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Oct. 1 brings ban on oil, pallets and plastic bottles in landfills

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RALEIGH — State environmental officials encourage North Carolina residents to do their part to keep motor oil filters, wooden pallets and plastic bottles out of landfills. Effective Oct. 1, these items are banned from solid waste disposal in North Carolina.

This ban on oil filters, pallets and plastic bottles recognizes that recycling these materials will contribute to the state's environmental and economic development goals.

North Carolina is home to a wide range of companies that collect, process and recycle the banned materials into a wide range of products.

"We encourage North Carolinians to help these disposal bans succeed by expanding and starting new recycling efforts," said DENR Secretary of the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

"Recycling is a proven job creator in North Carolina and if we do our best to recycle the newly banned materials, we will not only create jobs for businesses in the state, but also protect disposal capacity, recover valuable resources, save energy and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions."

To help ensure the success of the bans, DENR is strongly recommending that all generators of oil filters, plastic bottles and wood pallets start recycling efforts.

The Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance has posted information on how to start a recycling program for these materials at: <http://p2pays.org/BannedMaterials/index.asp>. Additional assistance is available from the DPPEA at (919) 715-6500.

Enforcement of the disposal bans will chiefly be applied at facilities such as landfills and transfer stations by the N.C. Division of Waste Management.

It is unlikely that enforcement will take place at individual businesses or other generating facilities. Depending on the type of violation and the severity of the violation, the 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. Starting a recycling program for these materials is the simplest and easiest way to ensure compliance.

The disposal bans will also reinforce DENR's "2 Million Tons by 2012" goal, announced in 2008. 2 Million Tons by 2012 challenges local and state governments to improve the performance of their recycling programs to achieve an annual recovery rate of 2 million tons of recycled materials.

Oil filters, pallets and plastic bottles join a list of previously banned materials and other items (computer equipment and televisions) whose disposal ban dates approaching on Jan. 1, 2011. The full list of banned materials can be found in the North Carolina General Statutes at <http://www.p2pays.org/ref/38/37984.pdf>.

For more information on banned items, please contact DPPEA at (919) 715-6500 or (800) 763-0136. You can also visit the Website at www.p2pays.org.