

State bans plastic bottles in landfills

by Rebecca Dotson, October 14, 2009

A new North Carolina state law, implemented on Oct. 1, 2009, bans plastic bottles, oil filters and wooden pallets from all North Carolina landfills.

This law is enforced by North Carolina's Division of Waste Management, which has the responsibility of inspecting disposal facilities to make sure all rules and regulations are being followed, including the exclusion of the recently banned materials.

The law was deemed necessary because the banned materials are in high demand by recycling processors, and through the retrieval of the materials jobs and business opportunities will be created.

Recycling these materials will reduce a long-term dependence on landfills and save the use of more resources to make products from scratch instead of recycled material," said Scott Mouw with the N.C. Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance.

"We expect the law will result in the establishment of new programs and efforts to recycle the materials across the state," Mouw said.

Two of the largest waste companies informed haulers and their communities, down to individual customers, on the new law and date of implementation.

This has proved to be very beneficial and both the N.C. Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance and the solid waste section at the state's Division of Waste Management have received numerous calls from citizens interested in knowing more about how to recycle.

Paul Crissman, chief of the Solid Waste Section of the N.C. Division of Waste Management, said he feels "the behavior of individuals, collectively, are very important," in helping the law make an impact on recycling.

Individuals are not the only ones ready to get involved with recycling. A new PET plastics recycling facility is being built in Fayetteville, N.C., which will have the capacity to use 280 million pounds of PET plastic annually.

Recovery facilities like this one will not only use materials from North Carolina, but also materials coming in from other states to change the items into sellable products.

Alamance County enacted its first recycling ordinance in 1992, which mandated all targeted recyclables, aluminum cans, clear and brown glass, cardboard, newspaper and commercially generated office paper, be recycled.

"We see (the new law) as more of an educational change and the changing of people's habits more than a true enforcement law," said Craig F. Honeycutt, Alamance County Manager.

Alamance County provides three drop-off locations: Pleasant Grove Elementary, 3479 Danieley Waterwheel

Road, and the landfill of 2701 Austin Quarter Road, Graham, N.C.

The landfill has recently introduced electronic recycling, which helps expedite the recycling process.

Off campus, students can recycle through TFC Recycling, which offers its services for \$3.95 a month. TFC will provide containers for recycling materials and have bi-weekly curbside pickup.

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