

New Dump Times

O G U N Q U I T

CHINA BANS RECYCLED WASTE. SEVERE RESTRICTION OF RECYCLING WORLDWIDE

On January 1st 2018 China began restricting incoming recycled material, banning unsorted paper and difficult to recycle PET plastics used to make such things as water

Bottles. And on March 1, contamination limits of .05 % were imposed. This means even small amounts of non recyclable or dirty materials mixed in with loads are being rejected by recycling facilities everywhere.

Large Material Recycling Facilities (MRF's) are struggling to adapt and loads of mixed forms of recycling such as Single Sort are no longer being accepted as recycled material but are headed to incinerators and landfills as garbage—at increased cost to the facilities (like our Transfer Station) that are collecting and sending the material.

Even up until the March deadline MRF's were stockpiling material with the hopes that the restrictions would not be imposed with severity. Now they are trying to clean up

what they have as more material continues to pile up and have imposed strict limits on what they will accept.

This has forced small operations that had been using Sin-



Unacceptable Recycling

gle Sort—like the Ogunquit Transfer Station to suspend and reorganize how materials are collected.

In the past we had separated plastics and glass from paper but went to Single Sort because separated loads started getting charged. This was easier for users of the Transfer

Station and the MRF's were able to pick out valuable material and send the “junk” on otherwise empty container ships returning to China to be further sorted , often by children with bare hands (and bare feet).

China no longer wants to be the dumping ground for our waste. In the end this will be a good thing, for the environment and for recycling technologies. However, for now we are at every level of the waste stream, scrambling to adjust.

The MRF's are looking for new markets in Southeast Asia, but will eventually need to find more efficient ways to sort materials. Some countries like Germany penalize manufacturers who use wasteful packaging..

On our level we need to do a much better job of recycling. We will need to find ways to separate out the materials that can

TRANSFER STATION HOURS

OPEN 7-3
EVERYDAY EXCEPT THURSDAY ALL YEAR

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NEW RECYCLING GUIDELINES

These new guidelines will most likely be changed as this new world of waste becomes hopefully ,clearer. Please see attendants for the latest guidelines.

METAL; Still recyclable. Redeemable (soda, beer, etc go into the redeemable area - Place Tin cans, Aerosol Cans, Aluminum Foil, Pots and Pans, etc. in the designated barrel or

the Large Metal Container.

CARDBOARD; Corrugated (ridges) Cereal. Pizza Boxes, Egg Containers, etc. are recyclable and go in the large container marked CARDBOARD.

REDEEMABLE BOTTLES ; Place in the designated barrels or milk crates or bring to the Bottle Building.

#1 +#2 PLASTICS; Place in designated barrel.

NON REDEEMABLE GLASS- Into designated barrel.

PAPER IS FOR NOW CONSIDERED GARBAGE.

This will hopefully only be temporary, but for now it's the way the world is.

CHINA (CONT)

actually be recycled . We need to keep unwanted waste like paper and especially plastic bags which can bind up the conveyer belts in the sorting facilities out of recycling containers.

We here at the Transfer Station need to help re-educate users as to what is now recyclable and how it needs to be treated (cleaned). We also need to find an easy way for users to dispose of the sorted materials.

This is a bigger problem than it might seem. Plastics such as hoses, bubble wrap, Styrofoam and polystyrene foam, toys, vinyl siding are not recyclable. If you look at many plastic containers there is a number (1-7) that designates what type of recyclable plastic it is. The problem is not all have numbers or the numbers are not clearly marked. Plastics that may appear to be the same may not be the same. There are two types of number two that if not separated will contaminate

each other at some point in the process. Plastic bottle top plastic is a different type from the bottle it is on and can contaminate a load. Right now only types #1 and #2 have value, the rest are more or less disposable at more or less of a cost. There are many varieties of paper, and each type needs to be separated.



Right now the best way to sort all of these materials at a reasonable cost at each point of the process is unclear. The Chinese limit of 0.5% contamination is impossible to meet at any of the levels. Recycling going forward will most likely not be of a simple, Single Sort method of throwing all into one box. It is not enough to recycle , it has to be done right or it is not recycling, it is garbage. And if done that way it will cost more to

dispose of and be more impactful on the environment.

The good news is that Cardboard and Metal are expected to continue as relatively easy to recycle products with value to us. If we can separate out clean #1 and #2 plastics we have places to bring those at no cost. Newspaper as well is acceptable—but it would need to be kept clean and dry and this would be very difficult to manage.

This state of transition will last for at least as long as it takes to find new markets here and abroad and no one knows how long that will take. It will demand an effort from all of us to minimize costs and we will need to have patience with the process. But everyone in communities everywhere are now dealing with this situation and a solution will be found. There is too much at stake financially and environmentally

Continued on pg 3

NO DUMP IS AN ISLAND

The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails.

Each time I have made out the budget for the Transfer Station the knowledge of the volatility of the waste industry would worry even the simplest calculations .We have been sailing along quite well for years now .Adjustments for price changes of commodities sold and costs for disposal were balanced by changes in practices..Often only a few new signs and fuel to rearrange the boxes were necessary. Bigger moves like a change of hauler or a generous contracted partnership with Oceanside Waste were important bulwarks

against a higher budget. Some of these changes may have been confusing to users but another big factor in our flat budget was the users steady improvement in recycling and the lessening amounts of expensive household garbage (Municipal Solid Waste or MSW) so it seems the majority got the message.

So what the worry ? The budget in 2002 was \$529,444.00 This for the Old Transfer Station—with three employees (one full-time employee with benefits, two part timers—making just under \$5,000.00 each) and no equipment . Last year the New Transfer Station Budget with two full timers with benefits and two part timers and equipment

\$304,894.00

How was this possible ? Part of the answer is that there was a sudden change in the waste industry . Most land fills were closed as part of the Resource conservation and recovery Act of 1979 and towns and waste managers were left scrambling for a way to dispose of trash—and of course



N O D U M P A N I S L A N D (C O N T .)

desperate measures usually come with a price. As the industry and users adapted and new methods of disposal and recycling came on line costs fell. But what goes around comes around and this brings us to our present situation ,or the latest version of change and its consequences.

Recycling is complicated and costly and has suddenly become even more so as the largest outlet for our recyclable waste has shut the door. Over 50% of the kind of stuff in our Single Sort container was sent to China. China doesn't want it any more. If you ever looked closely to what kind of stuff was put into that Single Sort container you might understand why. All of that stuff; bottles (different colors), plastic containers (marked #1 through #7- including two types of #2 which if mixed together contaminate each otherdid I mention this is complicated ?) and all different types of paper , all has to be separated and cleaned in order to be recycled.

And then there are the Plastic bags (please read the signs!), garden hoses, trash cans, gasoline containers, toys, tv

trash cans, gasoline containers, toys, tv parts, shoes, food waste, rope, to mention only a very few types of unrecyclable garbage that fills those boxes—and those shipping containers bound for China. Now China no longer wants to be the worlds garbage can.

So why didn't John, Chris, and Lou stop this ? Well, we did mention the bags..The answer to that is there was no incentive. The places that took our waste *preferred* it that way—they made it cheaper for us to send it all mixed up and dirty than to separate as we had done in the past. The idea of Single Sort is to make it easier to recycle. The easy to recycle stuff was sorted out and all the rest ,including the junk that inevitably ends up mixed in was sent in otherwise empty cargo holds of ships to China where it was further sorted out (often by hand by children—see the film “Plastic China”).This is good change. Good for China, Good for the Industry and new ideas—and very good for the environment.

The bad is that it will also be expensive, and we will have to get used to new ways of doing things. The price we now

of doing things. The price we now pay to get rid of our Single Sort has gone from \$0 to \$35.00 to \$95.00 per ton in one month. There is no one offering a better deal (and for those who might ask—no—members of Ecomaine are also paying the price).

We here at the Transfer Station are realists and our plan now, until either new markets are found and/or the prices come down is to, with your help, reduce the amount of material in our Single Sort container .

Probably the easiest way to help is set aside one recycling container each for ;

- Metal Cans
- #1 +#2 Plastic
- Cardboard
- Redeemable bottles
- Glass
- Paper can go in trash (for now)

Make sure the material is clean. We have designated barrels at the Transfer Station where they can be emptied and we will be standing by to help.

L I N K S

Here are some interesting links related to the present recycling crisis. This is a developing situation and there is a lot out there so for more and updated information you can go to Google—it's all there.

<https://resource-recycling.com/recycling/2017/10/03/local-programs-fee-dire-effects-chinas-ban/>

<http://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2018/01/22/china-foreign-waste-ban-recycling>

<https://www.economist.com/news/china/21725815-how-new-rule-could-wallop-recycling-industry-china-tries-keep-foreign-rubbish-out>

<http://large.stanford.edu/courses/2011http://large.stanford.edu/courses/2012/ph240/micks2/2/ph240/micks2/>

<http://www.waste360.com/business/what-operation-green-fence-has-meant-recycling>

<https://www.bna.com/us-recycling-woes-n57982089254/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/11/world/china-recyclables-ban.html>

<http://www.seacoastonline.com/news/20180317/new-chinese-policy-may-impact-local-recycling-efforts>





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A Final Word

Here at the Transfer Station we have always prioritized recycling. It is good for the environment and it keeps costs down. It is as difficult to see this current change for us as it for others out there who recycle, maybe more so.

The idea of Single Sort always struck us as inefficient and wasteful (as in full of garbage). but it was less expensive for us and easier for users. The thinking all up the line was that it was better to see waste mixed in with the recycling than less recycling. And this idea worked as long as China was willing to sort the final accumulated mess. Now that they won't it is up to us. Less than a month ago The Department of Environmental Protection calculated our recycling rate at 65%. Clearly Ogunquit appreciates the need and is willing to make the effort . The current change will demand more organization and effort from all of us, but it is important that we all do our part to make this a less wasteful world.

LOU RIOUX TO RETIRE JUNE

On June 30 the Transfer Station will lose an appendage. Lou Rioux has been a part of the staff since May of 2003 and over the years has made himself indispensable—and often incomprehensible.

His dedication and dependability and his unquestionable honesty and integrity serve as a model for all of us and his willingness to do any job to the best of his abilities made everyone's job easier.

A lot of things happen all at once when it is busy and one of the most necessary skills needed for the transfer station to function is the ability to priori-

tize tasks and trust that someone will be there to shift over to complete any job left by any one of us to do something more pressing. At this Lou excelled.

Always ready with suggestions with ways to improve operations and with a sense of lightness and humor [that on occasion some may have misread.]- it will not be easy to find someone who fits so seamlessly and works so efficiently .

We wish him all the best in retirement version 2.0 and good luck to Peg and Gus.



After 15 years of service to the town he's moving on and we will miss him.