

Municipalities Summary



Why is the law needed?

Waste diversion rates have plateaued in Vermont between 30 to 36% over the past 10 years. A major portion of the waste stream that is disposed is composed of recyclable items, leaf and yard debris, and food scraps that could be kept out of landfills and put to better use. Landfilling these materials (especially food scraps) contributes to climate change by producing greenhouse gas emissions, and takes up limited landfill space.

What is the goal of Universal Recycling (Act 148)?

The goal is to improve the diversion rates for these valuable materials to prevent them from being landfilled. By establishing phased-in bans on certain materials (recyclables, food scraps, leaf and yard debris) and by requiring parallel collection (requiring collection of these materials at the same location where trash is collected), more of these materials can be kept from the landfill. The bans adopted in Act 148 send clear signals to markets and end users that materials will be available for processing. This dedicated source of valuable material creates an incentive to invest in the infrastructure needed to meet a growing demand for their reprocessing. Universal Recycling will also develop convenient and consistent services for Vermont residents and businesses statewide.

What will Municipalities need to do?

- Implement a variable rate pricing system (a.k.a. unit-based pricing) that charges for the collection of MSW from residential customers by **volume** or **weight** by July 1, 2015. See “Variable Rate Pricing Guide” and a sample ordinance online for more information. [Universal Recycling Law](#)
- Provide containers for listed recyclables alongside all trash containers in public spaces by July 1, 2015
- Comply with listed recyclables landfill ban by July 1, 2015
- Comply with leaf, yard and clean wood debris landfill ban by July 1, 2016
- Comply with food scraps landfill ban by July 1, 2020
- Comply with the parallel collection requirements for solid waste haulers and facilities (transfer stations, landfills, etc.) if the municipality provides these solid waste services. See “Parallel Collection Fact Sheet” online for more information (link is on next page).

What is Variable Rate or Unit-Based Pricing?

Many communities in Vermont, the United States, and abroad pay for their trash in the same way that they pay for their electricity—based on the amount they use—or in this case, the amount of trash they produce. This payment system is commonly referred to as unit-based pricing (UBP), where a residence or a person pays a certain fee for each bag (e.g. volume unit) or for each pound (e.g. weight unit) of trash they throw away.

With unit-based pricing, the incentive to generate less waste is reduced disposal costs. In addition to waste reduction, unit-based pricing systems provide a fair rate-structure to all community members, and can save municipalities money.



Who are the other affected stakeholders and what will they need to do?

Facilities that offer trash services must also provide services for managing:

- Listed recyclables¹ by July 1, 2014
- Leaf and yard debris by July 1, 2015
- Food scraps by July 1, 2017

Trash haulers that offer curbside service must also provide services for:

- Listed recyclables by July 1, 2015
- Leaf and yard debris by July 1, 2016
- Food scraps by July 1, 2017

See ANR's Parallel Collection Fact Sheet for detail on what services haulers and facilities are required to offer.

[PARALLEL COLLECTION
FACT SHEET](#)

Businesses, institutions, schools, and other large food scrap generators will need to divert the following materials from the landfill by the dates listed:

Listed Recyclables:

- All listed recyclables by July 1, 2015

Leaf & Yard Debris:

- Leaf and yard debris and clean wood waste by July 1, 2016

Food Scraps:

- Depending on the amount of food scraps generated, deadlines range from July 1, 2014 (for those producing 2 tons or more per week) to July 1, 2020. Please see [Universal Recycling Timeline](#) for details.

Residents will need to recycle, compost and divert the following materials from the landfill by dates listed:

- Listed recyclables¹ by July 1, 2015
- Leaf and yard debris and clean wood waste by July 1, 2016
- Food scraps by July 1, 2020



HAVE QUESTIONS? Call 802-828-1138.

Department of Environmental Conservation
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AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

¹ Listed recyclables under Act 148 include: aluminum and steel cans, aluminum foil and pie pans, glass bottles and jars from food and beverages, #1 and #2 (PET and HDPE) plastic, corrugated cardboard, white and mixed paper, newspaper, magazines, catalogues, paper mail, envelopes, and box board.

NOTE: Other materials are already banned (<http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/wastediv/documents/LandfillBanPoster.pdf>) from landfill disposal in Vermont; this factsheet does not include a comprehensive list of the statewide landfill ban. Additionally, many solid waste districts already require recycling of these and other materials. Contact your local solid waste entity or town manager for more information.