

# Common RU Annual Reporting Errors

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Thank you for completing your recycling annual report! There are a few mistakes or oversights that frequently occur when RUs complete their recycling annual reports. Care should be taken while completing the report to avoid these errors. Completing your annual report correctly the first time can save you and the DNR time and resources. Below is a list of some of the most frequent mistakes that RUs make for each section of the recycling annual report.

## Section 2

- Some RUs misunderstand the terminology for the primary collection method. Please read the definitions of single stream, dual stream and source separated closely. The primary collection method refers to the method available to the majority of your residents (> 50%).
- RUs frequently do not include haulers that are contracted directly by the residents. Contact these haulers and include their tonnages in your report tonnages to provide a more complete picture of the amount of recyclables being collected in your RU. These additional tonnages may help you reach your collection standard.
- Know your correct MRF. Haulers fluctuate between MRFs they use; and MRFs close or are bought out. Please work with the facility that provides you with your recycling tonnages to ensure that you correctly report the MRF your materials are going to.
- RUs also tend to overlook Other Processors that collect Table 1 recyclables. Contact any Other Processors (e.g., scrap yards, farmers, paper mills, etc.) that your residents use for Table 1 recyclables and include their tonnages in your report. Be sure to check the list of self-certified MRFs provided as a drop-down in the report to see if the processor is listed there. If the processor is included on the MRF list, select it there rather than in the Other Processor list.

## Section 3

- One of the most common mistakes that RUs make in Section 3B is to not check “Yes” that the RU collected all of the Table 1 recyclables. All Table 1 materials are REQUIRED to be recycled by state law except for plastic containers #3-#7 and foam polystyrene (Styrofoam™) packaging. Newspaper, magazines, cardboard and #1 & #2 plastics are not required to be recycled in the two areas (La Crosse area and Barron County) where an incinerator was grandfathered into the state’s Recycling Law (i.e., approved prior to 1995). These materials must be collected for recycling in all other areas.
- Some RUs fail to convert pounds to tons when entering their recycling weights. All weights should be entered as tons or a fraction of a ton. Divide pounds by 2,000. For example, 100 pounds should be entered as 0.05 tons.
- Another common error is simply placing the decimal point in the wrong place. This can result in a large discrepancy in the tonnages.

- RUs sometimes include business and multi-family tonnages in their residential recycling tonnage numbers. This number should be from single family and 2-4 unit residents only. If you are unsure of how to separate your tonnages out, please contact your hauler or Ariana Mankerian, Recycling Specialist for help. If you have tonnages from multi-family residences, these numbers should be entered separately on the report.

## Grants Worksheet

- If an RU contracts with a private hauler for recycling pick-up, the cost for those services should be listed on line 6 (Contractual Services) of the worksheets.
- Tire collection expenses are often, incorrectly, listed on line 19 (Ineligible Costs) of the worksheets. Tire recycling costs (from personal vehicle, not heavy equipment or farm machinery) are an eligible expense under the recycling grant.
- Likewise, a number of RUs incorrectly include clean sweep, hazardous waste and sharps costs on as eligible costs on the worksheets. These are not eligible grant expenditures. The grant expenditures should be limited to the Table 1 materials. Other banned materials such as appliances or waste oil should be listed on line 19 (Ineligible Costs) of the worksheets instead.

## Table 1 Materials

The following items are banned from landfills. They are referred to as Table 1 materials.

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|--|---|
| • Newspaper                            | • Aluminum containers                     |
| • Corrugated cardboard                 | • Steel/Bi-metal (tin) containers         |
| • Magazines                            | • Plastic containers <sup>2</sup>         |
| • Residential mixed paper <sup>1</sup> | • Foam polystyrene packaging <sup>2</sup> |
|  | • Glass containers                        |

<sup>1</sup> Residential mixed paper (junk mail) is not technically a Table 1 material, but it can be included in your tonnages for Table 1 materials due to the difficulty to separate it out from mixed paper loads.

<sup>2</sup>Plastics #3-#7 and Foam polystyrene packaging have a variance exempting them from the landfill ban until better markets can be found for them.