

Changes to recycling program

By Sue Stafford
Correspondent

Changes in environmental quality regulations in China are having a direct impact on recycling here in Sisters.

Until recently, China has been the largest importer of recyclables from the United States. In an attempt to improve their own environmental quality, China has changed the standards for waste materials coming into their country. For example, they have banned mixed waste-paper. These policy changes are directly impacting the handling of recyclables by High Country Disposal and all other waste companies.

The co-mingled recyclables that go into the blue curbside carts in Sisters are compressed into large bales by HCD and are trucked to the Willamette Valley to be sorted and sent on to processors and other markets.

Brad Bailey, president of HCD, told City Council that Sisters has an excellent recycling history. However, with the increased cost of sorting and a decreased demand for

the recyclables, HCD necessarily has to look at making some changes.

Program changes would mean certain materials would no longer be collected, which means more waste would be going into the landfill. Currently, the Knott landfill has only 11 years of storage space left, and that would be shortened with more garbage going into it.

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Bailey wants to provide the public with more education to increase their understanding of what can and can't be recycled. When non-recyclable materials go into the co-mingled cart, the entire cart is contaminated. What goes in has to be marketable.

All of these factors put

upward pressure on garbage rates according to Bailey. This is happening not just here in Sisters but throughout Oregon. Medford is landfilling recyclables. Marion County is educating the public and making some program changes. Portland is increasing their education and their garbage rates. In Prineville, only certain items may be disposed of.

HCD would like to be consistent countywide in their education regarding recycling. They envision having to do a "reset" on recycling, which means they will have to do enforcement they've never done before. Cameras on the hoppers on the trucks allow the driver to see what is coming out of the cart. They may also have to do spot checks of carts on the ground before emptying them. There may also be surcharges for recycling certain materials.

Whatever is required, it will be necessary for residents to be informed about what they can and can't recycle — and then be conscientious when placing materials in their carts.

Sisters Country birds

By Douglas Beall
Correspondent

While gleaning insects within conifers in the forest or around our houses, the mountain chickadee (*Poecile gambeli*) will sing its merry, slightly hoarse fee-bee or chick-adee-adee-adee song. They prefer high-altitude forests and are found in the mountains from the Yukon down to Baja Mexico and southern New Mexico.

Mountain chickadees are cavity nesters who mold their nests with fur and lay 5-9 white eggs which incubate for 12-15 days. During this time when the female leaves the nest she will cover the eggs with a fur plug which will maintain the eggs

temperature. The chicks are fed by both parents a diet of insects including beetles, aphids, caterpillars and wasp larvae. In 17-23 days the young leave the nest and will flock with the adults until the fall season. The oldest MC recorded was 10 years old.

A common bird at a black sunflower feeder, the mountain chickadee will use nest boxes around our houses and produce several broods during their season.

A group of chickadees are known as a "dissimulation" or a "banditry."

To view more images of the mountain chickadee, visit and enjoy the small things: www.abirdsingsbecauseithasasong.com/recent-journeys/.



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