

Upcoming Plastic Bottle Ban Has Some Counties Moving

Posted by [Jennifer Wig](#)

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RALEIGH, N.C. – Starting Oct. 1, plastic bottles, oil filters and wooden pallets are banned from disposal in North Carolina's landfills.



North Carolina recovers less than one out of every five plastic bottles generated in the state, despite hosting some of the largest processors of these materials. The new ban is intended to boost the recovery of bottles, in large part to meet the growing demand for these materials.

An example of the appetite for recovered plastic bottles is the Clear Path facility being built in Fayetteville, which will have the capacity to use 280 million pounds of polyethylene terephthalate (PET #1) bottles annually. Envision Plastics, the nation's second largest recycler of high-density polyethylene (HDPE #2) bottles, also operates a facility in Reidsville. According to the National Association of PET Container Resources, end users of recycled PET in 11 southeastern states have the capacity for 1.439 billion pounds per year. HDPE reclaimers in the United States can use more than 1 billion pounds annually, but due to poor recovery rates are operating at 69 percent capacity.

"Widespread compliance with the plastic bottle disposal ban will ensure a flow of plastic bottles to meet market demand for the materials and will result in additional job creation through the expansion of recycling collection companies," said Scott Mouw, environmental supervisor for the state Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance. "The law represents a major growth opportunity for the state's recycling businesses and for local government recycling collection programs as well."

State officials are educating public and private solid waste management facilities to separate the banned items from the waste stream before those items arrive at a disposal facility. If necessary, enforcement of the disposal bans will be applied primarily at disposal facilities such as landfills and transfer stations by the N.C. Division of Waste Management. The law does allow for accidental or occasional disposal of small amounts of banned materials. However, starting a recycling program for the banned materials is the simplest and easiest way to ensure compliance.

Moreover, such recycling programs are good for the environment. If all the plastic bottles generated in the state were recycled, more than 2.4 billion additional plastic bottles would be kept out of landfills annually. Data from the N.C. Solid Waste Annual Report shows that some North Carolina counties are recycling plastic bottles at much higher rates than others.

Orange County has a comprehensive program and claims the top spot in the county-by-county rankings. With a recovery rate of more than 29 pounds of plastic bottles per person, Orange County recycled more than seven times the state average on a per capita basis. The average county per capita recovery is 3.81 pounds per person. Caswell, Graham, Martin and Warren counties do not collect plastic as part of their recycling programs.

A list detailing per capita plastic bottle recycling rates for each county can be found below. The totals include tonnage recycled by county and municipal programs in the county. Local collection programs typically target residential recyclables; additional plastic bottle recovery may be occurring through private recycling efforts. For more information regarding the data, contact Jim Hickman, DPPEA local government assistance team leader at (919) 715-6528.

County	Population	2007-08 Per Capita Plastic
Bottle Recovery (lbs)		
ORANGE COUNTY	127,344	29.42
PAMLICO COUNTY	12,947	14.76
CRAVEN COUNTY	96,406	12.98
MITCHELL COUNTY	15,950	10.53
DAVIE COUNTY	40,447	10.48
CATAWBA COUNTY	153,404	10.04
GUILFORD COUNTY	460,780	8.40
YANCEY COUNTY	18,550	7.50
CURRITUCK COUNTY	23,731	7.45
DARE COUNTY	34,272	7.39
BEAUFORT COUNTY	46,070	7.30
DURHAM COUNTY	254,740	6.94
CARTERET COUNTY	63,294	6.83
WATAUGA COUNTY	44,696	6.78
NEW HANOVER COUNTY	189,922	6.71
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY	30,758	6.69
MECKLENBURG COUNTY	863,147	6.68
JACKSON COUNTY	36,815	6.42
WAKE COUNTY	832,590	6.05
CHOWAN COUNTY	14,660	5.93
LENOIR COUNTY	57,642	5.92
UNION COUNTY	182,344	5.86
MCDOWELL COUNTY	44,064	5.79
SWAIN COUNTY	13,889	5.53
PERQUIMANS COUNTY	12,722	5.50
SCOTLAND COUNTY	36,830	5.36
WAYNE COUNTY	115,225	5.02
ALLEGHANY COUNTY	11,088	5.01
ALEXANDER COUNTY	36,656	4.97
FORSYTH COUNTY	338,679	4.80
ALAMANCE COUNTY	143,154	4.75
RUTHERFORD COUNTY	62,926	4.65
BRUNSWICK COUNTY	99,440	4.52
ASHE COUNTY	26,003	4.38
HENDERSON COUNTY	102,142	4.33
BUNCOMBE COUNTY	225,609	4.10
GATES COUNTY	11,819	4.09

HAYWOOD COUNTY.....	57,031.....	3.99
HYDE COUNTY.....	5,447.....	3.98
YADKIN COUNTY.....	37,850.....	3.98
LEE COUNTY.....	56,376.....	3.83
CABARRUS COUNTY.....	164,384.....	3.67
CALDWELL COUNTY.....	79,376.....	3.66
CAMDEN COUNTY.....	9,519.....	3.66
GASTON COUNTY.....	200,972.....	3.65
MACON COUNTY.....	33,626.....	3.65
CHATHAM COUNTY.....	59,168.....	3.38
PITT COUNTY.....	151,970.....	3.36
LINCOLN COUNTY.....	72,776.....	3.33
DUPLIN COUNTY.....	53,133.....	3.26
MOORE COUNTY.....	83,932.....	3.02
WILKES COUNTY.....	67,182.....	3.00
WILSON COUNTY.....	77,970.....	2.97
ROWAN COUNTY.....	136,486.....	2.80
DAVIDSON COUNTY.....	156,400.....	2.78
PENDER COUNTY.....	50,430.....	2.46
FRANKLIN COUNTY.....	56,456.....	2.23
BURKE COUNTY.....	88,439.....	2.22
STOKES COUNTY.....	46,257.....	2.12
MADISON COUNTY.....	20,495.....	2.10
MONTGOMERY COUNTY.....	27,588.....	2.01
NASH COUNTY.....	92,915.....	1.94
POLK COUNTY.....	19,040.....	1.93
HERTFORD COUNTY.....	23,730.....	1.90
TYRRELL COUNTY.....	4,290.....	1.83
PERSON COUNTY.....	37,640.....	1.82
ONslow COUNTY.....	169,302.....	1.62
CLAY COUNTY.....	10,326.....	1.61
JOHNSTON COUNTY.....	157,296.....	1.55
GRANVILLE COUNTY.....	55,667.....	1.54
STANLY COUNTY.....	59,158.....	1.54
CLEVELAND COUNTY.....	97,144.....	1.51
AVERY COUNTY.....	18,292.....	1.46
PASQUOTANK COUNTY.....	40,880.....	1.41
VANCE COUNTY.....	43,583.....	1.39
RANDOLPH COUNTY.....	139,422.....	1.37

ROCKINGHAM COUNTY.....	91,646.....	1.25
IREDELL COUNTY.....	150,421.....	1.24
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY.....	21,235.....	1.18
EDGECOMBE COUNTY.....	51,813.....	1.07
SURRY COUNTY.....	73,150.....	1.06
WASHINGTON COUNTY.....	13,214.....	0.95
GREENE COUNTY.....	21,110.....	0.92
CHEROKEE COUNTY.....	27,026.....	0.76
BERTIE COUNTY.....	19,971.....	0.60
SAMPSON COUNTY.....	64,522.....	0.59
CUMBERLAND COUNTY.....	313,616.....	0.57
BLADEN COUNTY.....	32,500.....	0.46
COLUMBUS COUNTY.....	54,460.....	0.24
ANSON COUNTY.....	25,332.....	0.22
RICHMOND COUNTY.....	46,672.....	0.21
JONES COUNTY.....	10,315.....	0.15
ROBESON COUNTY.....	129,425.....	0.11
HOKE COUNTY.....	42,932.....	0.09
HALIFAX COUNTY.....	55,352.....	0.03
HARNETT COUNTY.....	106,506.....	0.03
*CASWELL COUNTY.....	23,508.....	0
*GRAHAM COUNTY.....	8,144.....	0
*MARTIN COUNTY.....	23,906.....	0
*WARREN COUNTY.....	19,919.....	0

* Plastic bottle collection opportunities do not exist in these counties or they failed to report tonnage.

[conservation](#), [green](#), [recycle](#)

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