

The New Haven Transfer Station will be closed on Monday, June 19, in honor of Juneteenth. The Administrative offices at 14 Trumbull Street will be closed as well.



Feature

W.R.A.P. Uncovered



Locating “chips” were placed in plastic bags and dropped in W.R.A.P.-sponsored recycling receptacles. Only about 3% of the bags which contained those chips ended up in places that actually might recycle them...

Wrap Recycling Action Program for plastic film recycling and awareness was founded in 2000 with the goal of increasing awareness of best practices for consumer plastic film recycling, (which includes single-use shopping bags, film wrap, bagging for products on the shelf, and packing materials) as well as establishing an infrastructure for collecting plastic film and single-use plastic bags and processing them. Along the way, the organization picked up major sponsors among the stakeholders in this area, including Walmart, Target and Safeway (collection centers), Ziploc, Kellogg and Reynolds (manufacturers), several recycling processors and various state and municipal entities (outreach). As you probably are aware, single-use shopping bags have all but been eliminated in CT as well as seven other states.* But the other items listed are still in circulation, as are some plastic bags, so this article should still be of some concern to CT residents...

One of the major goals of the awareness outreach at W.R.A.P. has been to keep plastic film OUT of local Materials Reduction Facilities (recycling sorting centers), as these materials slow down and even damage the machines that do the sorting. There is an obvious benefit to achieving this goal.

The other major goal has been to provide an infrastructure for collecting and reprocessing plastic film, which is flexible polyethylene (PE) and more specifically, low density polyethylene (LDPE). The collection component of this process got off to a good start, but the feed stock supply chain has broken down somewhere along the line, because apparently only a very small percentage of the film collected actually makes it to a facility where it can be processed.

Recently, ABC investigative news reporting conducted a study which found that of dozens of locating chips that their team had placed in plastic single-use bags at collection drop-off points across the U.S. such as Target and Walmart, only 3 made it to a possible recycling processing location: No chips were actually traced to a specific recycling facility, but rather, made it to countries that claim to recycle

plastic film (pacific rim countries and in Africa). It should be noted that these locations are highly suspect regarding claims of recycling, often burning or burying plastic instead.

The vast majority of the chips went to landfills or burn plants, thus defeating the purpose of the collection and messaging effort of W.R.A.P. In its entirety! This effectively has extended the useless practice of “wishcycling” writ large. Click on the link below for a short video on the ABC News story.

There are many wasted resources here, not the least of which has been messaging people-hours, the cost of time, wages and the carbon cost of fuel to get to collection centers and transporting from collection centers. If these items had been just dropped in the trash, none of these costs would have been incurred. But perhaps the most important resource of all has been compromised: Trust. Trust that recycling actually works and is not simply a waste of time. And that is a shame, because trust, as we all know, is a hard resource to get back.

<https://abcnews.go.com/US/put-dozens-trackers-plastic-bags-recycling-trashed/story?id=99509422>

- Eight states that have banned single-use plastic bags — **California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, New York, Oregon and Vermont**

Feature Not In Your Backyard?

Actually, grass clippings should be deposited in your backyard. Or on your compost pile!



CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection strongly recommends that grass clippings and mulch from mowing be left in place on lawns, and in keeping with that recommendation, the Solid Waste & Recycling Authority is no longer accepting grass clippings and mulch at the New Haven Transfer Station.

Grass clippings, when left in place, help protect the existing grass from too much sunlight and also serve to fertilize the ground as they compost. The savings from having to collect, bag and transport and process these clippings offsite is substantial. CT DEEP estimates that a ½ acre lawn can generate over 200 bags of clippings per year! Most lawn mowers have a DIY modification that allows them to mulch what they mow in place, rather than spewing it over onto the next section of lawn.

If you really want that clean-swept look on your lawn, you can still keep the clippings on-site by using them as part of a backyard compost pile. (see insert below on establishing a compost pile) However,

as the summer wears on and there is less rain, it is still best to mow the grass at a higher level and leave the clippings in place.

This way you can rest assured you are doing the best thing for your lawn, the environment and relaxing while it happens!

Composting at home

Don't feel like paying extra money to have your organics collected? You can save money and divert as much as 500 pounds of organics a year from your trash by recycling at home. Don't just throw your stuff in the back yard, however. In order to compost efficiently you should follow these guidelines:

- o find a spot away from your house, in the shade
- o protect from animal intrusion
- o add layers of household compostables* and grass/leaves alternately
- o moisten if necessary
- o turn or 'til' the contents periodically
- o check temperature periodically

Also, keep in mind that your pile may produce strong odors and attract animals and insects, so protect and place your composting area accordingly!

***acceptable household compostables:** Most kitchen scraps, fruits and vegetables, coffee grounds, hair and real fur, small uncoated cardboard and paper pieces, b&w newspaper, eggshells. **unacceptable:** meat, bones, dairy products.

More 'problem' materials that still can be recycled

Here are a couple of our top contenders -- items that are not as easily recyclable as others:

Helium tanks – These little pink/violet canisters are becoming ever more popular these days. And how do I know? Because they have increasingly been showing up along with the other *illegally dumped* household hazardous waste and paint at the New Haven Transfer Station! Metal scrappers do not accept them either, and they are not welcome at most points of purchase. The New Haven Transfer Station will accept small consumer helium tanks as long as you prepare them properly for recycling by doing the following:



- / expel all residual helium by opening the valve and leaving it open.
- / remove the valve
- / first put on safety glasses, then with a hammer and screwdriver, punch around the edge where the circular indent is located near the top, and then pry back the thin metal cover open with the screwdriver. (This will ensure that the tank is no longer an explosion hazard)

https://youtu.be/s_0A5yiz5uA <<short video – how to render your helium tank safe for recycling.

Smoke Detectors – Smoke detectors contain very small amounts of radioactive Americium, but have been deemed not harmful to human health and are now acceptable in regular trash. However, these items are still recyclable, and one organization, Curie Environmental Services, is doing just that, for a small fee. For more information: <https://www.curieservices.com/smoke-alarm-recycling/>

Want to know more about other 'problem' items that are not accepted at the Transfer Station or in your curbside recycling?

ammunition - call your local police/public safety department or state police to surrender the ammunition

animal carcasses – dead pets may be disposed of by your veterinarian. All other animals – call your community's animal control

carbon monoxide detectors – Manufacturer might have a takeback program; otherwise can go in trash

fire extinguishers – Fire extinguishers are considered “expired” if they are more than 6 years old, or by the date given by the manufacturer. Most fire extinguishers are really only good for one use. After that they must be refilled or disposed of. Disposal: 1) Expel the remaining fire retardant safely (outside in low or no wind) 2) Let sit for a couple of days and recheck for remaining retardant and expel. 3) Remove the flange at the top of the canister once you are sure that all retardant has been expelled and there is no residual pressure. 4) If canister is metal, bring to scrap metal yard or metal drop-off at transfer station. 5) If canister is plastic, dispose of in regular trash. 6) Hose and other minor parts can also go in regular trash.

unexploded fireworks – call local fire dep't. or police for proper disposal.

ink cartridges / toner – check with your local retailer for refill programs, or with manufacturer

magazines – re-use or recycle curbside

medical waste – “BMW” is highly-regulated, and cannot be just thrown in the trash. Patients and recipients should have a protocol in writing when they first become a subscriber to a service.

Mercury thermometers and thermostats – bring to HazWaste Central 90 Sargent Drive, New Haven (register online first - <https://www.rwater.com/hazwaste/>)

needles/syringes- first, check your local health-care facility or hospital for take-back programs. As a last resort, seal tightly in rigid plastic containers and place in trash. **DO** place in curbside recycling!!

propane tanks – take back to any local distributor (e.g. Lowes in New Haven)

shredded paper – can be recycled but only through shredding services. (shredded paper is not accepted at the transfer station or in your recycling toter.) If you don't have a large quantity of it, place in trash.

underground storage tanks – there are strict requirements for removal, cleaning and disposal of USTs in CT. the New Haven Transfer Station does not accept these tanks. Please refer to the CT DEEP page at this link: <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Underground-Storage-Tanks/Underground-Storage-Tanks>

wrappers for candy/cookies/chips - Terracycle has recycling options that involve low cost or free mail-back for hard-to-recycle consumer items (bottles, tubes and packaging)

click below for more such items:

<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Waste-Management-and-Disposal/What-Do-I-Do-With>

Calendar of Events:

World Ocean Day – June 8
<https://worldoceanday.org/>

City of New Haven meeting schedule:

<https://newhaven-ct.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

New Haven Parks and Public Works info:

A Message from Parks and Public Works Resident Services:

This is the perfect time of the year to properly clean your trash and recycling toters. Use a disinfectant or all-purpose cleaner to saturate both the inside and outside of the toter. Adding a bit of baking soda can help get rid of odors. Please call our office at (203) 946-7700 if your toter needs to be repaired. We can easily put a new lid, replace tires, and put in a new metal bar if needed.

Bulky items such as furniture, mattresses, toys, clothing, and tires *cannot* be placed on the treeline for pickup. This is considered illegal dumping and you may be subject to a fine. New Haven residents with a valid CT state driver's license, or ID can stop by our office at 34 Middletown Ave to pick up free vouchers. Our office hours are Monday-Friday 7am-4pm. Once you have the vouchers, you can take yard waste and/or regular household items to the Residential Drop-off Center. Construction materials will be charged 6 cents per pound. The Residential Drop-off Center is located at 260 Middletown Ave and their hours are Monday-Saturday 9am-noon.

Leaf bag pick up continues. Rocks, dirt and outdoor trash cannot be placed inside the brown leaf bags. Leaves should only be in brown paper bags. Please do not overfill the brown bags to make pick up easier and more efficient. Leaves placed in plastic yard waste bags will not be picked up. Place the leaf bags curbside the night before your weekly trash and recycling pick up.

In observance of Juneteenth, our office at 34 Middletown Ave will be closed Monday, June 19th. The Residential Drop-Off center located at 260 Middletown Ave will also be closed. Weekly trash and recycling pick-up will be a day delayed.

Links:

New Haven Public Works-

<https://www.newhavenct.gov/gov/depts/pw/>

Public Works paving schedule-

<https://www.newhavenct.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/15028/637903861608081376>

See Click Fix-

<https://seeclickfix.com/new-haven>

NHSWRA contact info and link:



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