

# NEWSLETTER

## Clear Out the Clutter: What to Do With Household and industrial Hazardous Waste This May



May is an ideal time for communities across the Texas Panhandle to take stock of the chemicals and materials that build up over the year. Whether they're stored in garages, barns, school maintenance closets, municipal shops, or small business work areas, hazardous materials shouldn't sit through the summer heat—especially in a region known for high winds and dry conditions. These materials show up everywhere: leftover paint and stains from facility projects, pesticides and herbicides used in ag operations, automotive fluids from fleet maintenance, pool chemicals, aerosols, corrosive cleaners, batteries, fluorescent bulbs, and other flammables or reactive products.

Clearing out these items now helps reduce fire risk, prevents leaks, and protects local soil and water as temperatures rise. Residents can check with their city or county for disposal options, while schools, businesses, and municipal departments must use licensed haulers or environmental service providers. PRPC can help connect organizations with proper disposal resources and regional guidance.

With hazardous materials cleared out and summer prep underway, May also brings several environmental observances that highlight the everyday actions helping Panhandle communities stay safe, resilient, and environmentally aware.

**QUICK HAZARDOUS WASTE GUIDE FOR SPRING CLEANOUTS**

Why it matters: wind + heat = higher fire risk; prevents leaks; protects homes, shops, and community facilities.

Pesticides & herbicides

Automotive fluids

Paints, stains & solvents

Corrosive cleaners

Pool chemicals

Aerosols & flammables

Batteries & fluorescent bulbs

## Keep Texas Recycling Market

As recycling markets continue to shift across Texas, staying informed helps our programs plan with clarity and confidence. The latest pricing from Keep Texas Recycling provides a clear snapshot of where key commodities stand and how values are changing across the region. Below is a quick overview to help PEP members track trends, anticipate impacts, and stay aligned with current market conditions.

### MARKET AT A GLANCE - MAY 2026

<b>Aluminum Cans (UBC)</b> Baled UBC increased to \$1,740/ton in May (from \$1,600 in April and \$1,700 in March). <b>HDPE Natural #2</b> Baled HDPE Natural rose to \$1,520/ton in May (up from \$1,360 in April and \$1,240 in March).	<b>HDPE Pigmented #2</b> Mixed Paper remains \$20/ton (unchanged March–May). Newspaper stays at \$10/ton baled. <b>OCC (Cardboard)</b> Baled OCC reached \$57/ton in May (up from \$52.50 in April and \$48 in March).	<b>Mixed Paper &amp; Newspaper</b> Mixed Paper remains \$20/ton (unchanged March–May). Newspaper stays at \$10/ton baled. <b>PET #1</b> PET bottles remain at \$0/ton for March–May.
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## PEP Agreements / KTR Contracts Reminder

PEP Agreements and KTR Contracts have been emailed out to all members as of May 4. These documents are now due to be signed. For questions or additional details, please contact Katrena Volden, Regional Planning Specialist at 806-372-3381 or via email [kvolden@theprpc.org](mailto:kvolden@theprpc.org).

# NEWSLETTER

## National Wildfire Awareness Month

May marks the start of peak wildfire conditions across the Texas Panhandle. Dry grasses, high winds, and wide-open landscapes mean even small sparks can spread quickly. Safe disposal of flammables, proper storage of chemicals, and clearing out old fuels around homes, barns, and shops all make a difference.

**PANHANDLE WILDFIRE RISKS**

Why it matters: protects homes, livestock, and property; reduces emergency strain. One spark can spread fast — prevention starts at home.

- High winds
- Dry Grasses
- Old fuels
- Equipment sparks



## National Clean Air Month

May is National Clean Air Month, a perfect time to highlight how everyday choices help protect the air we all share across the Texas Panhandle. Proper disposal of aerosols and chemicals, reducing open burning, and recycling materials that save energy all contribute to cleaner skies.

## Panhandle Community Spotlight: Booker ISD

Booker ISD continues to shine as strong example of community-driven recycling. For the 2025 reporting year, the district diverted an impressive range of materials—including aluminum, cardboard, mixed paper, plastics, and scrap metal—totaling hundreds of tons kept out of landfills. Their commitment is equally noteworthy, with 400 tons of yard waste and 250 tons of bulk wood waste through local efforts. For a district serving just 1,397 residents, these numbers reflect a remarkable level of participation and pride. Booker ISD shows how even small communities can make a big impact across our 26-county region.

## Community Challenge

As we celebrate Booker ISD’s success, we’re challenging communities across the Texas Panhandle to join in and elevate regional recycling and composting efforts. Whether it’s reducing contamination, recycling more consistently, or supporting local drop-off programs, every town can make a difference. Let’s work together—community by community—to keep the Panhandle clean, resilient, and leading the way in environmental stewardship.

## About the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC)

The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission supports communities across the 26 counties of the Texas Panhandle through regional programs in solid waste, recycling, public safety, economic development, and local government assistance. PRPC works closely with cities, counties, and partner organizations to strengthen services, expand resources, and promote long-term sustainability throughout the region. From coordinating recycling initiatives to supporting community planning efforts, PRPC is committed to helping Panhandle communities thrive.