



NORTHEAST KINGDOM WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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Plastic Film Information Sheet – July 14, 2021

On Tuesday, July 12, 2021, the NEKWMD Board of Supervisors voted to discontinue accepting plastic bags/film for recycling. The primary reason for this decision is the lack of markets for the material.

Our primary outlet for this material had been a company in northern New Hampshire. They have not accepted material from us since December 16, 2019. While we have reached out numerous times for information, they have not given us any indication of when they might resume accepting material.

Since the end of 2019 we have contacted a number of facilities and brokers in an effort to market the material. While we always seek markets that pay for materials, we could not locate a facility that we could pay to accept the material. We were able to find a potential outlet in Ontario, Canada and shipped a load of plastic film bales on June 1, 2021. The receiving facility charged us approximately \$800 to accept the material. After reviewing our baled plastic film, the company determined that our bales were too heavily contaminated with unacceptable plastics and indicated they would not accept additional loads from us.

We currently have 2-3 tractor trailer loads of material (40-60 tons) stored at our facility in Lyndonville. We are still searching for outlets for this material, but it is highly likely we will be forced to landfill this material before the end of the year.

The recent surges in commodity prices gave us hope that we might find a market for plastic films; however, while prices for recyclables like cardboard, rigid plastics, paper, tin and aluminum have all gone up dramatically, no markets have developed for plastic films. At least not for the quality and variety of plastic films collected in the NEKWMD.

Plastic films represent less than 1.5% of materials processed by the NEKWMD annually. Plastic films are not part of the list of mandated materials identified in Vermont's Universal Recycling Law - Act 148. The State of Vermont banned the use of certain plastic films on July 1, 2020.

We appreciate attendants' attentiveness and patience as we educate residents about this new change. We advise that towns remind residents to reduce the amount of plastic films they purchase. As we conduct outreach to communities about this change, we will emphasize that residents have access to retail recycling locations for plastic films (Shaw's, Price Chopper) and can find more information about recycling plastic films at participating retail locations at recycle.trex.com.

Sincerely,
The NEKWMD Team