

By Charlene LaVoie

*This article originally appeared in the 6-7-91 issue of the Torrington Register Citizen. Atty. Lavoie asked that we reprint it because the company mentioned is now trying to build a plant in Harwinton. Lavoie is the community lawyer in Winsted.*

It is ironic that New Hartford lamented the loss of the compost facility in the June 13 Register Citizen article. New Hartford should be thankful that they will not be dealing with IPS and its new parent, Wheelabrator Technologies Inc.

The age-old process of composting mixes dry waste like tree stumps, leaves and grass clippings with organic wet material like sewer sludge, and lets it sit awhile until it becomes a dry mulch. Composting is environmentally and economically sound. Doing business with Wheelabrator is not.

IPS, a Connecticut-grown company with sound environmental goals, decided to make composting technology — adaptable to community needs — available on a large scale and provided communities with the guidance to build and operate composting facilities. Unfortunately, Wheelabrator Technologies Inc. purchased IPS earlier this year. Wheelabrator Technologies Inc., owned by Waste Management Inc., is the largest waste-management business in the country. IPS is gone. What exists is a company notorious for making deals advantageous to it, but which poses financial and environmental problems for the host community.

Before the Wheelabrator takeover, IPS assisted Fairfield, a town of 50,000, in building a 6-bay compost facility which is owned and op-