



## LOCAL GOVERNMENT CASE STUDY: MACON COUNTY – PALLET RECYCLING

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Population:	33,626
Contact:	Joel Olstroff (828) 349-2252 <a href="mailto:jostroff@maconnc.org">jostroff@maconnc.org</a>

Macon County began offering pallet recycling services to the public in 1998, making program improvements three years later. Rather than using collection containers, the county designates a specific area for pallets with simple signage at two locations: the county's municipal solid waste landfill, and the Highlands Transfer Station. To provide an incentive for recycling, the tip fee for separated pallets is \$30 per ton, while the tip fee for mixed waste is \$66 per ton.

Macon County uses a contract grinder, Desoto Trail Construction, to grind the pallets and other yard waste on site. The resulting mulch product is used as alternative daily cover on the county's landfills. Whole pallets are available to the public free of charge.

A front loader and labor from other landfill operations are used to minimally manage the pallet and mulch piles. As these were capital expenses necessary for the operation of other landfill services, overall cost to implement and manage the program is minimal. Signs designating the pallet recycling area cost about \$30 each. Grinding services were negotiated at a competitive rate. Before the current negotiated rate with Desoto Trail Construction, Macon was paying about \$7 per ton for the onsite grinding service.

Of the total 3,053.8 tons of brush and pallets recycled each year, Macon County estimates that approximately 11 percent, or 335.4 tons, are pallets.