

October 1, 2009

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**STATEWIDE PLASTIC BOTTLE BAN TAKES EFFECT OCTOBER 1**

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."

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.

The law, also known as House Bill 1465, joins other statewide and local bans, such as the statewide ban on disposal of aluminum cans in the landfill, which has been in effect since 1994. Since 2008, all ABC permit holders in North Carolina are required to recycle their beverage containers. Also banned from landfills statewide are: appliances (white goods), used motor oil, antifreeze, lead-acid batteries, scrap tires, oyster shells, and yard waste. Since 1996, it is a requirement to recycle corrugated cardboard in Orange County, and since 2002, under the Regulated Recyclable Materials Ordinance, scrap metal and clean wood waste are also required to be recycled in Orange County.

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. UNC-Chapel Hill recycled 224.68 tons of containers in the 2008-2009 fiscal year, the vast majority of those being plastic bottles.

How does this new law affect the University? UNC-Chapel Hill has plastic bottle recycling containers available indoors in every building, as well as outdoors. If you are interested in adding additional recycling containers, please call the Office of Waste Reduction and Recycling at 962-1442 or email us at [recycling@fac.unc.edu](mailto:recycling@fac.unc.edu). The law does allow for accidental or occasional disposal of small amounts of banned materials, and materials that contain hazardous materials should still be dealt with through Environment, Health and Safety as they have been in the past.

To help publicize the ban, a group of students, organized by Bill Bobbitt, participated in a “smart flash mob” today at lunchtime in the Pit. The idea was sent out to local universities by Kelley Dennings of [www.re3.org](http://www.re3.org), a statewide recycling campaign run by the NC Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance. Students froze with plastic bottles in their hands, while an a cappella group sang a modified version of the song “Battlefield,” by Jordin Sparks, substituting lyrics about throwing plastic bottles in the landfill. A similar flash mob occurred today in the brickyard at NC State.



Students hold up a sign during a smart flash mob to promote the plastic bottle recycling ban in the Pit on Oct. 1.

The statutory reference for the disposal ban can be found at: <http://www.p2pays.org/ref/38/37984.pdf>.

For information about where recycling bins are located in campus buildings, please visit the website for the Office of Waste Reduction and Recycling here: <http://portal.facilities.unc.edu/webrequestsystem/RecyclingIndoorPickups.aspx>

Please also refer to our Quick Recycling Guide: <http://www.fac.unc.edu/wastereduction/signs/New%20Image.JPG>

Sources: [http://portal.ncdenr.org/c/journal/view\\_article\\_content?groupId=21953&articleId=282670](http://portal.ncdenr.org/c/journal/view_article_content?groupId=21953&articleId=282670); <http://www.fac.unc.edu/wastereduction/trend/2008-2009/OWRR0809%20June.pdf>

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