



## **Disposal Waiver for Unmarketable Recyclables Guidance for Cities, Towns and Counties**

With the implementation of China’s “Blue Sky” initiative, and the associated lower contamination limits for collected source separated and commingled recyclables, there have been significant disruptions in markets for many materials collected throughout Washington State. Historically, many communities and service providers have depended upon China as an end-user for the many materials collected and processed into new products.

As a result of this unprecedented situation, the Washington Association of County Solid Waste Managers (WACSWM) has assembled the following guidance for your community to consider if you are approached by your service provider challenged with managing stockpiles of recyclables for markets that no longer exist. The following guidance is meant only as short-term solution to this problem for local jurisdictions. You should consult local elected officials and local Solid Waste Advisory Committees (SWAC) before making any final decisions about granting even these short-term disposal options for unmarketable materials.

Additionally, you should review any contracts, interlocal agreements, or local codes to ensure concurrency for disposal. More long-term recycling program changes should be addressed through your local SWAC, incorporated into in your Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan and may require changes to contracts, codes or interlocal agreements.

Guidance for a disposal waiver is as follows:

1. Prior to disposal, a good faith effort must be made by a collection company and/or processor to access an end market exists for materials collected and sorted.
2. Documentation of at least three processors, or end users were solicited, and the net cost per ton to recycle exceeds the net cost per ton for disposal.
3. Material disposal must comply with the solid waste planning jurisdiction’s comprehensive solid waste management plan, applicable city, town, county codes, interlocal agreements, and existing contracts.
4. Materials collected were from source separated, or commingled recyclables from residential, multifamily, or commercial recycling programs.
5. Disposal for unmarketable recyclables requires approval by both the effected city, or town and solid waste planning jurisdiction. Prior to disposal the following information shall be presented to the effected city, town and county (see attached for requested information).
  - a. Material type (i.e., mixed waste paper, plastics 3-7, glass containers)
  - b. Estimated tons disposed of monthly
  - c. Source of material:
    - i. Residential
    - ii. Multifamily,

- iii. Commercial, or
    - iv. All three
  - d. Geographic area of material origin (i.e., city, town, unincorporated county, tariff area “G-certificate”)
  - e. Proposed start date
  - f. Proposed disposal location
- 6. Disposal concurrence should not be allowed to exceed 90 days in duration. Extensions beyond 90 days should require city, town, and planning jurisdiction authorization. Permanent changes to materials collected may require a formal revision to a jurisdiction’s Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan, contracts and local codes.
- 7. The following monthly reporting is required to maintain concurrence and be submitted to the effected city, town, or solid waste planning jurisdiction:
  - a. Actual material by tons disposed (i.e., mixed waste paper, plastics 1-7, glass containers)
  - b. Actual source of material(s) – residential, commercial, or both
  - c. Actual geographic area of material origin (i.e., city, town, or tariff area)
  - d. Actual disposal dates
  - e. Actual disposal location(s)
  - f. Efforts made to determine if recycling of these materials can resume
  - g. Document signed by company authorizing agent

WACSWM recognizes that our residents, businesses, service providers and local governments have worked very hard to establish effective and successful recycling programs. The disposal of unmarketable recyclable materials is undesirable for the best interest of the environment and does not allow reuse of materials in creating new products. Development of this guidance allows the decisions on how to best manage your local programs to be left up to local communities. Such decisions should therefore be developed in a transparent manner so the community understands this unique challenge with market conditions for recyclable materials.