



## State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
AIR QUALITY, ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY

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*Lt. Governor*

CATHERINE R. McCABE

*Acting Commissioner*

PAUL BALDAUF

*Assistant Commissioner*

May 21, 2018

Dear Mayor,

New Jersey has been a national leader in recycling for well over 30 years in large part due to the excellent job our municipal and county recycling programs do to get residents to actively participate in their curbside collection programs. Millions of tons of material are recycled annually thanks to these programs, saving landfill space, conserving New Jersey's natural resources, strengthening our economy, and creating jobs.

Despite these successes, we know that recycling programs like the one in your town are facing a significant new challenge that undermines the success of our state's recycling efforts. This challenge stems from the troubling increase in non-acceptable items that are mixed in with designated recyclable materials collected at the curb. These non-acceptable items that make their way into residential recycling buckets include everything from plastic shopping bags and garden hoses to polystyrene cups and plastic toys. Such "contamination" creates serious quality control issues and negatively impacts the marketability of the materials collected, as well as the economics of recycling. We want to make you aware of a few strategies available to help remedy this situation and hope you will consider implementing them as part of your recycling program.

**Recycling Education and Enforcement** - Municipalities around the country, including several in New Jersey, have found that enhanced recycling education and enforcement programs lead to reductions in recycling contamination rates, as well as improved participation rates. The **Boroughs of Fair Lawn** (Bergen County) and **Point Pleasant** (Ocean County) have implemented comprehensive and successful recycling education and enforcement programs that can serve as models for other municipalities. (See attached list of contact information and resources, including a weblink to a Case Study on the Fair Lawn recycling program.)

**Continual and Diversified Messaging** – Municipalities that remind residents on a continual basis about those materials that should be recycled (as well as those materials that should not be recycled) see the best results. It is highly recommended that municipalities utilize all available avenues to communicate these messages, including traditional (newspaper ads, calendars, flyers, reminders

with tax bills), and digital (municipal recycling website, Recycle Coach system, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) methods.

If you have any questions on these strategies, please reach out to Steven Rinaldi in our Bureau of Energy and Sustainability at (609)-633-0538.

Undoubtedly, the environmental and economic benefits of recycling are significant and important to our state's sustainability goals. By working together at the municipal, county and state levels, I am confident that New Jersey will lead the way in addressing this pressing issue.

Thank you for your continued support of New Jersey's recycling efforts.

Sincerely,



Paul Baldauf, Assistant Commissioner  
NJDEP, Air Quality, Energy & Sustainability

## **Recycling Education and Enforcement Contacts and Resources:**

### Municipal Recycling:

Borough of Fair Lawn – Ron Lottermann, Recycling Coordinator, 201-794-5341 or [recycling@fairlawn.org](mailto:recycling@fairlawn.org). Borough of Fair Lawn Recycling Case Study - <http://www.nj.gov/dep/aqes/Fair%20Lawn%20Case%20Study.pdf>

Borough of Point Pleasant - Joy Bragen-Edly, Recycling Coordinator, 732-892-1287 or [jedly@ptboro.com](mailto:jedly@ptboro.com), <https://ptboro.com/departments/public-works/recycling/>

### NJDEP Recycling Educational and Promotional Resources:

Promotional ads/graphics:

<http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/images/contamination.pdf>

<http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/images/bags.pdf>

Radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs):

<http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/promotools.html>

Article – “The Recycling Challenge” -

<http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/Recyclingarticle2017.pdf>

Podcast - <https://njdep.podbean.com/e/episode-31-america-recycles-day-with-steve-rinaldi/?token=7d5d391fa06fe8c59ce294831aed5506>

New Jersey WasteWise Business Network -

<http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/wastewise/brbn03.htm>

### Other:

Association of New Jersey Recyclers – [www.anjr.com](http://www.anjr.com)

Sustainable Jersey – [www.sustainablejersey.com](http://www.sustainablejersey.com)