

RECYCLING PLAN ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade the recycling of waste and used materials has become a required and commonly accepted practice within the State of New Jersey. In the early 1990s the Municipal Land Use Law was amended to incorporate a recycling plan element as a required section within municipal master plans. The creation of this element is the basis for implementing the Mandatory Statewide Source Separation and Recycling Act of 1987, which requires the creation of a municipal recycling program and the adoption of a recycling ordinance.

This element of the master plan is intended to affirm Highlands' intent to meet and exceed the statewide goals and to expand the local recycling program.

This Element provides an overview of the current status of solid waste management and recycling within the Borough, along with waste generation and recycling rates. Lastly, a series of recommended actions and programs are presented for the Borough to pursue in order to increase the percentage of solid waste that is recycled in the community.

CURRENT STATUS OF WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Waste And Recycling Collection Program

Solid Waste

Waste is picked up twice per week from each residence, church, and all municipally owned buildings, parks and playgrounds, and facilities. All solid waste collected within Highlands is disposed of in accordance with the Monmouth County Solid Waste Management Plan.

Recyclable Materials

The Mandatory Statewide Source Separation and Recycling Act of 1987 sets goals for recycling and requires each municipality to implement a recycling program. In addition, the Act required municipalities to adopt a recycling ordinance, designate a Recycling Coordinator, and report annual recycling tonnage to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

Recycled materials are picked up bi-weekly from each, business, church, and all municipally owned buildings, parks and playgrounds, and facilities.

Designated recyclable materials for weekly pick-up include:

1. Beverage and Food Containers: Aluminum, steel, tin and bi-metal containers and aluminum foil.
2. Glass: All products made from silica or sand, soda ash and limestone, the product being transparent or translucent and being used for packaging or bottling of various material commonly know as clear (flint), green or brown (amber). Glass shall not include crystal, ceramics, cookware, light bulbs, and plate, window, laminated, wired or mirrored glass.
3. Plastics: Plastic products PET (symbol 1), HDPE (symbol 2), PVC (symbol 3), with labels attached.
4. Paper/Corrugated Cardboard: All uncontaminated newspaper, magazines, books, junk mail, chipboard, computer paper, office paper, corrugated cardboard and panels, etc.

Ferrous and Non-Ferrous Metal Products

All ferrous and non-ferrous metal/bulk appliances/white goods are picked up on the fourth Friday in January, April, July and October from each residence, business, church, and all municipally owned buildings, parks and playgrounds. Examples of bulky waste include washers, dryers, dishwashers, ovens, refrigerators, freezers, hot water tanks, hot and cold water tanks, air conditioners, gas/oil/electric heaters, gas tanks, bicycles, metal lawn equipment or other large appliances commonly referred to as white goods.

Waste Generation and Recycling Rates

The Borough produces annual Recycling Tonnage reports that categorize the recyclable materials into the following groups: aluminum containers, asphalt pavement, automobile scrap, batteries (automobile), brick, brush/tree parts, concrete, corrugated cardboard, food waste, glass containers, grass clippings, mixed office paper, nonferrous/aluminum scrap, newspaper, used motor oil, other

paper, other plastic, pallets (wood), plastic containers, stumps, tires, white goods and light iron, and wood scraps.

Figure R-1, entitled “Municipal Solid Waste and Recycling Rates Tonnage,” breaks down the amount of solid waste disposed of and the recycling which the Borough is responsible for (residential, business, parks and playgrounds, and municipal buildings). Figure R-1 illustrates the recycling rate varies from 22.5% to 44.2%.

**TABLE R-1
MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING RATES TONNAGE
HIGHLANDS BOROUGH**

YEAR	SOLID WASTE TONNAGE	RECYCLING TONNAGE	TOTAL	RECYCLING RATE
1997	Data was not collected	4,901	4,901	N/A
1998	Data was not collected	2,123	2,123	N/A
1999	Data was not collected	6,190	6,190	N/A
2000	4,957	1,815	6,772	36.6%
2001	5,503	4,374	9,877	44.2%
2002 (incomplete data)	5,439	1,583	7,022	22.5%

Source: Monmouth County Planning Board, NJ DEP Department of Environmental Protection Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste Management

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following programs are recommendations that the Borough should pursue to increase the percentage and total tonnage of materials collected.

New Jersey Department Of Environmental Protection Programs

In the mid-1990’s the Department of Environmental Protection offered a wide range of programs and grants to educate the public on the benefits of recycling and to assist municipalities in developing

more efficient recycling operations. The long-term future of these programs is dependent upon additional funding. Therefore, many or all of these programs may become inactive until future funding is received. These programs are as follows:

1. Pay As You Throw Program

The pay-as-you-throw program encourages residents to recycle waste by charging them based on the amount of trash they generate. There are a number of approaches the Borough may take to establish a pay-as-you-throw program. The most basic approach consists of limiting the number of cans that residents can put out for disposal. Any waste above the limit must be tagged with a cost assigned to that tag or sticker. A similar, yet more common approach, involves selling specialized bags, tags, or stickers at a cost equal to the cost for disposal of 25-30 pounds of trash. Collection costs may be charged through taxes or as an added cost in the sale of the bags, tags or stickers.

It has been found in other communities that once residents understand this approach is more equitable than charging everyone a flat rate in property taxes, they will readily adopt it. The challenges of establishing a pay-as-you-throw program involve designing the best program for the community, finding the most effective process of educating residents about the program, and setting up a distribution network (i.e. retail outlets) for the bags, tags, or stickers. The costs to implement the program incorporate staff time and the distribution of information materials. Traditionally, grant money of up to \$75,000 is available from the DEP. However, funding is not available at this time.

2. Recycling Tonnage Grants

In previous years, the NJDEP has provided recycling tonnage grants to municipalities and counties in New Jersey. These grants were based on the tonnage of recyclable material generated by and recovered for recycling by residential and or commercial sources within a municipality. Up to \$10 per ton are provided depending on the amount of funding available to the Recycling Grant Fund, the dollar amount received by the county or municipality in the past, and the eligible and actual amount of recycled materials within the county and municipality. These grants are dependent upon funding cycles. The Borough should contact NJDEP for annual availability:

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste
Office of Recycling and Planning
CN 414
Trenton, NJ 08625-0414

Bid Waste Services With Another Municipality

In the future, the Borough should consider bidding on waste and recycling services with adjoining municipalities to receive a more favorable price for services rendered. An EPA document entitled, *Joining Forces on Solid Waste Management*, explores this potential. In addition, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has been offering an ongoing Regional Efficiency Development Incentive (REDI) grants to study the feasibility of consolidating services and providing start-up costs for new shared or regional services among municipalities.

Encourage Recycling Through Development Regulations

The Municipal Land Use Law requires the recycling plan element to include provisions for:

“the collection, disposition and recycling of recyclable materials within any development proposal for the construction of 50 or more units of single-family residential housing or 25 or more units of multi-family residential housing and any commercial or industrial development proposal for the utilization of 1,000 square feet or more of land.”
(NJSA 40:55D-28.b;12).

It is recommended that Borough regulations remain current with this requirement to ensure that site plans include details and information on the storage and disposal of recyclable materials. The inclusion of this language would be oriented at promoting recycling throughout the Borough in a uniform manner.