are tax-deductible. Contributions can be sent to CRRA Garbage Museum, 1410 Honeyspot Road Extension, Stratford, CT, 06615. Contributions can also be made on-line at http://www.crra.org/pages/edu_donate.htm

More information about the Garbage Museum is at http://www.crra.org/pages/edu_museums.htm#strtfd. Facebook users can become a “fan” of the Garbage Museum by visiting the Garbage Museum Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Garbage-Museum/84731121082>.