

MRFs report bale prices cooled in late 2021

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A survey of 12 MRFs from seven northeastern states reveals details on the value of recyclables and the cost of collecting and selling those recovered commodities. | Huguette Roe/Shutterstock

The steady, steep year-long runup in recyclables prices came to an end during the fourth quarter of 2021, according to results of a survey of MRFs.

The report, [recently released](#) by the Northeast Recycling Council (NERC) showed that the average value of a ton of recyclables was \$162.27 during the fourth quarter, down 8% from the [third quarter](#). Still, the price was up 201% year over year.

The above prices are the blended value for a ton of recyclables including the negative value of residuals, which are disposed of. Not counting the cost of residuals, the average price in the fourth quarter of 2021 was \$171.52, down 7% from the third quarter but up 184% from the [fourth quarter of 2020](#).

The quarterly NERC survey also looks at MRFs' costs to sort and sell recovered commodities. During the fourth quarter, processing costs averaged \$86 a ton. That was down 8% from the third quarter and up 8% year over year.

For the latest survey, which was the 11th NERC has conducted, 12 MRFs in seven northeastern states participated, including single-stream, dual-stream and source-separated facilities.

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The latest recycling industry news

Schupan buys MRF operator Mid America Recycling

Kalamazoo, Mich.-based Schupan and Sons is expanding its reach in the Midwest, picking up a long-time processor.

Conference panelists outline state of plastics recycling policy

Interest in minimum-recycled-content mandates and extended producer responsibility bills is at an all-time high, but the reality of passing legislation is more complicated, according to industry experts.

Curbside aluminum and plastic values jump sharply

March has brought surges in prices for several curbside recyclables, with PET containers up 24%, aluminum cans up 25%, color HDPE up 32% and polypropylene up 30%.

US fiber exports rebound after two years of declines

Scrap fiber exports to China collapsed in 2021, but the rest of the world more than made up the difference. Scrap plastics, however, continued their years-long decline in shipments.

Aggressive organics bill passes in Pacific Northwest

Washington state lawmakers have sent the governor a sprawling bill focused on diverting organics from landfills.

The Recycling Partnership to launch PET recycling coalition

The Recycling Partnership will launch a PET recycling coalition, a representative of the nonprofit group announced at last week's Plastics Recycling Conference.

In My Opinion: Don't mess with paper recycling's success

The CEO of the American Forest & Paper Association argues that paper and paperboard recycling is already a success story, but poorly designed policies, such as extended producer responsibility, threaten industry achievements.

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