**TRANSFER STATION FAQs**

**Why did the transfer station close?**

The decision to close the Transfer Station was difficult, but necessary due to serious structural and environmental safety issues at the site. That operation cannot continue to operate safely at that location.

**Can it reopen at that site?**

No. While the town did receive MassDEP approval to redevelop the site in 2017, it was discovered the town has no deeded access or right-of-way to access the property. Any significant change to the site would require the town to negotiate access from private property owners

**Can we open a transfer station elsewhere in town? If so, what is required?**

MassDEP permits all solid waste facilities in the Commonwealth and the only Dedham location with the required permits is the current site. In order to consider another site, the town would have to go through the MassDEP site review & permitting processes. To learn more, visit <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massdep-solid-waste-forms>.

**Does the Town Manager have the authority to make a decision that costs the town money (ie: loss of lease payments) without a Town Meeting vote?**

Town counsel can share the authority the TM had to notify them to leave.

**What do other towns do to ensure residents have access to trash services?**

Town trash & recycling programs vary, as do town budgets & expenditures on the services.

Norwood: Curbside pickup at no charge, transfer station, fee for bulky items & white goods

Westwood: Curbside pickup for a fee, no transfer station, fee for bulky items & white goods

Walpole: Curbside pickup at no charge, no transfer station, no fee for 1 bulky item or white good a week

Boston: Curbside pickup at no charge, no fee for bulky items & white goods

**What are the financial implications to the Town of closing the transfer station?**

The town will no longer collect the rent from the operation of the transfer station (~140K/year.) We will likely incur some additional cost as DPW & Park & Rec depts used transfer station to dispose of their waste at high volume times. The cell tower is being relocated/rebuilt, so we will continue to receive that rent.

The flipside is the liability of continuing to operate the site as it is. The smokestack is structurally deficient and unsafe. There are also continue to be very elevated levels of e coli coming from the site and, despite remediation suggested by environmental agencies/experts, the levels continue to fluctuate.

It is important to note that the town has also granted tax abatements totaling approximately $130,000 to neighbors showing a negative impact to their property value by virtue of their proximity to the transfer station and its operations.

**What do we do now with our extra trash?**

The Board of Selectmen has compiled a document outlining options to dispose of various items. [LINK TO THE RESOURCE DOC.]

The Board of Selectmen is also working to adopt a program in which residents can purchase extra bags to throw away excess trash on weeks the barrels may not be enough. The program, run by Zero Waste, should be up and running in about 90 days and more information will be shared with residents via the local newspaper, town website and social media.

**When the decision was made to close the transfer station?**

The decision was made by Town Manager Jim Kern at the end of May, and was communicated to the Board of Selectmen at our May 29th meeting.

**How was the date to close decided?**

The town notified the operator of the decision to close on June 5th and gave the operator until July 15th to comply. The operator decided June 22nd would be the last day of operation.

**What was the transfer station, anyway? Who used it beyond the three hours a week residents got access?**

The transfer station operated Monday-Friday to take waste & debris from contractors and other paying customers. Town departments, including the DPW and Parks & Recreation department, also disposed waste collected from public barrels at the transfer station. Per the terms of the lease with the town, operator Recycling Solutions opened the facility and accepted household waste from residents on Saturday mornings.

**Who ran the day-to-day operations at the transfer station?**

Recycling Solutions

**When will the smokestack come down?**

The town is working to bring the smokestack down safely as soon as possible. There are three cell phone providers who lease space on the smokestack for their equipment. The town is currently negotiating with those providers to build a temporary tower and relocate the equipment, a process which is expected to take through the end of 2019. As soon as the equipment has been relocated, the town will demolish the smokestack and the building.

**What will be done with the property?**

The property will be secured effective immediately after the last collection day.

Once the smokestack and building are demolished, it will be up to the Board of Selectmen to decide if there is another appropriate use of the property.

**Will this affect my curbside trash and recycling pick up?**

No, residents should expect the same curbside trash & recycling service.