

It was noted in a recent publication of Waste 360 Daily Wire, a respected waste industry periodical, that February 2019 marked the second anniversary of China's National Sword campaign.

The National Sword campaign was largely unnoticed in the United States however it was mentioned in passing as something that could have an impact on plastics recycling in the United States.

Five months later, in July, China's government announced it was planning to ban imports of 24 types of recyclables. Mixed paper and mixed plastics were among the banned items. A contamination limit of 0.3 percent would be applied to imported recyclables. This was a far more serious move. Eventually the Chinese government raised the contamination limit to 0.5 percent.

The limit was and remains a significant barrier for commercially generated recyclables from the recycling industry and presented challenges to processors. Panic hit the recycling community and in some municipalities, recycling programs were abandoned and recyclables were (and still are) sent to disposal facilities. Exports of post consumer plastics to China have all but disappeared.

So what does this mean to the local recycling community and Modern's affiliate, Buffalo Recycling Enterprise?

Mixed paper and mixed plastics are the heart of any residential recycling program and Modern and Buffalo Recycling Enterprise are not immune to these changes. As a processor we too faced imposing quality standard, loss of available and reliable markets and material rejection due to contamination.

These changes have increased processing costs that will ultimately be felt by all consumers. Some community partners now pay to have their recycling processed and in some cases processing fees exceed the cost of waste disposal.

Re-education became a priority and messaging in our recycling menu now features the *"Best Items to Place in Your Recycling Cart"*. This message is intended to promote awareness and provide education to our recycling community of the impact changes in the world markets has here in Niagara County, Western New York and all across our Country. The change has sparked conversation by shaking up the traditional and once very inclusive recycling menu of the past. Our menu features those commodities where stable markets exist, removing those which don't. This has caught the eye of the consumer and the avid recycler.

As a locally owned and operated company, Modern remains a key stakeholder in the communities, neighborhoods and families we serve. Modern has a significant investment in the local recycling industry and provides jobs for hundreds of local Western New York families and contribute millions to the local economy.

We are committed to the very best service and continue to support recycling and waste diversions as our *"Dedication to the Community and Commitment to the Environment"*