



## OREGON REFUSE & RECYCLING ASSOCIATION

September 29, 2017

Representing the solid waste and recycling companies of Oregon, ORRA is reaching out to share information regarding drastic changes that have been announced in the international recycling markets within the last three months. Those changes are now causing a potential crisis in terms of our recycling industry in Oregon and on the West Coast. These proposed market changes could potentially affect the ability to continue to recycle the items our citizens are accustomed to recycling in their local programs.

Attached is a Fact Sheet on China's proposed recyclables ban. The Fact Sheet summarizes the changes that are threatened due to China's drastic cuts in importation of recycling and waste materials, as a part of China's effort to improve the environmental quality in its own country. The Fact Sheet also explains how China's decisions affect our collection programs and the ability to recycle common items taken in the curbside recycling programs in our cities and state.

This is a national and international issue, but the negative effects are very local - at this point there is no excess capacity in the recycling markets in our region that can absorb the materials which China is stating it will no longer accept. This means there will not be enough storage or processing capacity for the recycling materials that are generated by the recycling programs in our state. As a result, this could create a potential crisis in which no markets would exist that can take the recyclable material. **In the short term, this may force disposal of some recycling while we continue to seek a long term market solution.** ORRA is working with its members as well as cities, counties and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to consider the best solutions moving forward.

Collection programs are only as good as our recycling markets; if the markets are in a "re-set" mode, our collection programs will be forced to re-set as well. However, ORRA members are committed to offering the recycling collection programs supported by their customers. Right now, customers can assist by **careful recycling** – follow the list of acceptable recyclables for collection in order to help reduce contamination as much as possible from the start.

As more information becomes available, we will share it with you. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to reach out if we can answer questions.

Working together, we know we will find the solutions that we need. Thank you.

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