China’s Import Restrictions and California

Zoe Heller
Assistant Director, Policy Development
CalRecycle
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What Does Recycling Mean in CA?

Through the Eyes of the Public

Through the Eyes of the Industry and Local Government

Through the Eyes of the Law

What the Consumer Sees

What Actually Happens

The Driving Force
What Does Recycling Mean?

Magic...
Recycling in California

Roughly 1/3 of all recycled waste is exported

Roughly 2/3 of what we toss in our blue bins is exported

Estimated 76.5 million tons generated in 2016 – AB 341
Exports

• One quarter of all exports from California seaports are recyclable commodities
  • In 2016:
    • 15 million tons
    • Vessel value 4.6 billion
China’s Policies

- **February 2015**: Green Fence launched
- **February 2017**: New two-month customs crackdown on importer practices
- **November 2015**: National Sword announced
- **Mid April 2017**: Additional enforcement on polluting facilities in China
- **July 18, 2017**: China proposes 0.3 percent maximum contamination levels
- **Mid August 2017**: Initial impacts of import restrictions reach curbside programs and MRFs
- **November 2017**: China issues limited import permits for 2018
- **Late September 2017**: Reports of slowdown in exports to China
- **December 2017 / January 2018**: Significant shifts in material flow away from China
- **Late January 2017**: Continued industry focus on cleaner materials
- **February 2018**: CalRecycle public meeting on China’s policies
Impact on United States and California

• Challenging to move materials to markets
• Processing facilities are storing materials on-site, or landfilling previously recycled items
• Collection programs and facilities are doing what they can to reduce contamination
National Response

• In December, the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI), the National Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA), and the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) submitted comments to the WTO
  • More specificity in the guidelines
  • Impact on global recycling markets
  • Delay in implementation of any import regulations

• In January, China published the final standards unchanged

• US Senators also sent a letter to the Chinese ambassador echoing industry comments
State Response

- Established webpage
- Coordinating with local enforcement agencies on permit conditions for material storage
- Coordinating with jurisdictions to share examples of local actions
- Packaging reform
- SB 1383 regulation development
Local Response

• Encouraging waste prevention

• Addressing collection and contamination

• Improving processing
Market Development Opportunities

• Greenhouse Gas grant and loan programs

• Recycling Market Development Zone loan program

• Partnerships with GO-Biz and tax incentive programs
THANK YOU

http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/Markets/NationalSword/

Contact:
zoe.heller@calrecycle.ca.gov
exports@calrecycle.ca.gov