



State of Recycling

What's in your cart?

Presentation to Council
April 1, 2019

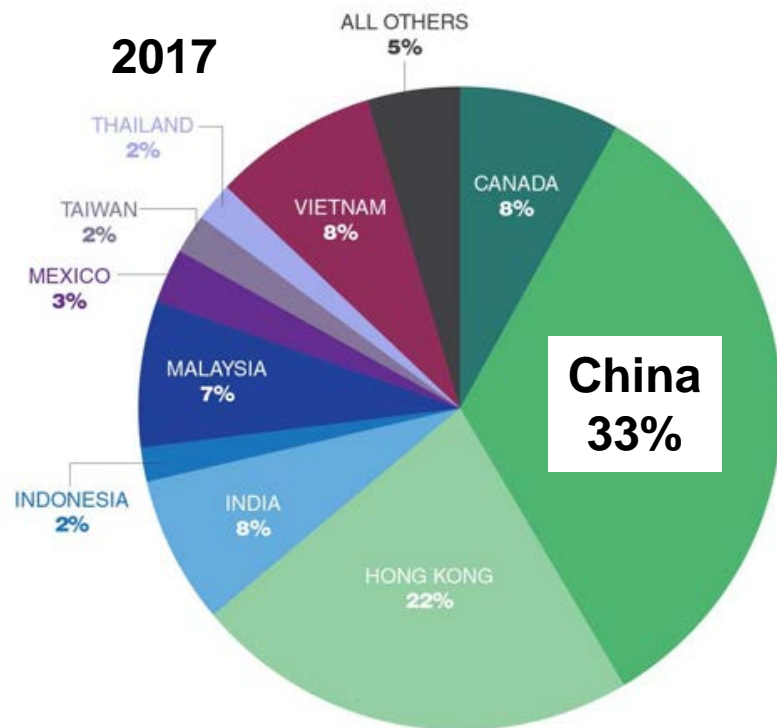




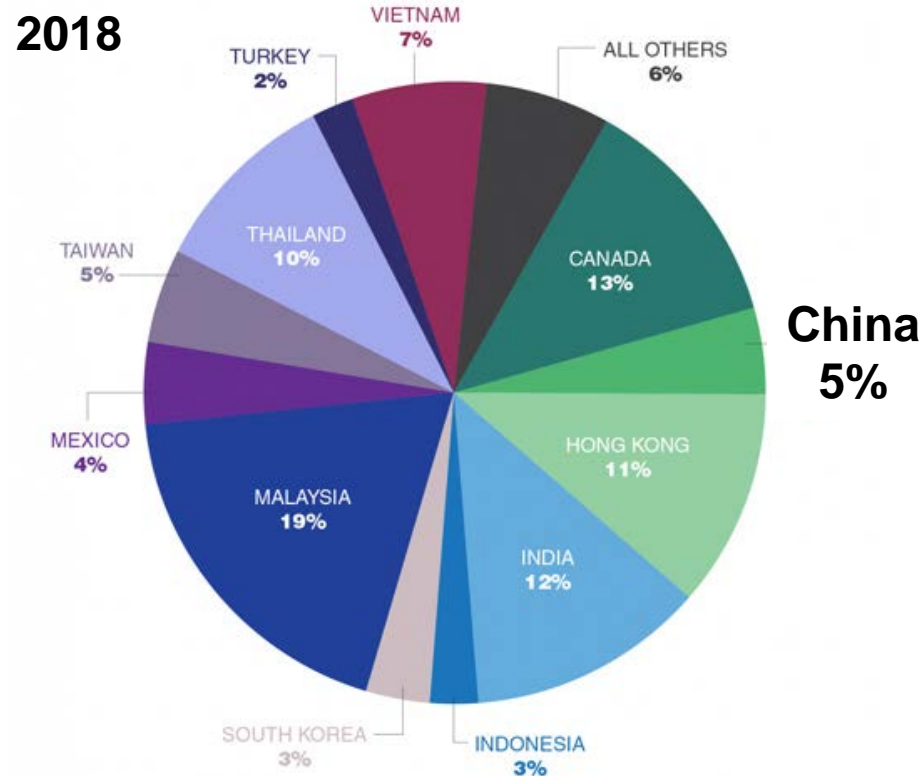
China's **National Sword** Policy: Import Restrictions in 2018

- Mixed paper and post-consumer scrap plastic was officially banned as of Jan. 1, 2018; sharp quality standards for other recyclables, such as OCC, took effect in March.
- Recovered plastic shipments to China dropped by 99.1 percent in 2018 compared with 2017, indicating the country's restrictions on importing post-consumer plastic have been highly impactful.
- Chinese companies imported 110 million pounds of scrap plastic in 2018; a fraction of the nearly 12.6 billion pounds the country brought in during 2017
- On the paper front, the country brought in 18.8 million short tons of recovered fiber in 2018, down from 28.4 million short tons the previous year.

Major Plastics Importers



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China's **National Sword** Policy:

Timeline background

- **Feb. 2017** – customs enforcement began a 1 year crack down on illegal smuggling of “foreign waste”
- **Jan. 2018** – China bans 24 materials from being imported (incl. post-consumer plastic & mixed paper)
- **March 2018**
 - 0.5% quality standard goes into effect applying to all paper, paperboard and cardboard materials
 - The Chinese government announced a special action campaign entitled “Blue Sky 2018” focused on banned materials
 - The US imposes tariffs on steel and aluminum imports



China's **National Sword** Policy:

Timeline background

- **June 2018** – Thailand temporarily bans plastic recyclables
- **July 2018**
 - China releases draft rules that propose a complete ban on recyclable imports effective 2020
 - Malaysia stops issuing import permits for plastic recyclables
 - Vietnam announces it will no longer issue licenses for recyclables
- **Aug. 2018**
 - China imposes tariffs on recyclables imports
 - Taiwan proposes import restrictions
- **Nov. 2018** – Malaysia stops issuing import licenses for recyclable plastics



Recycling programs across the country are reeling a year after China banned contaminated waste imports. Prices for materials, including metal, glass & plastic, have collapsed because domestic recycling companies don't have capacity to process all we toss in our bins.





Recycling Contamination Facts

- **Fact 1:** The average recycling contamination rate is 25%, or 1 in 4 items.
- **Fact 2:** The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that 75% of waste is recyclable, yet only close to 34% of it is recycled.
- **Fact 3:** Heavily soiled paper, wax coated paper, and shredded paper cannot be recycled curbside.
- **Fact 4:** Compostable items can contaminate your recycling. The processes of composting and recycling are very different, so you can't recycle food waste or compostable serveware.
- **Fact 5:** Despite pricey recycling campaigns and new sorting technologies, recycling levels haven't improved in the U.S. in 20 years

Facts by RUBICON



Hardcover
Books



Ropes, Chains, Cordage,
Garden Hoses



Plastic Bags



Food
Waste



Styrofoam



Shredded
Paper

25% **Contamination** Rate



The 3 most important things we can do in order to reduce the contamination rate:

- ***Know & throw*** only those items accepted for recycling
- ***Empty & rinse*** plastic, glass and metal containers before they go into the recycling bin/cart
- ***When in doubt, throw it out.***

Properly prepared recyclables are just as important as recycling the right items



The **Plastic** Problem



- A billion \$ industry
- In everything from our clothing to the fish we eat
- Mass produced since the 1950's
- Most are produced from fossil fuels
- 18B* pounds are dumped into our oceans each year
- Plastic production creates greenhouse gases (GHG)

**National Geographic*

The **Plastic Recycling** Problem



- Many, many different types of plastics
- How we've been taught to identify recyclable items by small numbers in chasing arrows
- These are found on many products these days confusing us all
- A 25% and growing contamination rate in our recycling stream





Plastic **Recycling News** Headlines

**Communities Turn to Burning
Recyclables Amid China Ban**

The Guardian

**5 Everyday Products
Contaminated With Plastic**

EcoWatch

**Washington state bill would
make manufacturers responsible
for plastic waste**

Food Dive; March 1, 2019

**Facility closure prompts Virginia
communities to suspend, alter
recycling programs**

Waste Dive – February 27, 2019

**Ohio Lawmakers Want To Ban
Local Bans/Fees On Plastic Bags**

WVXU Cincinnati Public Radio

**Hawaii, New Jersey
Propose Tough
Statewide Plastics,
Styrofoam Bans**

Waste360 April

**Supply and Demand
Drives Rising Tip Fees**

Waste360; March 19

**Aluminum Can Prices
Tank, Causing Scrap
Yard Pileups**

Waste360; March 2019

**India to end
plastic scrap imports**

Resource Recycling, Mar 6

**How recycling is
changing in all 50 states**

Waste Dive

More Cities Stop Recycling. They Can't Afford It. *The New York Times*

The **Results** are:



Because so much more material is staying in the US, there is a glut of recyclables today. This translates into higher costs and lower revenues for recycling programs.

Some cities have reduced or even stopped their recycling programs:

- ❖ **Oregon, Ohio**, suspended recycling program for two years.
- ❖ **Tacoma, Washington**, surveying recycling customers about paying more to keep recycling services or simply shutting down.
- ❖ **Deerfield Beach and Sunrise, Florida**, ended their recycling programs.

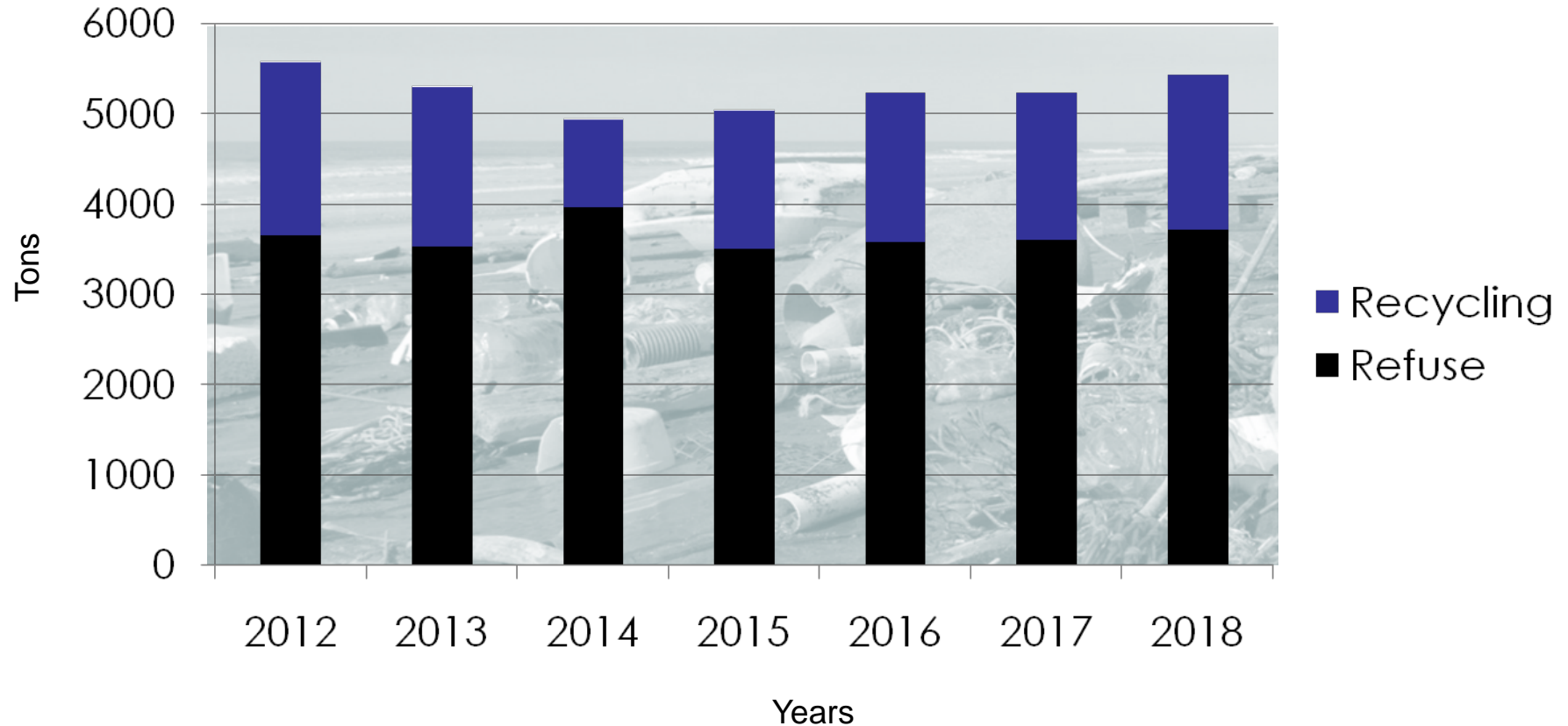
The **Results** in Oberlin are:

1. Recycling confusion
2. 'Wishful' recyclers
3. Contamination in stream
4. Dirty recyclables
5. Increased cost
 - \$27.50/ton → \$57.50/ton
 - effective April 1





Oberlin Waste Management: 2012-2018



Recycling *Simplified*

Know what to throw

ONLY place these items in the recycling container



Empty. Clean. Dry.™

Keep all recyclables
free of food and liquid



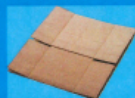
Keep it loose

Never put recyclables
in bags or containers



We'll handle it from here.®

Learn more at RecyclingSimplified.com



Flattened
Cardboard



Paper



Metal Cans



Plastic Bottles
& Jugs

Recycling *Simplified*

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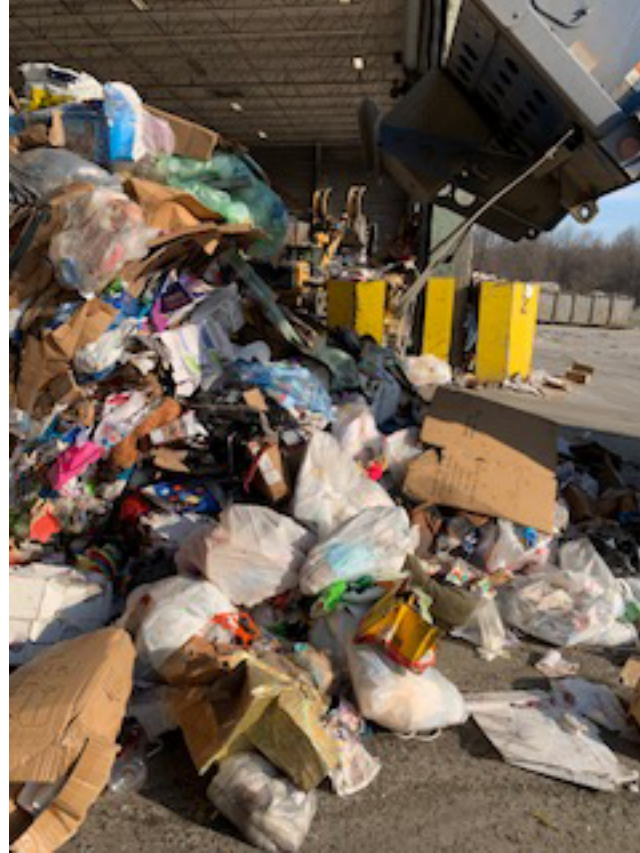
Recycling Center - *Tipping Floor*

Just 9% of plastic is recycled in the U.S.

WasteDive

3 top offenders:

- plastic bags
- clothing
- yard waste





Recycling Quick-hit Questions

- When buying a 6-pack of beer, is it better to purchase cans or bottles? **CANS**
- Purchase milk in a carton or plastic jug? **PLASTIC JUG**
- What about shredded paper – where does that go? **NOT IN CURBSIDE RECYCLING.**
 - It can be placed in a clear, plastic bag, sealed and placed in any Paper Retriever Bin or it can be composted
- Egg carton containers come in 3 flavors – paper, plastic & Styrofoam – can all 3 be recycled curbside? **ONLY PAPER & PLASTIC EGG CARTONS SHOULD BE PLACED IN CURBSIDE RECYCLING.** Reuse styrofoam egg cartons by dropping them off at OCS.
- What's the problem with putting my recyclables in a plastic bag? **PLASTIC BAGS GET CAUGHT IN THE VARIOUS SORTING EQUIPMENT AND SHUTS DOWN THE SYSTEM WHICH THEN HAS TO BE DUG-OUT BY HAND, LOOSING TIME & MONEY DURING NORMAL OPERATION. PLEASE, DO NOT PLACE PLASTIC BAGS IN YOUR CURBSIDE RECYCLING CART.**

*We've lost track
of Reduce and Reuse*

Don't be afraid to Refuse

REUSE
REDUCE
RECYCLE



AVOID/Refuse single-use products including:

straws, bags, cups and bags.

These items can be made of multiple, different materials
*(particularly ones that are hard to pull apart,
like coffee cups, juice pouch, toothpaste tubes).*

Compost yard waste & food scraps

Find Ways to Reuse or Recycle Unusual Items

- ♻️ Donate or reuse items whenever possible
- ♻️ Look for special collection events
- ♻️ Utilize the county's Collection Cnt.
- ♻️ Fix things when they break



Curbside Recycling

- Check the city's website for curbside recycling & yard waste information, pick-ups and tips, to make sure that you are recycling & composting everything possible curbside.
- **Typical items recycled curbside:**
 - Plastics
 - Glass
 - Aluminum & Metal Cans
 - Cartons
 - Paper
 - Cardboard
 - Yard waste (not in cart)





Tips for Reducing, Reusing, Recycling & Composting



- Pack a zero waste lunch.
- Purchase & use a water bottle and a reusable shopping bag.
- Take your own containers for take-out food.
- Donate empty & clean egg cartons to OCS for reuse through their food pantry.
- Plant a vegetable garden.
- Start a compost pile or purchase a backyard composter and take advantage of the city's *Recycling Rebates* program
- Utilize the local Library for books, magazines & videos.
- Don't use paper plates & plastic utensils for meals
- Offer recycling at your next party; better yet make it a zero waste party!



We Create Waste and We Can Stop It

Additional steps:

- Visit MRFs and mills, to learn how products and packaging sorts out (or doesn't) and breaks down (or doesn't).
- Choose materials that biodegrade or recycle more easily.
- Don't place compostable materials in recycling
- Don't use your recycling cart for a trash cart
- Only place those items accepted in your recycling cart





Thank you



Zero Waste Plan

City of Oberlin, Ohio
December 2013

Prepared by:
GT
environmental, inc.

