

August 27, 2018

ATTENTION, WE HAVE A WASTE CRISIS ON OUR HANDS! Effective immediately, the following are the **ONLY** items accepted in the RCC drop-off boxes located throughout Burnett and Washburn Counties: paper, flattened paper containers and cartons (including frozen food boxes), magazines, envelopes, phone books and newspaper. Plastics include those coded #1 thru #5. Metal food and beverage containers. Glass food and beverage containers.

Preparation has also changed drastically. From this point forward please make sure your recyclables are **EMPTY, CLEAN** and **DRY** before placing them into recycling containers. According to Republic Services, "One dirty item can contaminate thousands of pounds of collected materials". **PLASTIC BAGS/FILM ARE NO LONGER ACCEPTED!!**

Why the sudden and drastic change? The sheer amount of contaminated recyclables are threatening local program like ours. We must evolve our approach to purchasing and recycling/reusing/reducing more than ever before and not tomorrow, **TODAY!**

Recycling has never been the solution to the problem, just a way to lessen the effects of too much waste; but reality is becoming harder to ignore now that the foreign market for our material is collapsing.

Up until just a few months ago, China was the single largest market for the world's recyclables. But China has its own refuse to worry about, and they no longer want to import the world's trash, especially the plastic kind.

While Vietnam, Indonesia and some other countries still buy recyclable materials, there's no market on the scale of China. As you read this, bales of mixed paper and plastics are piling up in warehouses. If a buyer can't be found soon, the bales will probably have to be taken to landfills to make room for the next wave of paper and plastic because the U.S. doesn't have the remanufacturing facilities to process them here.

Un-manned sites in the two-county region are already closed, please do your part to keep this recycling bins by only bringing in items for recycling that are acceptable- i.e. on the Acceptable list! If the bins are contaminated they go directly to the landfill. Please, do not let other people's good efforts put this site at risk for closure. Do your part: **EMPTY, CLEAN, DRY!**

The real solution — the long-term solution — is not to improve our recycling process, but to reduce our reliance on disposable items. On the bright side, it might just be the stimulus needed to force society to confront the disposable culture that is trashing the planet.

Don't Let Your Recycling Get Trashed!

- All items must be EMPTY, CLEAN & DRY!
- Starting immediately, all contaminated recycling containers will be land-filled.
- Only Items listed below will be accepted

Paper:

- Brochures
- Envelopes
- File folders
- Greeting cards
- Junk mail
- Magazines/catalogs
- Newspaper & inserts
- Office paper
- Paper dairy & juice containers (clean!)
- Paperback books
- Paperboard (cereal boxes, etc. type)
- Phone books

Cardboard:

- Corrugated boxes (flattened)
- Paper/cardboard boxes (flattened)

Plastic: #1-5

- Milk/juice containers
- Soda bottles
- Water bottles
- Other #1-5 plastic bottles/jugs only (clean!)

Glass:

- Clear, brown, green beverage & food jars/containers (NO Food Waste in Jars!)

Metal:

- Aluminum cans
- Steel/tin/bi-metal cans (soup/veggie cans, etc.)
(NO Food Waste in Cans!)

-Common Items NOT Recyclable-

CONTAMINATION

- ⇒ Plastic from packages
- ⇒ Plastic grocery/garbage bags
- ⇒ Plastic tarps
- ⇒ Plastic wrap/film/bags of all kinds
- ⇒ Aerosol cans
- ⇒ Ceramics or dishes
- ⇒ Food storage containers
- ⇒ Food waste
- ⇒ Garbage
- ⇒ Hard cover books
- ⇒ Hoses
- ⇒ Lawn chairs
- ⇒ Petroleum containers (oil/antifreeze jugs)
- ⇒ Pizza boxes
- ⇒ Shredded paper
- ⇒ Styrofoam of all kinds (even if it has a #1-5)
- ⇒ Take out containers
- ⇒ Tissue
- ⇒ Window glass/drinking glasses/mirrors
- ⇒ Wood/construction debris