



# HOUSE BILL 8: NC Managing Environmental Waste Act of 2025.

2025-2026 General Assembly

<b>Committee:</b>	House Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	<b>Date:</b>	July 28, 2025
<b>Introduced by:</b>	Rep. Warren	<b>Prepared by:</b>	Aaron McGlothlin
<b>Analysis of:</b>	Second Edition		Staff Attorney

**OVERVIEW:** *House Bill 8 would enact several measures related to food service ware as follows:*

- *Establish that it is the policy of this State that all State agencies, community colleges, and local school administrative units shall, to the extent economically practicable, purchase and use materials with compostable or recyclable content in their food establishments.*
- *Restore certain annual reporting requirements concerning the amounts and types of materials and supplies with recycled content purchased and the amounts and types of materials collected for recycling by State agencies, community colleges, and local school administrative units.*
- *Require the North Carolina Policy Collaboratory at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to study the issue of food service ware.*
- *Require the Legislative Services Officer to evaluate and implement opportunities to reduce the use of food service ware in food establishments and beverage services operated by the General Assembly.*
- *Require the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources to implement a pilot program to eliminate the use of food service ware at five facilities operated by the Department.*
- *Clarify that recovered materials are not subject to permitting requirements for solid waste and authorize a fee for determining whether waste qualifies as recovered materials.*

## **BILL ANALYSIS:**

**Section 1.(a)** of the bill would provide that it is the policy of this State that all State departments, institutions, agencies, community colleges, and local school administrative units shall, to the extent economically practicable, purchase and use, or require the purchase and use of, materials and supplies with compostable or recyclable content in food establishments operated under the auspices of the department, institution, agency, community college, and local school administrative unit.

**Section 1.(a) and 1.(b)** would restore certain reporting requirements applicable to State agencies, community colleges, and local school administrative units concerning the amounts and types of materials and supplies with recycled content purchased annually by these entities, and the amounts and types of materials collected for recycling annually by these entities. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) would be required to report this data to the Environmental Review Commission (ERC) and the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations. These reporting requirements were repealed in 2009 and 2010.

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**Section 2** would direct the North Carolina Policy Collaboratory (Collaboratory) to study the issue of food service ware, including examination of all the following matters:

- The environmental impacts of plastics pollution.
- The State's current requirements for plastics recycling.
- Estimates of the proportionate volume of plastics recycled versus plastics disposed of in landfills in the State.
- Recycling markets and available information on the fate of plastics collected for recycling in the State, including data on plastics used as feedstock for in-State recycling, and national and international markets.
- Pending and enacted legislation in other states to regulate food service ware, including bans on specific types of food service ware.
- The impact that bans on specific types of food service ware have had on people with disabilities.
- Current private sector initiatives to reduce plastics pollution and additional financial and market tools that may be employed by private sector interests for this purpose.
- Alternatives to use of food service ware for serving or transporting food and beverages.
- New technologies for plastics recycling and waste reduction.

Section 2 would also require the Collaboratory to consult with stakeholders in conducting the study, including DEQ, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Administration, representatives of the environmental community, the North Carolina Retail Merchants Association, and the North Carolina Beverage Association. The Collaboratory would be required to report its findings and recommendations, including any legislative proposals, to the 2026 Regular Session of the 2025 General Assembly upon its convening.

**Section 3** would require:

- The Legislative Services Officer to evaluate all opportunities to reduce the use of food service ware in food establishments and beverage services operated by the General Assembly and implement such measures at the earliest date that (i) does not result in disposal, prior to use, of food service ware already procured on the date this act becomes law and (ii) does not impair contracts for purchase of such food service ware in effect on the date this act becomes law.
  - The Legislative Services Officer must issue a preliminary report on implementation of the requirements of this section, including any additional costs associated with replacing food service ware with compostable or recyclable materials, to the ERC no later than September 1, 2025, and provide a final report to the ERC no later than March 1, 2026.
- The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources to implement a pilot program to eliminate the sale or provision of food or beverages in or with food service ware. In implementing this pilot, the Department must identify five facilities operated by the Department to implement measures to eliminate food service ware at the earliest possible date that (i) does not result in disposal, prior to use, of food service ware already procured by the agency on the date this act becomes law and (ii) does not impair contracts for purchase of such food service ware in effect on the date this act becomes law.
  - The Department must issue a preliminary report on implementation of the requirements of this section, including any additional costs associated with replacing food service ware

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with compostable or recyclable materials, to the ERC no later than September 1, 2025, and provide a final report to the ERC no later than March 1, 2026.

**Section 4** of the bill, for purposes of this act, defines "food service ware" as products, other than compostable or recyclable products, used by a food service provider that are designed for one-time use for serving or transporting prepared, ready-to-consume food or beverages, including plates, cups, bowls, trays, utensils, straws, cup lids, and hinged or lidded containers.

**Section 5** would clarify that recovered materials are not subject to permitting requirements for solid waste. "Recovered material" is defined as "material that has known recycling potential, can be feasibly recycled, and has been diverted or removed from the solid waste stream for sale, use, or reuse." Under current law, recovered material is not subject to regulation as solid waste, but must be managed as a valuable commodity in a manner consistent with the desired use or end use, subject to several conditions.

DEQ would be authorized to require any person who owns or has control over such materials to obtain a beneficial use determination from the agency. The person would submit an application to DEQ, who may either authorize management of a specified type of nonhazardous solid waste at a site other than a permitted solid waste management facility or issue a beneficial use determination with appropriate conditions for use of specific types of solid waste in construction, land application, or other applications. DEQ could require submittal of a demonstration that the solid waste is being managed in a manner to protect public health or the environment, and may require periodic testing or conditions to ensure that the product or by-products of the materials are not discharged into any land or water in such a way as to enter the environment and threaten the public health and safety. Beneficial use approvals would expire after five years at most, but could be renewed.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Section 5 would become effective January 1, 2026. The remainder of the bill would be effective when it becomes law.