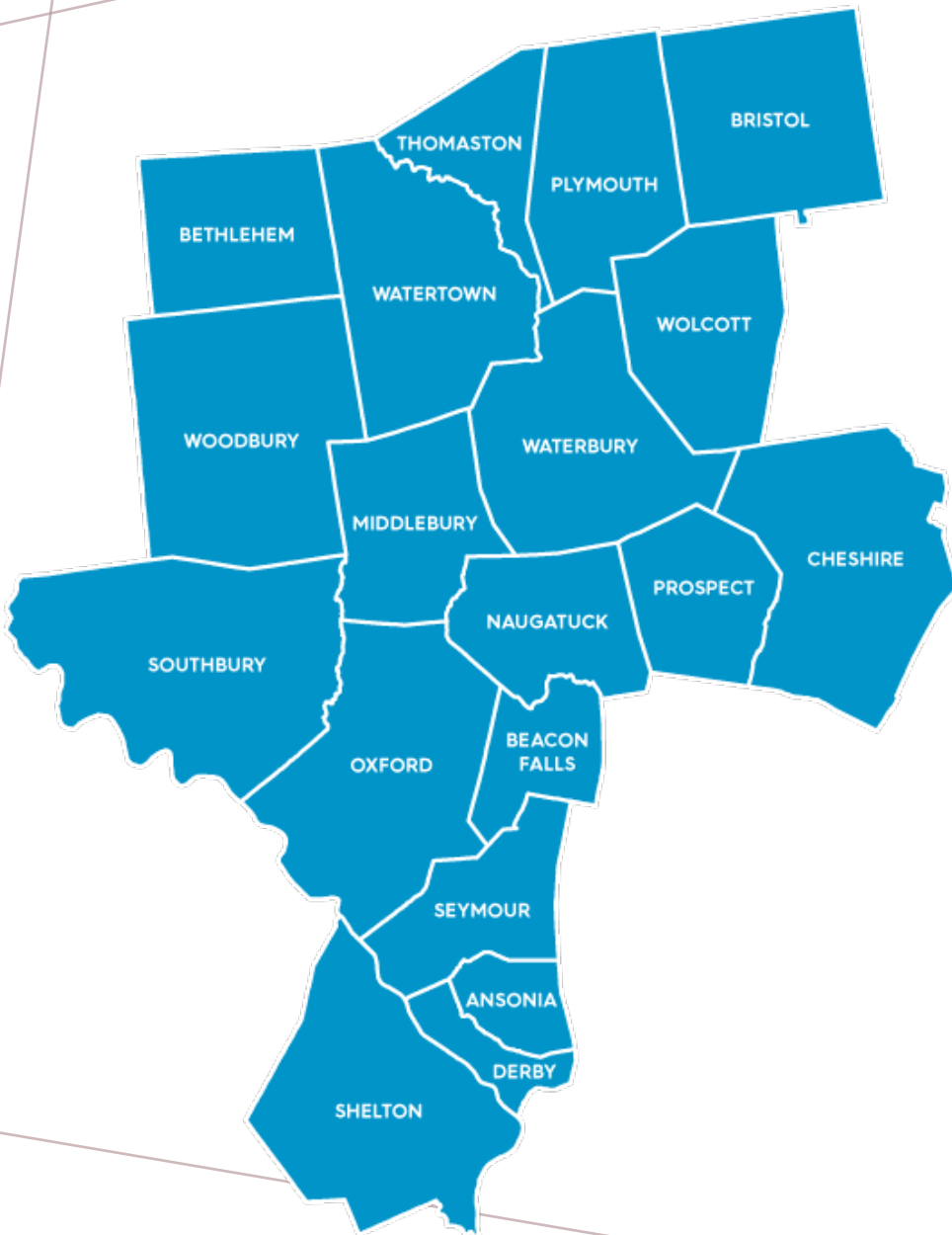




Seymour Trash Reduction Pilot Community Champions Dinner

February 27, 2023

Funding provided by the Sustainable Materials Management Grants
Program administered by the Connecticut Department of Energy and
Environmental Protection (DEEP)



About Us

- Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG)
- Christine - Environmental Planner
- Steven – Environmental Planner
- Working with state & local partners on waste management



About the Problem

Connecticut is in a **waste crisis**.

- As much as 40% of our waste is shipped out of state, due to a lack of capacity. That means more taxes, more emissions, and an uncertain future.
- Our waste-to-energy incinerators are aging. All CT incinerators are past their 30-year lifespan.
- Fees are skyrocketing. DEEP predicts the average tip fee could be over \$120 per ton in just the next few years.



About the Program

- Sustainable Materials Management (SMM) Grant funded by Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection
- Focused on the Monday trash pickup route (about 1,100 homes)
- Two key components:
 - Organics diversion (composting)
 - Unit-based pricing



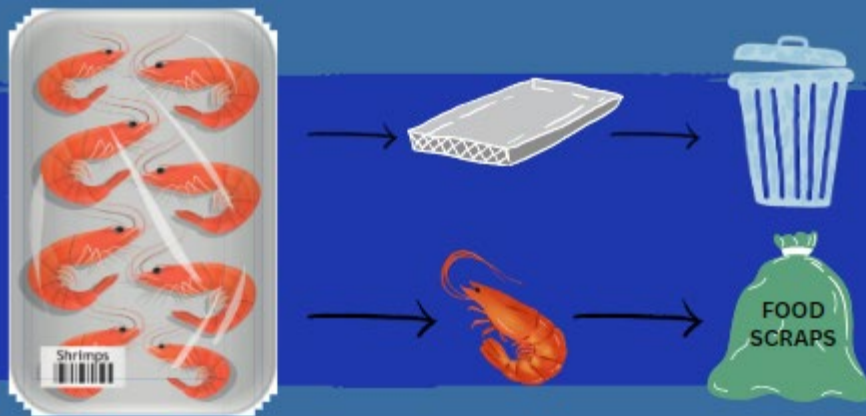
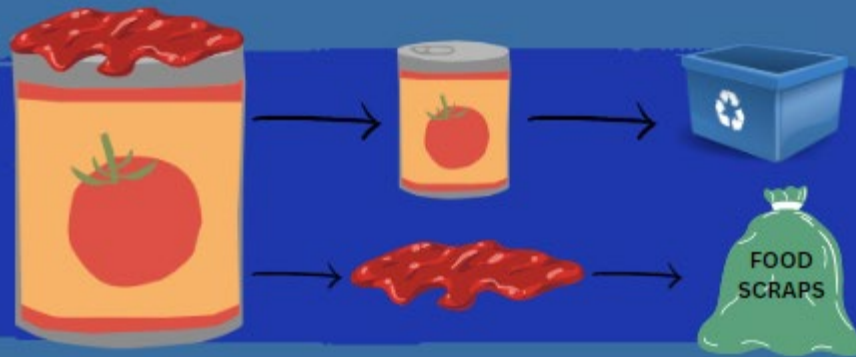
Organics Diversion

- Households received a 9-month supply of green and orange bags.
- **Orange bags are for trash.** **Green bags are for food scraps.**
- Encouraging households to limit themselves to two orange trash bags (30 gal total) and one green food scrap bag (8 gal) per week.
- Separating food scraps allows them to be sent to an anaerobic digester or composting facility, where they can be turned into energy or soil amendment. This costs less than disposing of them along with waste.
 - If contamination rates are low, this will save taxpayer money.



Before you bag it - Unpackage!

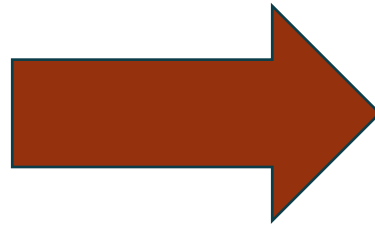
Green bags are for "naked food" only -
no plastic, boxes, cans, packages, etc.



Unit-Based Pricing

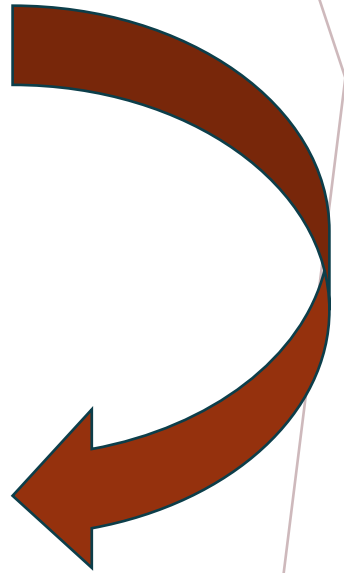
To understand unit-based pricing, let's look at how Seymour pays for residential trash services right now...

\$893,700 for collection
+ \$560,000 for disposal
\$1,453,700 per year



That \$1.4 million is split among Seymour taxpayers, and is paid through property taxes.

So your "share" of the trash fee is calculated by: (1) the total cost of everyone's trash, and (2) your share of that total cost based on how your property has been Assessed.



In other words... the fee is NOT based on how much trash you actually produce.

Could you imagine paying for electricity this way? Why would you bother turning off your lights when you leave the room, if that doesn't impact how much you pay?

Unit-based pricing imagines a different system.

Unit-Based Pricing

Although the 9-month supply of bags are **free** during the pilot, using Seymour-branded bags introduces the idea of unit-based pricing or pay as you throw.

- UBP would take the waste disposal cost out of your taxes, and put it into a per-bag charge.
- It's the "electricity bill model." You pay for the trash *you* throw away, rather than paying for your share of the town's average.
- Puts you in control of your waste costs. Save money by reducing, reusing, and recycling!
- The per-bag charge is hypothetical – this would only be implemented if Seymour voted to implement a permanent program.

Without Unit-Based Pricing



\$200/yr thru
taxes
+ bag cost



\$200/yr thru
taxes
+ bag cost

With Unit-Based Pricing



\$75/yr thru
bags



\$325/yr in
bags

Program Mechanics



1 Residents separate material types at home into color-coded bags



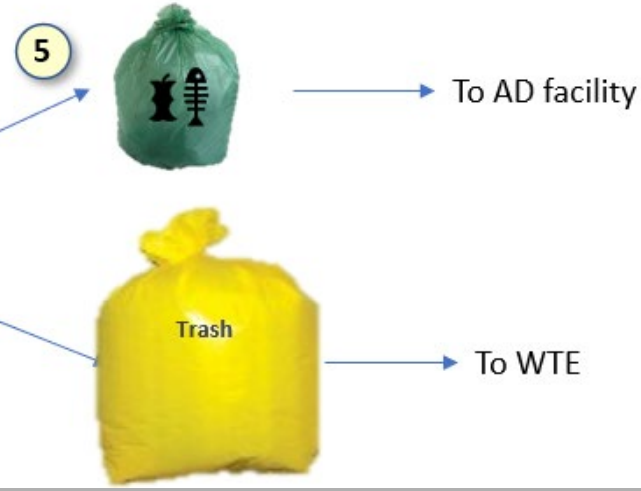
2 All bags go into the same curbside cart



3 All material goes into the same truck on the same collection route



4 Materials are unloaded and separated at the transfer station or sort facility





FAQs

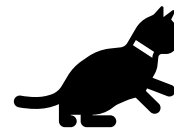
- **What happens if I run out of bags?**

Your free box gives you enough to use 2 orange trash bags/week and 1 green food scrap bag/week. If you run out of bags, you can purchase more at a local retailer. We are working with retailers right now to get the bags stocked.

- **Will my food scraps attract rats/bears/critters?**



*Remember that separating your organic food waste into its own green bag *does not* involve creating any new food waste. So if you didn't have an issue with this before the pilot program, you shouldn't have an issue with it now! Be sure to keep your green food scraps bag in a sealed container (whether that's your trash can or another container in your kitchen). Put the green food scraps bag out with the trash each week to be co-collected!*



FAQs

- Has this sort of program been successful in other communities?

Unit-based pricing and organics diversion is being done all over the country and all over the world! From Minnesota to Taiwan, we have seen these program effectively reduce waste and save money.

- How can I reduce my trash, to get down to 30 gallons a week?

Separating out your food waste will already reduce your trash. Consider donating items instead of throwing them out (like old textiles), buying reusable items, and hitting [RecycleCT.com](https://www.RecycleCT.com) to learn more about what's recyclable.

'Pay-as-you-throw': More Cities Around the World are Adopting this Policy to Reduce Waste

• [AFP](#) • Last Updated: FEBRUARY 08, 2022, 17:55 IST

South Korea has almost zero food waste. Here's what the US can learn

FAQs

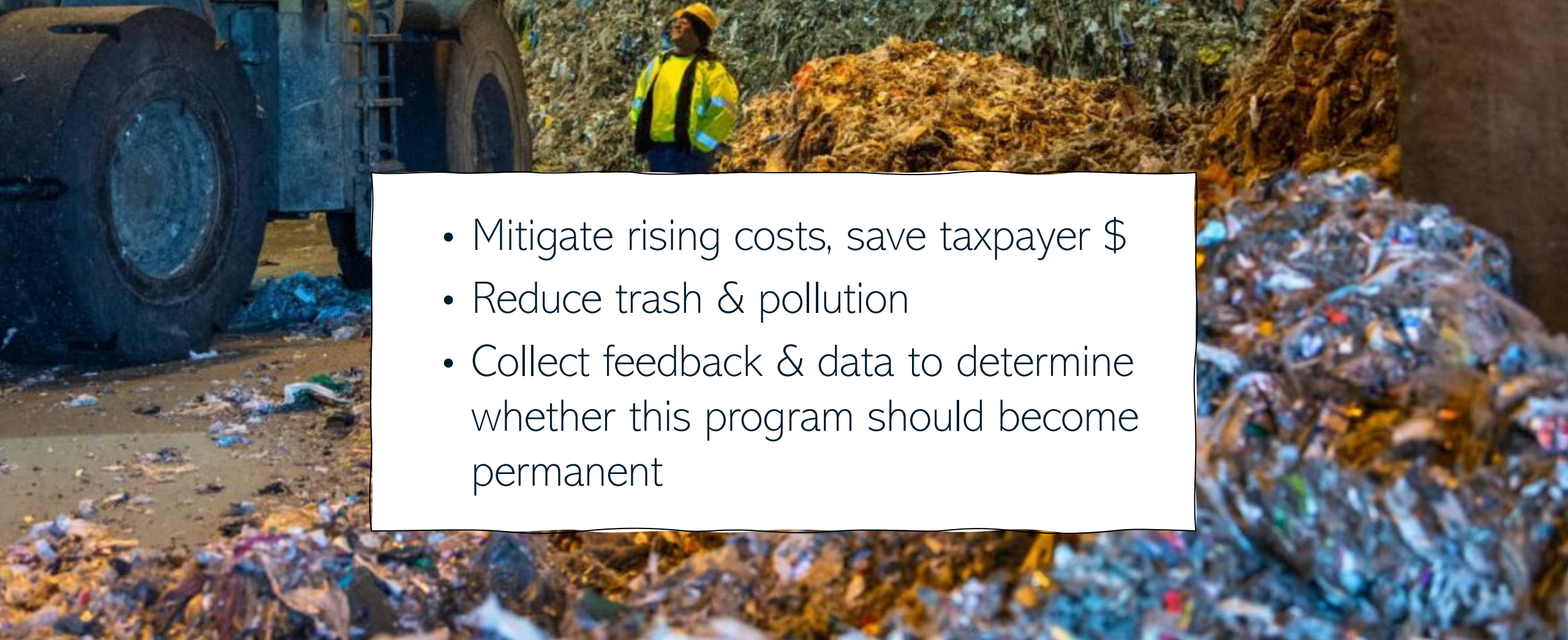
What happens if this program becomes permanent?

*If the pilot data justifies a permanent program, here's what **may** change:*

- The fee for waste disposal could be transferred (completely or in part) from property taxes to a per-bag charge. Residents would pay for each bag they use. That means if you make less garbage, you pay less money!*
- Seymour **may** decide to enforce the use of these bags.*
- Data suggests that a permanent program could save Seymour taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars annually.*

This is all hypothetical! We won't know for sure what a permanent program looks like until Seymour leadership puts a proposal on the table.

Program Goals

- 
- Mitigate rising costs, save taxpayer \$
 - Reduce trash & pollution
 - Collect feedback & data to determine whether this program should become permanent



Questions? Ideas?

USE THIS BAG FOR
No yard waste • No hazardous waste
No construction debris • No hazardous liquids

Please securely close and tie each bag before disposal.

www.cityofwesthaven.com / recycling@westhaven.com
Please report bag quality issues to WasteZero@westhaven.com
WasteZero
Made in USA



Feedback

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Feedback: Operations

Has it been clearly communicated what goes in each bag? How are the bag **size & quality**?

Feedback: Operations

How has food waste collection been going?

Any issues with odors/animals?

Feedback: Operations

Is the program running smoothly
(curbside collection, bag delivery)?

Feedback: Operations

How can we build support among community leaders to transition this program to permanence?

Or

What would need to change about the program for you to support permanence?

Feedback: Messaging

What is the best way to reach residents?

Feedback: Messaging

Is it clear *why* we are doing this?

How can we better educate?

Feedback: Messaging

Are the educational material you've seen so far (flyers, website) been **clear & accessible?**

Feedback: Messaging

Are you using the app?
Is it useful?





Next Steps

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You are now Community Champions!

1.



Participate.

Separate your food scraps, reduce your waste, improve your recycling.

2.



Spread the word.

Tell other community groups, friends, & neighbors about the pilot program.

3.



Give feedback:

What is working well? What isn't? What should we adjust to gain broader support?

Keeping up the momentum

- Spread the word!
- Speak up where there's misinformation or confusion
- Follow NVCOG, the Town of Seymour, ReduceTheTrashCT, community groups
- Bring this message back to other groups you're part of (PTA, Girl Scouts, Garden Club...)



@NVCORGREDUCETHETRASH

The screenshot shows the Facebook profile for 'NVCORG Reduce the Trash'. The profile picture features two bags: an orange one labeled 'Co-Collection Program TRASH' and a green one labeled 'Co-Collection Program FOOD SCRAPS'. The page name is 'NVCORG Reduce the Trash' with 1 like and 1 follower. Navigation tabs include Posts, About, Mentions, Reviews, Followers, Photos, and More. The 'Intro' section provides information about trash reduction pilots and the waste crisis. The 'About' section lists the page type as 'Public & Government Service', the address as '49 Leavenworth Street, Waterbury, CT, United States, Connecticut', the phone number '(203) 489-0368', the email 'ReduceTheTrash@nvcogct.gov', and the website 'nvcogct.gov/what-we-do/environment/waste'. The 'Posts' section shows a recent update where the profile picture was changed to the two bags.

Co-Collection Program TRASH
USE THIS BAG FOR HOUSEHOLD TRASH ONLY

Co-Collection Program FOOD SCRAPS

The screenshot shows a website with four FAQ questions, each with a right-pointing arrow indicating a dropdown menu. The questions are:

- HOW DOES THE TRASH REDUCTION PILOT PROGRAM WORK ?
- HOW DO I GET MY FREE BAGS ?
- WILL THE TRASH REDUCTION PILOT PROGRAM CHANGE WHAT CONTAINERS I USE FOR TRASH ?
- WHAT IF I NEED ADDITIONAL BAGS ?

REDUCETHETRASHCT.COM/SEYMOUR



Questions?

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recycling@westhaven.com

WasteZero
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Thank you for joining!

Christine O'Neill
ReduceTheTrash@nvcogct.gov
(203) 489-0351