



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Waste Transfer Stations

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Description:

- Solid waste transfer stations are facilities where municipal solid waste is unloaded from collection vehicles and loaded onto larger, long-distance transport vehicles for shipment to landfills or other treatment or disposal facilities. Facilities that move solid waste from one mode of transportation to another, such as rail to road, are also regulated as transfer stations.
- At many transfer stations, workers screen incoming waste on the receiving floor to recover materials that are recyclable or inappropriate for disposal at a solid waste landfill (e.g. large appliances, tires, automobile batteries).
- Rapidly decomposing waste is required to be removed from a transfer station within twenty-four (24) hours. Recyclables may be stored in containers at a transfer station for a longer period of time.
- Combining the loads of several individual waste collection trucks into a single shipment reduces the number of vehicular trips traveling to and from the disposal site, which can help communities save money on labor and transportation costs.
- Although waste transfer stations help reduce the impacts of trucks traveling to and from the disposal site, they can cause an increase in traffic in the immediate area where they are located. Proper transfer station zoning and local regulations can provide for the responsible siting, design and operation of transfer stations, to minimize impact on the communities in which they reside.
- Transfer stations may be publicly or privately owned. Prior to constructing and operating a transfer station, owners and operators must receive local zoning approval for siting a facility. After receiving local zoning approval, they must then receive a solid waste facility permit from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), as well as any required local land use permits.
- Transfer stations are required to prevent any contamination from leaving the site. Modern transfer stations are required to have an enclosed building with concrete floors and a waste water collection system.
- Transfer stations mainly receive municipal waste, such as household waste, office waste, construction/demolition waste and other waste as allowed by the facility permit. Transfer stations are not authorized to accept hazardous waste.

Environmental Impacts:

- Waste transfer stations make solid waste collection more efficient and reduce overall transportation costs, air emissions, energy use, truck traffic, and road wear and tear.
- Modern transfer stations that are designed to collect wastewater, control spills, and minimize blowing litter, odor and dust have a minimal impact on the surrounding environment.
- Transfer station operators must monitor the facility grounds for blowing litter, dust, spills, and the presence of vectors, such as rodents, insects or birds.
- All municipal waste stored overnight at the facility must be stored inside the facility building or in covered containers and removed from the facility the following operating day.
- Once permanently closed, transfer station operators must remove all waste and residue from the facility and ensure no dumping occurs once the facility is closed.

IDEM's Role:

- IDEM is responsible for protecting human health and the environment while providing for safe industrial, agricultural, commercial, and governmental operations vital to a prosperous economy.

- IDEM's Office of Land Quality regulates landfill facilities, processing facilities and transfer stations in Indiana and works with solid waste management districts on local waste management and recycling programs.
- IDEM's Office of Land Quality is responsible for reviewing permit applications and, if they are in compliance with solid waste regulations, issuing permit decisions for solid waste disposal and processing facilities. Existing permits are reviewed for renewal every five (5) years.
- IDEM's Agricultural and Solid Waste Compliance section conducts routine inspections at solid waste facilities, including operating and closed landfills, processing facilities and transfer stations.

Citizen's Role:

- There are a number of ways every citizen can participate in the transfer station permitting or planning process:
 - Communicate:
 - Contact authorities that plan, permit and regulate waste transfer stations, such as local zoning boards, planning commissions, and the Solid Waste Management District.
 - Talk to the waste transfer station developer and communicate your concerns or ideas as early in the process as possible.
 - Submit comments on draft permits during the IDEM public comment period, which lasts at least thirty (30) days.
 - Participate in local planning and zoning ordinances for land use requirements:
 - Attend public information meetings, hearings and decision meetings to express your interests.
 - Request a visit to the developer's completed and operating waste transfer stations, if available.

More Information:

- For more information on solid waste permitting, visit IDEM's Office of Land Quality Web site at <http://www.in.gov/idem/4222.htm>.
- For more information on solid waste and solid waste facility compliance, reporting and services, visit IDEM's Office of Land Quality Compliance Web site at <http://in.gov/idem/4998.htm>.
- For a list of permitted solid waste facilities in Indiana, visit IDEM's Office of Land Quality Web site at <http://www.in.gov/idem/4862.htm>.
- For public documents related to a facility in your community, visit IDEM's Virtual File Cabinet at <http://12.186.81.89/Pages/Public/Search.aspx>.
- For additional information on solid waste management, visit the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (U.S. EPA) Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/index.htm>
- For a guide on citizen involvement in the planning of waste transfer stations, visit U.S. EPA's Web site at <http://epa.gov/osw/hazard/tsd/permit/pbupart/index.htm>

