

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 26 (Senator Peters)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Landfills - Disposal of Motor Vehicle Oil Filters

This bill prohibits a person from knowingly disposing of a motor vehicle oil filter in a landfill unless the person demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) that the prohibition would cause undue economic hardship.

The bill takes effect October 1, 2010.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill codifies current practice within the Maryland Environmental Service (MES).

Local Effect: Potential minimal operational impact on local jurisdictions that operate landfills.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: MDE regulates refuse disposal systems, including incinerators, transfer stations, landfill systems, and other forms of solid waste acceptance facilities. Among the forms of solid waste that are currently prohibited from disposal in a refuse disposal system are scrap tires and infectious waste.

Background: According to the Filter Manufacturers Council, used oil filters are recyclable because they are made of steel. Once the filters are processed by a recycler, they can be sent to a steel mill or foundry, combined with hot metal from iron ore, and

ultimately sold to make products such as steel cans, cars, appliances, rebar, and construction I-beams. Local governments operate most of the sanitary landfills in Maryland. In the most recent waste diversion activities report available, MDE stated that, in 2007, 17 of Maryland's counties reported recycling oil filters.

Several states, including Iowa, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Wisconsin ban or restrict the disposal of oil filters in landfills.

MES operates a landfill facility. MES advises that its current method for ensuring that prohibited wastes are not disposed of in its landfill is (1) to send notice to residents and commercial haulers; (2) alert all personnel engaged in the inspection of incoming waste about the prohibited item; and (3) designate bins to segregate the prohibited item from the landfill. Because this does not require the purchase or major modification of capital equipment, the increase in operating costs to MES may be minimal. Further, MES advises that, when the value of recycled metal increases to a certain point, any scrap oil filters it collects may generate additional revenue.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of the Environment, Maryland Environmental Service, Montgomery County, Department of Legislative Services

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