

2026 -- S 2802

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- RHODE ISLAND RESOURCE RECOVERY
CORPORATION

Introduced By: Senators Valverde, Kallman, Urso, Murray, Gu, Britto, and Lauria

Date Introduced: March 04, 2026

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Sections 23-19-13.6 and 23-19-24 of the General Laws in Chapter 23-19
2 entitled "Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation" are hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **23-19-13.6. Cover materials not permitted.**

4 (a) No resource recovery system or facility made available by the corporation shall use the
5 following as material to cover compacted solid waste at a sanitary landfill:

6 (1) Construction and demolition debris, whole, shredded, or pulverized, including wood
7 (including painted, treated, and coated wood and wood products), land-clearing debris, wall
8 coverings, plaster, drywall, plumbing fixtures, non-asbestos insulation, roofing shingles, and other
9 roof coverings; ~~or~~

10 (2) Organic materials, including materials that contain carbon-to-carbon bonds and are
11 biodegradable, such as paper, wood, food waste, leaves, and yard waste. Organic materials may be
12 used only as a final landfill cover with approval of the department of environmental management;
13 or

14 (3) Artificial turf. Provided, the provisions of this subsection do not require the removal of
15 artificial turf which has been installed as material to cover compacted solid waste at a sanitary
16 landfill on or before July 1, 2026.

17 (b) Any facility violating the provisions of this section shall be fined not less than two
18 thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500), nor more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000). The fine shall

1 be paid to the city or town in which the facility is located.

2 **23-19-24. Reporting requirements.**

3 (a) The corporation shall, within ninety (90) days after the close of each fiscal year, submit
4 an annual report of its activities for the preceding year to the governor, the speaker of the house of
5 representatives, the president of the senate, the state treasurer, and the secretary of state. The report
6 shall provide: a summary of the corporation's meetings including when the commissioners, solid
7 waste facilities siting board, and citizen advisory board met, subjects addressed, and decisions or
8 recommendations rendered; a summary of the corporation's actions including a listing of transfer
9 stations, waste processing facilities, and resources recovery facilities planned, being constructed or
10 renovated, or owned and operated by the corporation as prescribed in § 23-19-9, rules and
11 regulations promulgated as prescribed in § 23-19-10, hearings held as prescribed in § 23-19-10,
12 fees charged as prescribed in § 23-19-10, property acquired or disposed of as prescribed in § 23-
13 19-10, contracts and agreements entered into as prescribed in § 23-19-10, bonds and notes issued
14 and secured as prescribed in §§ 23-19-14 and 23-19-16, surveys, studies, and investigations
15 conducted as prescribed in § 23-19-10, and administrative penalties imposed as prescribed in § 23-
16 19-28.1; a synopsis of the hearings, complaints, suspensions, or other legal matters related to the
17 authority of the corporation; a consolidated financial statement of all funds received and expended
18 by the corporation including the source of the funds, liabilities incurred or assumed, funds invested,
19 and revenues received from the sale of materials, energy, and other by products of solid waste
20 processing as prescribed in subsection 23-19-10(30); a summary of actions taken to assist in the
21 development of industrial and commercial enterprises within the state based on resource recovery,
22 recycling, and reuse as prescribed in subsection 23-19-9(5); a summary of activities related to the
23 development, amendment, and implementation of a statewide plan for the separation of solid waste
24 as prescribed in subsection 23-19-10(29); a synopsis of the status of source reduction activities
25 including efforts taken to reduce the state's waste stream and develop new uses for materials
26 recovered from solid waste as prescribed in subsections 23-19-10(42) and 23-19-11(12); a
27 summary of any training courses held pursuant to subsection 23-19-10(44); a listing of the staff
28 and/or consultants employed by the corporation as prescribed in § 23-19-10; a summary of
29 activities related to the management of the central landfill in Johnston as prescribed in § 23-19-
30 11.1; a summary of performance during the previous fiscal year including accomplishments,
31 shortcomings and remedies; a listing of findings and recommendations derived from corporation
32 activities and the findings of the citizen advisory board as prescribed in § 23-19-23.

33 (b) The report shall be posted electronically as prescribed in § 42-20-8.2.

34 (c) The corporation shall cause an audit of its books and accounts to be made at least once

1 each fiscal year.

2 (d) The corporation shall develop a system for tracking and reporting on artificial turf
3 disposal volume and weight. A summary of the information gathered by this tracking and reporting
4 for the previous fiscal year shall be included in the annual report prepared and submitted pursuant
5 to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section.

6 SECTION 2. Chapter 23-19 of the General Laws entitled "Rhode Island Resource
7 Recovery Corporation" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

8 **23-19-13.7. Pilot program established.**

9 (a) The resource recovery corporation shall initiate a landfill plant cover pilot program to
10 determine feasibility and benefits of using a grass mix with pollinators and/or plant mix as landfill
11 cover.

12 (b) As used herein the term "plant mix" means and shall include native plants and be
13 determined in consultation with subject matter experts such as the university of Rhode Island
14 cooperative extension, college of the environment and life sciences, or similar researchers or
15 scientists.

16 (c) The corporation shall provide a report on the landfill cover pilot program to the speaker
17 of the house of representatives, the president of the senate, and the public, on or before January 1,
18 2028.

19 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T
RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- RHODE ISLAND RESOURCE RECOVERY
CORPORATION

1 This act would prohibit the use of artificial turf as material to cover compacted solid waste
2 at a sanitary landfill on or after July 1, 2026. This act would also establish a pilot program to
3 determine the benefits of using a plant mix and/or grass mix with pollinators as landfill cover. This
4 act would also impose reporting requirements on the resource recover corporation on these matters
5 on or before January 1, 2028.

6 This act would take effect upon passage.

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