



## **Q&A: The MRC's Proposed MSW Recycling & Processing Facility in Hampden**

The Municipal Review Committee (a non-profit organization representing 187 Maine cities and towns) is considering developing a municipal solid waste (MSW) recycling and processing facility in Hampden using cutting-edge, environmentally-friendly technology.

This innovative facility will replace the PERC incinerator in Orrington with an entirely new approach which will significantly increase recycling and would then process remaining waste into a usable product (such as a biofuel) instead of burning it. A small portion of the waste that cannot be recycled or processed will then be taken from the facility to one of the state's existing, active landfills.

The MRC has taken an option to purchase land in the "triangle area" between the Cold Brook Road and I-95. In addition to providing easy highway access with minimal disruption to other properties, this project will also result in the construction of new road and utilities infrastructure to complement the town's existing infrastructure and support the town's planned development objectives.

### **1.) What impacts would this facility have on Hampden residents?**

This project is being designed to have very minimal impact on Hampden residents by conforming to the town's comprehensive vision for planned land use in and around the project location. The biggest change will be increased truck traffic on the short portion of the Cold Brook Road between where the access road will be built and Interstate 95. This project will not involve an incinerator like PERC across the river so there is no need for a large stack or water discharges into the Penobscot River. Additionally, we're planning to put in place a comprehensive plan to be a responsible neighbor by mitigating off site impact of the facility's operations, which includes an innovative system that prevents odors from migrating off site. The nature of this operation and its distance from neighbors should make this very manageable.

### **2.) What benefits will the community get for hosting this facility?**

Hampden will have a package of benefits associated with being the host community. The details of community benefits need to be worked out with town leaders over the next year or so. A host arrangement comparable to what exists in Orrington would include delivery of the town's residential MSW to the facility without any tip fee, significant annual payments to the town and other benefits to cover any direct use of municipal services. Combined, these items will represent a significant financial benefit for Hampden taxpayers. Additionally, this project will build out infrastructure in a part of town that presents great promise for adding non-residential taxable value to this small area of town targeted for this purpose.

### **3.) How does this project fit with the town's development plans?**

This area has already been zoned for industrial/commercial use and is targeted for development in the town's comprehensive plan. MRC carefully reviewed the town's plan in assessing the compatibility of

this site and the facility is a great fit for the kind of commercial development that the town is seeking in its plan. Not only does the facility itself fit, the MRC will be building out the access and other infrastructure that will make this area more attractive for future businesses to join it at the site.

**4.) Will this involve a landfill? Will any of the solid waste be staying in Hampden?**

There will be no landfill associated with this facility and no solid waste will remain in Hampden beyond the short time it is there for processing. Recyclables and the processed fuels will be shipped for sale and the small portion of residuals will be taken to one of the state's existing, active landfills outside of Hampden.

**5.) Why is this facility needed and who will use it?**

This facility is an essential replacement for the PERC waste-to-energy incinerator in Orrington. After the MRC communities' 30-year contract with PERC concludes in 2018, the PERC facility will no longer be an economically viable option and the 180+ MRC member communities and several non-member municipalities will need a processing solution for their MSW. The MRC has been planning for this possibility for several years and has identified the kind of facility being proposed for Hampden as the best option to replace PERC. The facility will not accept out of state waste.

**6.) How does this facility work?**

The MRC has been developing this proposal with a company called Fiberight, based in Virginia. Fiberight has developed the state-of-the-art technology at a demonstration scale facility in Virginia that is currently expanding to full commercial scale. In addition, they are nearly ready to construct a full-scale facility in Iowa to serve a group of communities at the same scale that will meet the needs of our region. With this process, the MSW from the towns is put through an aggressive recycling process that extracts any valuable materials that haven't been captured by the diversity of recycling programs in the individual communities. Then, the remaining waste is chemically processed into a product that can be developed into any number of biofuel products. Only a small portion of the incoming MSW (less than 20%) will not be suitable for processing through one of these two stages and will be sent to one of the state's existing, active landfills.

**7.) What type of material will this facility recycle and process?**

The facility will handle municipal solid waste (MSW) from MRC member communities and, potentially, other cities and towns in Maine if capacity is available. It will not receive any out-of-state waste for processing.

**8.) Will there be emissions like there are from PERC across the river?**

It is necessary for the PERC facility to release strictly regulated and controlled air emissions from a smokestack because it is based in a waste-to-energy incinerator. This facility would not produce any emissions from a smokestack. At most, the proposed processing operation would be a very low emissions project resulting from energy usage in processing steps and the kind of heating and cooling systems that would be associated with any typical facility of comparable scale and process systems.

**9.) Will the facility affect groundwater?**

All processing will take place inside enclosed buildings, and procedures will be put in place for spill containment and control, no different from other industrial facilities. Groundwater is also a part of the project that will be carefully reviewed by the Maine DEP and the Hampden Planning Board during the permitting process. In the project's planning phase, the site will be reviewed by geologists and a plan will be put in place to protect groundwater.

**10.) Would the Town of Hampden have a role in monitoring the operation and performance of the facility?**

Yes. As an MRC member, the Town of Hampden has access to all of the operational and performance information that the MRC possesses as part of its oversight of PERC and that arrangement would continue with this new facility. Additionally, the MRC would offer the Town of Hampden a permanent standing seat on the MRC board of directors with full voting rights equal to the elected, volunteer directors.

**11.) Will the facility result in changes in traffic movement?**

There will be new traffic flows on the short portion of Cold Brook Road from the new access road to the Interstate 95 on ramp. Trucks will be bringing MSW in from member communities and out in the form of recyclables, processed products and residuals on a daily basis. As part of the development planning process, MRC will conduct a traffic study to fully understand any material changes in traffic movement, but initial reviews suggest the road infrastructure in this area is well-equipped to handle the anticipated new traffic.