

Solid Waste & Sustainability Follow Up Questions

Are the landfills inspected? How often? If is safe for people living five miles from the landfill?

- Landfills are monitored and inspected in keeping with State of North Carolina regulatory requirements. The State performs annual inspections of all landfills and transfer stations. A good starting point to learn more about regulations pertaining to solid waste management in North Carolina, including landfills, can be found at this link: <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/waste-management/solid-waste-section>
- The following information is from the Sampson County government web page and pertains specifically to the Sampson County landfill, where the City's waste is currently disposed: http://www.sampsonnc.com/departments/health_department/environmental_health1/solid_waste_and_recycling.php

Solid Waste and Recycling - Sampson County, North Carolina

Landfill: Sampson County hosts a regional landfill that exceeds federal Subtitle D and state solid waste requirements. The landfill is owned and operated by Sampson County Disposal, Inc., a subsidiary of Waste Industries, Inc.

www.sampsonnc.com

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Sampson County hosts a regional landfill that exceeds federal Subtitle D and state solid waste requirements. The landfill is owned and operated by Sampson County Disposal, Inc., a subsidiary of Waste Industries, Inc. The landfill is located at 7434 Roseboro Highway, approximately 8 miles west of Clinton and 4 miles east of Roseboro on Highway 24.

The landfill will accept construction debris, demolition debris, commercial yard waste, business and residential waste between the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and on Saturday from 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Sampson County residents may dispose of household waste free of charge. There is a fee for all agricultural and commercial waste. For information regarding commercial rates, contact the landfill office at (910) 525-4132.

State solid waste facility permits and County host fee agreements/franchise ordinances govern the tonnage and type of waste material which can be disposed of at the Sampson County landfill. Under the existing facility permit and under applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, this waste includes, but is not limited to, household, commercial or municipal refuse, ashes, sludges, animal manure, residue from incineration, food processing wastes, dredging wastes, tires, asbestos, but expressly excluding nuclear waste or waste defined as hazardous waste under applicable federal, state, and/or local laws or regulations. The landfill is permitted to accept qualified waste from all counties of the State of North Carolina.

Landfills operated by Waste Industries convert the methane produced as a natural byproduct of waste decomposition into clean, useable energy. This energy is routed back into the power grid and is then is distributed to the surrounding community, allowing a cheap and clean alternative to many other forms of energy production. While the landfill continues to break down the elements stored within it, regular tests are performed on the areas surrounding the cells. Many steps are taken in producing a clean, reliable, and undamaging landfill, some of which include the development of wetlands by Waste Industries that provide natural habitats for much of the wildlife within the area. These wetlands are constantly monitored and carefully protected by landfill staff, ensuring a clean and healthy environment for the flora and fauna that inhabits the region surrounding their landfill.

Can you explain what you mean by contaminated materials?

- Contaminants as it pertains to recyclable materials means one of two things: 1) materials that are NOT acceptable in a recycling program, but that are placed there by residents (i.e., garden hose, ceramic dishes, automobile parts); 2) materials that ARE acceptable, but are contaminated by other materials (i.e., a half full jar of mayonnaise, a cardboard box that is completely covered in packing tape)

What are some of the most common items that people put in their recycling by mistake?

- The number one problem is plastic bags, with everything else being second. Other commonly found items include: plastic containers that are NOT included on the list of acceptable items, water hoses, clothes, diapers (new and used), clothes and shoes, Styrofoam packaging, food, plastic or metal utensils, mirrors, pots and pans and other cookware, dishes.

Why is the price of recycled goods down?

- In a word: quality. We have all heard about China severely limiting and in many cases, totally eliminating the acceptance of recyclable commodities. This was primarily due to the low quality of materials that were being shipped to China and other Asian countries. Processors (including Sonoco Recycling in Raleigh) now have fewer end-users and manufacturers willing to buy recyclable materials, combined with demands for higher quality. The result: high supply, combined with lower demand equates to lower prices for materials.

What is the plan to make recycling more sustainable as the markets continue to decline?

- Once again, in a word: quality. As communities and processors work to "clean up the stream" of recyclable materials, demand for them will increase, which will, in turn, push prices back higher. We are also seeing more manufacturers expand existing processing capacities and/or building new capacity. In the southeast, that includes plant capacity for paper products, plastics, and glass. Our processor, Sonoco Recycling, has also made investments in new equipment, and has slowed down their sorting lines, in order to improve the quality of materials they are shipping.

Would it be possible to increase recycling pick up and decrease solid waste?

While this may be feasible some day, residents still produce more trash than recycling., and, unfortunately, not all households recycle, but all households do produce trash. We are hopeful that some of the initiatives by packagers and manufacturers to make their products and packages more readily reusable or recyclable, and as collection of food waste becomes a reality, less materials will need to be collected as trash.

Any information or update about the possibility of a composting service in the city? Or restaurant composting?

- The Solid Waste department has a contract with a vendor who currently processes and composts all of the yard waste collected by the City and dropped off by residents and contractors. The SW Department is also working to develop a plan for collection of food

waste right now. We don't have a lot of details to provide yet, but will very soon, so please stay tuned.

Are there any future plans to include parts of Durham County to be serviced by the City's solid waste collection?

- While the City and County currently partner on services such as E-Waste and Shred-A-Thon events, access to recycling drop-off services at both City and County sites, and partnering on loading and hauling costs to transport recyclable materials to Sonoco Recycling in Raleigh, curbside collection service is funded through City taxpayer dollars and so is not a service that the City could provide to County residents who live outside of City limits.

How can we advocate for more resources to be dedicated to sustainability?

- Just like any other program or initiative, decisions regarding resource allocation happen with the Board of Commissioners. There are many opportunities to provide comments through the budget process and throughout the year to advocate for sustainability or other programs important to you.

Would it be feasible to be fully renewable energy-wise (no natural gas just solar, hydro, biomass)?

- At this time, it is not feasible to be fully powered by renewable resources for a number of reasons including limitations of technology, the variety of energy sources the County uses, the County's reliance on monopoly utilities like Duke Energy and Dominion, etc. Attached is a [white paper](#) I wrote a few years ago that goes in depth into the issue and potential solutions and costs and a [memo that summarizes it](#).