

Less @ Landfills

New law bans recyclable items from waste stream

By Scott Nicholson

Watauga County expects to collect more recyclable materials as new statewide bans will soon come into effect.

Beginning Oct. 1, motor oil filters, wooden pallets and plastic bottles are prohibited from entering any North Carolina landfill.

“Watauga County residents are already doing a good job of recycling plastic bottles as more than 143 tons of plastic were collected last year,” said county recycling coordinator Lisa Doty.

“But these bans provide the opportunity to keep even more items out of the waste stream and put them into the recycling loop.”

There are 10 convenience centers located throughout the county where residents can take plastic bottles for recycling. Locations and hours are listed at www.wataugacounty.org by clicking on “Recycling.”

Containers for recycling oil filters and used oil are at the Watauga County Transfer Station and at the Recycling Center located at 336 Landfill Road, off of Hwy. 421 behind the Nissan Dealership in Boone.

All wooden pallets must be placed in the yard waste/brush pile at the Watauga County Transfer Station located at 336 Landfill Road, off of U.S. 421 behind the Nissan Dealership.

The yard waste is chipped into mulch and offered back to residents free of charge. Transfer station hours: are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.–4 p.m. and Saturday, 8 a.m.–12 p.m.

Watauga County provides recycling containers for plastic bottles and aluminum cans at county recreational facilities and the Recycling Office has bins that can be checked out to use for recycling at special events and festivals. Doty will also work with event planners and festivals to set up recycling efforts.

North Carolina recycles more than 480 million plastic bottles, but more than 2.4 billion plastic bottles are thrown away each year.

Other items that are banned from North Carolina landfills include: aluminum cans, lead-acid batteries, antifreeze, motor oil, appliances, oyster shells, beverage containers from ABC permitted facilities, scrap tires and yard waste.

In January 2011 televisions and computer equipment also will be added to the “banned” list. Watauga County already provides recycling for all electronics at the Recycling Center.

For more information on banned items or for any questions about the recycling program, call Lisa Doty at (828) 265-4852.

