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Columbus: Recycling pickup debated

What happened: Columbus County is in compliance with a new state law that prohibits plastic bottles from North Carolina landfills, even though some of those items still are making their way in, representatives of Waste Management, Inc. told county commissioners Monday.

Why it matters: State lawmakers adopted the law in 2005, but delayed its effective date until Oct. 1 this year. The law requires that plastic bottles, oil filters and wooden pallets be separated from the waste stream and not end up in landfills.

What they said: Residents who already pay for curbside garbage collection at their homes, especially those without a way to haul recyclables to one of six recycling centers, want better options, Commissioner Amon McKenzie said.

Board Chairman James Prevatte suggested providing two cans for residents, one for garbage, the other for newspapers, magazines, glass, plastics and cardboard. The cans could be picked up every other week, on alternating schedules, Prevatte said, with little additional costs.

Other commissioners said the idea wouldn't work because garbage odor would be excessive, especially during summer months.

Commissioners asked that Waste Management officials work with county staff to consider alternatives for recycling.

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