

PERPLEXING PLASTIC...

AS OF FEB. 15TH, SANDERS COUNTY WILL NOT BE ACCEPTING PLASTICS FOR RECYCLING. Due to China's January 1st recycling ban, Sanders County has been forced to discontinue taking plastics to recycle. "We have been taking plastic we just can't sell, and to be fiscally responsible to the taxpayers, we will currently have to quit taking it." ~Jason Peterson, Sanders County Solid Waste Supervisor. We interviewed Dusti Johnson, MDEQ Materials Management Specialist, and she had this to say: "It is not a county or state problem. It is an international issue. If you have no market to sell the recycled plastic, unfortunately, it becomes trash. The bigger more concentrated areas can sustain because they don't have the shipping costs of the rural sites. It's going to take some time, but someone will come up with something to do with it" She encouraged finding other ways to buy or make products such as laundry soap, condiments, etc., and if you can't recycle plastics, make it up with the other items you can.

"China's recycling ban is an opportunity for the U.S. While China majorly disrupted the status quo of the waste industry, this ban has provided the opportunity to rethink and refocus the systems and methods that are currently used in our industry. By implementing regulations similar to those in Europe, and making producers more responsible for their packaging and lifecycle of their product, we can change practices to prioritize reduction and recycling as the cheaper, more viable option, rather than landfills. The responsibility of our recyclable waste has been placed back in our hands, and we can use this as an opportunity to implement positive, waste reducing methods that will have a lasting impact." www.wastedive.com Feb. 8, 2018

SANDERS COUNTY WILL CURRENTLY ACCEPT THESE OTHER COMMODITIES FOR RECYCLING:

All batteries, clean and flattened cardboard, mixed paper, vehicle oil, aluminum beverage cans, metal. Two sites in Missoula currently accept plastics:

Republic Services- 3207 W Broadway St Missoula (406) 721-1120

Currently, the Republic Services Missoula Recycling Center is only accepting #2 HDPE Natural and #1 PETE. The drop off area is open to the public 24/7 but the plastics need to be sorted into the appropriate bins.

Pacific Recycling-2600 Latimer Missoula (406) 543-7280

#1 & #2 bottles only – mouth smaller than base, so for example coffee containers qualify. Lids must be removed and discarded as they are a different type of plastic.

No oil bottles because the oil permanently contaminates the plastic.

#1 bottles all go together regardless of color.

#1 trays and clamshells not accepted.

#2 may be split into 2 grades:

Translucent – most milk jugs, windshield wash etc...., may be recycled many more times.

Colored – including white, will mostly likely not be recyclable again, but on the plus side will likely be made into durable products rather than use and toss packaging. For convenience #2 translucent may be included in the colored, but this limits its use as well as its ability to be recycled again.

Questions? Call Dusti Johnson, MDEQ Materials Management Specialist 406-444-6499 or Kathy Conlin 827-6942.