

In Jefferson County

Transfer Station Attendant Training Is Launched

By Jan Oatman
DANK Recycling Coordinator

Solid waste transfer station staff in Jefferson County participated in innovative training this spring, designed by the Development Authority of the North Country, to help them understand how they fit into the bigger picture of solid waste management in the region and ultimately, to bolster waste diversion efforts.

Jan Oatman, Recycling Coordinator for the Development Authority, developed the training and launched it in March, after rolling it out to attendees at the annual conference of the New York State Association of Reduction, Reuse and Recycling last November. It is believed to be the first training of its kind being offered to transfer station attendants in the state.

The Development Authority owns and operates a three-county regional landfill and the counties regulate recycling, but often those who actually staff the facilities and interact with residents get left out when it comes to education on the laws and policies that govern solid waste and recycling.

"Everyone benefits when the operators understand how their activities fit into the big picture of recycling," Oatman said. "If we can help them better understand what can and cannot be accepted for recycling, we will ultimately see an increase in waste diverted from the landfill, prolonging the life of the landfill and promoting good environmental stewardship practices."

The training includes an overview of state and local solid waste laws, landfill operating permit requirements, recyclable materials that are accepted, materials that are prohibited from



Jan Oatman, standing, leads a group of transfer station operators in a training seminar in March.

disposal as solid waste and a discussion of industry-wide Best Management Practices.

Just as important, the training also provides an opportunity for the operators to interact with each other, discuss common issues and exchange ideas. Twenty five operators from 13 different towns participated.

Attendees were provided with certifications of completion at the end of the session.