

TO: Municipal Administrative Officials

FROM: Scott Mouw
State Recycling Director

SUBJECT: Upcoming Disposal Bans and County Facilities

As you may be aware, statutory bans on the disposal of wooden pallets, oil filters, and plastic bottles are effective October 1 of this year. With this ban, the General Assembly has recognized that these items are recyclable commodities and not waste, and that the recovery of these materials will contribute to the environmental and economic development goals of the state.

In addition to the recycling programs you offer to the public, we strongly encourage you to take steps to ensure that all of your government operations properly manage the banned materials. Examples would include recycling filters generated by any fleet maintenance activities and recycling any pallets generated in the receipt of supplies or materials.

In regards to plastic bottles, we recommend initiating recycling efforts at all points of generation, which can include municipal offices, break rooms, community buildings, parks and recreation facilities, and sports fields. Effective plastic bottle recovery is often best achieved by “twinning” recycling bins with solid waste containers to maximize participation through convenience and to minimize contamination. We also want to remind you that North Carolina has a statutory disposal ban on aluminum cans. We highly recommend that you initiate recycling of the cans wherever you have not done so already.

Enforcement of the disposal bans will chiefly be applied at disposal facilities such as landfills and transfer stations by the North Carolina Division of Waste Management. It is unlikely that enforcement will take place at individual businesses or other generating facilities. However, starting a recycling program for the banned materials is the simplest and easiest way to ensure compliance. Depending on the type of violator and the severity of the violation, the North Carolina Division of Waste Management may, at its discretion, assess a range of administrative and/or civil penalties for violation of the disposal bans. The law does allow for accidental or occasional disposal of small amounts of banned materials. The statutory reference for the disposal ban can be found at: <http://www.p2pays.org/ref/38/37984.pdf>

Information on how to start a recycling program for the banned materials can be found at: <http://p2pays.org/BannedMaterials/index.asp>. If you need additional assistance or have questions, please contact the Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance at 919-715-6500.

Other Important Facts About the Disposal Bans

Why is it important to recycle more plastic bottles?

North Carolina and the southeastern U.S. are home to many of the nation’s largest and most important plastic bottle recyclers in the world, including Shaw Industries, DAK Americas, Mohawk Carpet, Coca Cola, and WM/Recycle America. The combined market demand for plastic bottles to make products such as carpet, new bottles, strapping, and polyester far exceeds the entire generation of these materials in North Carolina. The collection, processing, and use of bottle plastic bottles directly creates jobs and contributes to our state’s economic growth. Recycling plastic bottles also conserves resources, saves energy, prevents pollution, reduces our dependence on landfills, and slows climate change.

Why is it important to recycle oil filters?

The steel in oil filters is in high demand by steel manufacturers to make new steel products. The residual oil in filters is also highly valued to produce fuel oil and re-refined lubricants. Recycling oil filters is inexpensive and North Carolina is home to over twenty different oil filter recycling companies. As with plastic bottles, the collection, processing, and use of oil filter materials directly creates jobs and economic opportunity in North Carolina. Recycling filters also prevents the disposal of oil in landfills and helps promote energy independence.

Why is important to reduce wooden pallet disposal?

Wooden pallets are easily reusable and recyclable into new pallets and many different products, and can sometimes be even eliminated from use. North Carolina is home to a robust pallet recycling industry employing over 1,000 people. Pallet recyclers and other companies such as wood fuel users and compost producers have the capacity to consume all of the currently disposed pallet wood in the state. As with the other banned materials, recycling pallets creates jobs, returns valuable resources to a wide range of uses, and helps conserve valuable landfill space.

For more information, contact the Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance at 919-715-6500 or visit the Website at: <http://p2pays.org/BannedMaterials/index.asp>

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