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*One of many graphics available for free  
from the [Recycling IQ Kit](#)*

## December Meeting notes, updates

Jim Nocella of **Waste Management (WM)** discussed the recycling market disruptions resulting from China's imminent import ban on mixed recyclables. WM processes single stream recyclables (**SSR**) from half of our member towns. He affirmed the accuracy of the Director's [article](#) about China's "**National Sword**" in the SSRC December Updates.

About half of US recyclables are exported, and China has been the biggest buyer. Last July, **China** notified the World Trade Org. that it would **ban the import of mixed paper and plastics** by the end of 2017. Despite much trade association pressure to reconsider, China appears firm.

China stopped issuing import licenses a few months ago. Material Recovery Facilities (**MRFs**) stopped shipping to China, uncertain that there would be a buyer. This is **causing a glut**, reducing values and enabling other buyers to tighten their specifications.

MRFs including WM have slowed their sort lines and added labor to make bales saleable, raising processing costs to about \$80/ton. They are seeking alternative markets. Indonesia and Italy are accepting materials.

The domestic market will take time to redevelop. Many US mills closed in the past several years due to their inability to compete with China. WM may upgrade its sorting technology.

A **sustained effort** is needed to **improve quality** at the curb long term. WM is working with communities to clarify what goes in to recycling containers. He recommended that municipalities budget for **outreach to residents** that use town recycling programs.

WM is keeping the specs of acceptable materials simple: Clean, dry paper and cardboard. Empty food and beverage containers. 1-7 **rigid plastic containers**.

The biggest problem is soft plastics: **film, bags and bagged recyclables** impede processing.

WM is stepping up **load inspections** from individual communities. It is time consuming but will inform where to focus education efforts. **When in doubt throw it out.**

Q: Should we **discourage glass in SSR**, and provide separate drop off collection for it? A: Taking glass out of SSR would reduce the cost, BUT much glass would end up in the trash at higher cost. Focus on **eliminating soft plastics, food, and tangles** from SSR.

## HHW contract

The Negotiating Team of **Mr. Sylvester, Ms. McCarthy, Mr. Koep and Ms. Galkowski** explored options for the FY19 HHW contract, and negotiated a proposal with **Stericycle Environmental**, our current contractor. After discussion, the Board approved it unanimously.

Stericycle proposed FAC82 pricing and terms plus a 5% volume discount, which would apply to the majority of SSRC events. Since our current contract is extremely advantageous, this will result in about a 20% increase in HHW costs.

There are only two State Contract (FAC82) vendors, Stericycle and Clean Harbors. CH wouldn't negotiate its FAC82 rates. One other company provides this service in our area, but couldn't provide competitive pricing.

At the request of the SSRC, and with support from MassDEP, the **Mass. Operational Services Division will reopen the HHW portion of FAC82.**

## Grind Screen IFB

The third extension of our current contracts for brush grinding, compost screening, and wood chip removal expires 12/31/17. Eight of our Member Municipalities used the contracts in 2017.



**Mr. Sylvester, Mr. Basler, Mr. Flynn** reviewed the bid docs before release in mid-December. Four service providers submitted bids in time for the bid opening on 1/11/18 at the Hingham DPW. The awards will be voted at the January 18 meeting.

## Small scale outreach grant proposals

The SSRC was awarded a \$2,000 Outreach grant by MassDEP. The Director proposed allocating half to social media promotion and maintenance, half to WATD FM radio ads. Other suggestions included movable signs reminding people to keep recyclables clean. The Director presented a social media proposal from Jess Wozniak. Julie could provide guidance. Messages: When in doubt throw it out? No Wishful recycling? Please, only these? Revisit next month.

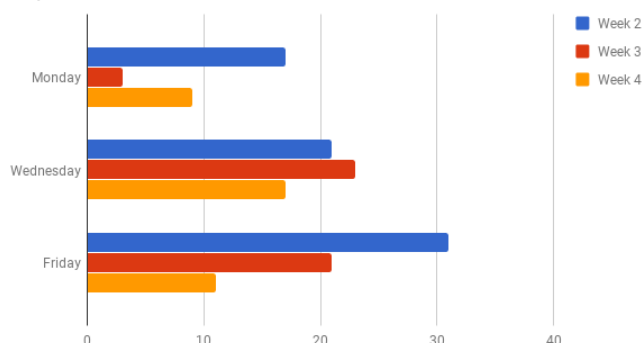
## RECO Report- Middleboro, Kingston, Plymouth

By Julie Sullivan, SSRC Recycling Education and Compliance Officer

In December, we closed out a successful OOPS tagging program in Middleboro. Every other Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in November and December, our wonderful "tag team" (**Jeff Jenness** and **John Pooler** of the Middleboro Highway Dept., **Naomi Mastico** and myself, (pictured), plus **Stephanie Carlisle**, set out to inspect and tag the most plastic bag-contaminated routes in town. In addition to plastic bags, we tagged for other egregious violations such as DEP waste banned items and carts full of miscellaneous rubbish, including but not limited to hairballs, dog poop, and lots of soiled paper towels and Kleenex.



Repeat Offenders



Overall, we saw a 7-10% decrease in the amount of OOPS tags left behind and photos of pristine loads of recycling being collected during the last week of the program. Special thanks go out to all of the incredibly supportive staff at the Middleboro Highway Department, who went above and beyond in devoting staff time and RDP funds to our cause and fielding calls from outraged residents. I look forward to checking back in with them in Fall 2018.

As the temperatures outside fall, my private hauler investigations on behalf of the Kingston Board of Health and the Plymouth Department of Public Health have been heating up. The contiguous towns share several private haulers, making it easier to spot consistencies (and inconsistencies) in the haulers' reporting. I've been reviewing quarterly reports and other submissions to the towns to see which haulers need the most attention. Stay tuned as the mystery unfolds!

## Cohasset pay-per-throw scofflaws warned

By Abigail Adams [aadams@wickedlocal.com](mailto:aadams@wickedlocal.com), Cohasset Mariner, Nov 10, 2017 (excerpts)

Some residents in Cohasset say they find the blue bags from the Cohasset Recycling Transfer Facility to be more pesky than helpful. Yet there is far more to these bags than many realize.

At the Cohasset RTF, trash is only accepted in the blue “pay-per-throw” bags. But as Selectman Steve Gaumer recently pointed out, people have been attempting to sneak by without blue bags for years ... tensions between residents around the rules of the RTF have risen as of late, occasionally sparking confrontation.

Police are working with the DPW and Town Manager Chris Senior to crack down on illegal dumping at the RTF. Senior said some residents are unaware of the purpose of the blue bags.

“Those bags pay for trash disposal,” said Senior. “That’s what they are designed to do.”

According to Director of Public Works Brian Joyce, the town has made an effort to educate the public about why complying with the blue bag rule is so important.

Police currently have 40 license plate numbers of the scofflaws who have been seen not using the blue bags and will be providing the addresses to the DPW. Warning letters will be sent to first-time offenders, Chief Bill Quigley said.

Those caught violating the rules a second time will be fined \$50. ... After three violations, the town will also suspend their access to the RTF for 30 days. After four violations, violators will be suspended for 6 months. Any subsequent violations will result in a one-year suspension.

... “At the end of the day, all of this is taking money out of somebody else’s pocket, out of your pocket, and putting it in someone else’s because those bags pay for [disposal], and I don’t know if people fully appreciate that,” said Senior. [More](#)



## NBWS Announces Plans to Open Facility in Fall

The new 100,000-square-foot facility is reportedly fully funded.

[Waste360 Staff](#) | Jan 12, 2018

New Bedford Waste Services, LLC, a sister company of ABC Disposal service, has announced plans for a zero waste facility in Rochester, Mass. The company said that it has secured financing for the 100,000-square-foot facility, which will open in the fall of 2018.

The facility will accept waste from municipal, residential and commercial properties. It will sort waste manually and mechanically, sorting out recyclable materials and compacting the rest to be used as a fuel alternative to coal.

This announcement comes after several setbacks including a fire to the building in Rochester and a bankruptcy case. [More](#)



## RDP grant reports, recycling data due Feb. 15

Two annual reports are required to comply with the Sustainable Material Recovery Program (SMRP) Grant Agreements. Both are submitted using your municipality's existing [ReTRAC](#) account. Contact [Janine Bishop](#) to find out who the ReTRAC account holder is for your town.

1. The **Calendar Year 2017 Recycling and Solid Waste** survey is due by **February 15<sup>th</sup>**. If you have received a SMRP grant in the last 2 years, or intend to apply for a SMRP grant in April 2018, or for Technical Assistance by Feb. 20, it must be submitted. All other municipalities are encouraged to submit. A PDF copy of the survey is available on MassDEP's [website](#) for reference. Contact [Todd Koep](#) if you have questions.
2. The **Calendar Year 2017 Recycling Dividends Program (RDP) Annual Report** is also due by **February 15<sup>th</sup>**. If you have been awarded RDP funds, this report is required. A sample copy is available on the [RDP webpage](#) for reference. Scroll down on the webpage to find "6. Report on Your RDP Expenditures." Contact [Dawn Quirk](#) with questions.

SSRC Director [Claire Galkowski](#) is scheduling appointments with Member Municipalities to assist with submissions.

## Contracting for Solid Waste & Recycling Services

MassDEP sponsored a seminar in November reviewing solid waste contracting issues, featuring **John W. Giorgio, Esq.** of KP Law. The workshop was recorded and will be made available soon to those who were unable to attend. Email [Todd Koep](#) if you want to view the session.

Notes from the 2016 seminar with similar content are posted on the SSRC website [here](#).

## Organics recovery, capacity growing in Mass.

[Cole Rosengren](#), Waste Dive, Dec. 14, 2017 (excerpts)

- Since Massachusetts enacted its commercial organics diversion mandate in 2014, haulers have reported a 56% increase in collection customers.
- Last year, this resulted in 260,000 tons of material being diverted: 166,000 tons at compost facilities, 57,000 tons at anaerobic digesters, 22,000 tons donated (up more than one-third since 2014), 13,000 tons of beverages processed into wastewater, and at least 4,000 tons fed to animals. (Another) 50,000 tons (was) processed on-site.
- Massachusetts currently has 45 total sites. This includes 150,000 tons of compost capacity, 315,000 tons of digestion capacity and six de-packaging operations. The DEP reported that seven new digesters — with as much as 570,000 tons of new capacity — are in various stages of permitting and development. [More](#)

# Maxed out Mass. MRFs prompt disposal waivers

Cole Rosengren, Waste Dive, Jan. 4, 2018 (excerpts)

- MassDEP has issued 21 disposal waivers for unsorted single-stream recycling material since November. Amounts range from ... small, to 300 tons or multiple trailer loads in one case. As of publication, only three waivers remain current.
- The issue (is a result of) a lack of available processing capacity due to contamination concerns. As material recovery facilities slow down their lines, or run loads through twice, they can't keep up with the usual demand. "Effectively the MRFs are really full," said John Fischer, DEP's chief of commercial waste reduction and planning, who emphasized the limited nature of these waivers. "It's only allowing them to go for disposal when they cannot find a recycling outlet that will accept it."
- So far waivers have been issued to Waste Management, Troupe Waste Services, FM Services, ABC Disposal Service, Noonan Waste Services, Gilbert Trash, Jet-A-Way, Graham Waste Services and Automated Material Handling.

Sending material that residents or business customers have already sorted to landfills and waste-to-energy facilities isn't ideal for anyone involved. The DEP stresses the importance of finding options for recycling, as required by state law, and has purposely written many of the waivers to last for just a matter of days or weeks.

Local company E.L. Harvey & Sons (pictured) was recently in the news for its stockpiling challenges...

MassDEP had no predictions about how long this might continue. ...Processing capacity is one of many areas the agency will be studying this year as part of a comprehensive capacity survey ahead of the state's new 2020-2030 Solid Waste Master Plan.



...China alone accounted for half of the world's scrap plastic purchasing, so new markets will need to be aggressively pursued. Coming to grips with the amount of contamination found in many single-stream recycling programs will also be a top priority now that these new standards are final. [More](#)

## Chinese processing group sets goals for US visit

by [Colin Staub](#), Resource Recycling, January 10, 2018 (excerpts)

The China Scrap Plastics Association (CSPA) ... wants to get acquainted with American plastics processors who would like Chinese processing investments for equipment or other infrastructure. The group wants to ... partner with major U.S. recycling companies to build new processing infrastructure.

(CSPA) said it understands the impact China's restrictions have had on the industry both in China and the U.S., and noted that "this cooperation will benefit both sides," Lee said.

In another effort to benefit the industry in both countries, CSPA is looking to secure additional scrap plastic feedstock to feed the growing Southeast Asian processing market. Many Chinese companies have moved to this region to absorb some of the displaced material that can no longer enter China. [More](#)

## Recycling Partnership Update: Where it's at

by [Dylan de Thomas](#), December 19, 2017, Resource Recycling (excerpts)

*If you just* put some bins in the town square ...

*If you just* installed a few optical sortation devices at some MRFs ...

*If you just* teach the children how to recycle ...

"If you just" is magical thinking. And while the process of recycling might seem like magic on a YouTube video, we all know that it takes a lot of interconnected parts to move the recyclables out of the trash can and into the recycling cart – and back into new goods – to enjoy the environmental and economic benefits that recycling can deliver.

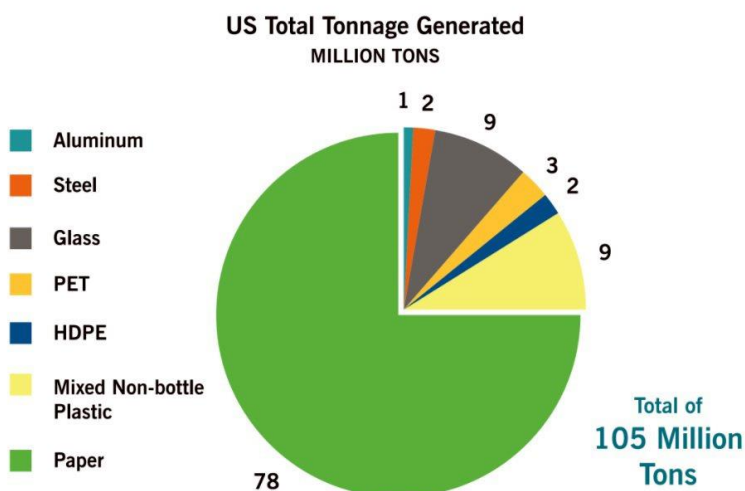
So, what does it take if you can't just?

### Mapping it out

The Recycling Partnership looked for traditional recyclable materials most U.S. residents can put in their cart: cans, bottles, paper, cardboard, containers and cartons. ...

we calculated there are **105 million tons of recyclable packaging** available to be captured in the U.S.

**How Much Recyclable Packaging and Printed Paper Is Generated Every Year?**  
All Sources



... (in) the 95 million occupied **single-family homes**, we see **36 million tons** of recyclable packaging available to be recovered. Currently, we **capture 14 million tons**, a little bit worse than a 40 percent (capture rate).

We focus on the single-family home, because we can leverage existing infrastructure (trucks and MRFs) and knowledge to get at that **additional 22 million tons** of recyclable packaging.

... boost materials recovery via ... billboards, social and traditional media pushes, and targeted communications. Or using those channels to combat the biggest challenge in recycling today: contamination, including plastic film and bags that should head back to retail locations.

## Measurement matters

Over the last three years, we worked with DSM Environmental Services in Massachusetts ...to measure capture rates.

How do you measure a capture rate? You rent some box trucks and grab samples of paired recycling and trash carts in demographically diverse neighborhoods. Then you sort out what's in 'em, finding out what recyclables are in the trash and what trash is in the recycling.

These capture rate studies allow us to both see which materials and behaviors need the most help and then help target those efforts. Does a community need to boost participation? We have tools for that. Does another need to get residents to put recyclables into the cart loose, instead of tied up in plastic bags that can give a MRF fits? Why, look at that – we have free tools and best management practices for that, too.

## Capitalizing on human capital – together

(TRP has) free [six-point plans](#) to help combat contamination and help [shield local programs](#) from China's National Sword.

We can't just. We have to do more. And we're here to do it with you. Because you're all where it's at, and we're coming to you. [More](#)

### EVENTS (click [here](#) for details)

**SSRC Breakfast meeting**, Thurs., Jan. 18, 8:50-10:30am, Kingston town hall, 26 Evergreen St.

**Quality Matters: free resources to support plastic recycling programs**, webinar, Thurs., Jan 25, 1-2:30 pm. Register [here](#)

**Recycling data surveys, RDP expense reports** due Feb. 15 at [ReTrac](#)

**SSRC Breakfast Meeting**, Thurs., March 1, 2018, Abington Town Hall, 600 Gliniewicz Way

**Southeast Municipal Recycling Council**, Wed., March 14, 8:45-noon, location TBA. Topic: 2020 Solid Waste Master Plan. Rsvp to [Kathi Mirza](#)

**MassRecycle/SWANA SNE R3** conference, Mon, March 26, Sheraton Framingham. Info [here](#).

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