



Preserving Resources,
Preventing Waste

The New Jersey WasteWise Bulletin

Newsletter of the New Jersey WasteWise Business Network – Winter 2025
WasteWise ... improving your bottom line and the environment
through waste reduction, recycling, and recycled product procurement.

Valuable Recyclable Materials Wasted in Disposal Facilities

Readily recyclable materials disposed in the trash are not only wasted natural resources, but also wasted economic resources. The lost market value of recyclable material that is disposed in landfills and incinerators rather than recycled is significant, even when recycling market prices are low and more so when they are high.

According to a recent report from the federal Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), the amount of cardboard, paper and paper-based packaging in U.S. landfills represents \$4 billion in lost economic value. The NREL also estimates the market value of landfilled plastic to be \$7.2 billion on average. In addition, a recent policy statement from the Aluminum Association indicates that the U.S. sends more than \$1 billion worth of aluminum beverage cans to landfills each year.

While recycling rates have risen considerably over the last four decades, only 32% of municipal solid waste (i.e., waste from homes, businesses and institutions) generated in the United States is recycled (source: USEPA). New Jersey's 37% municipal solid waste recycling rate makes it a national leader in recycling, but clearly there is still a significant amount of valuable recyclable material that continues to be sent to landfills and incinerators each year.

Visit your municipal or county recycling website or Recycle Coach for information about local recycling requirements.

Help Recycling Thrive in '25!

Sustainability in Motion Conference Back in '25

The Association of New Jersey Recyclers and the New Jersey Clean Communities Council are teaming up again to host the annual Sustainability in Motion conference in Atlantic City. The event will be held from March 5 to 7, 2025, at Caesars Atlantic City Hotel and Casino. The conference will focus on sustainability, recycling, litter abatement and materials management and will feature vendors showcasing their products and services. For additional information, visit <https://www.njsustainabilityconference.com/>.

Free E-Waste Recycling for Small Businesses

New Jersey small businesses with fewer than 50 full-time employees can recycle electronic waste free at approved manufacturers collection sites. All computers, monitors, laptops, portable computers, desktop printers, desktop fax machines and televisions are accepted for recycling at no cost at the approved collection sites. For more information, visit www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/ewaste/index.html.

New Professionals Network Launched

The Association of New Jersey Recyclers has launched a network for entry level professionals new to the recycling field. The *New Professionals Network* will host programs that provide members with the opportunity to engage with experienced recycling professionals in a supportive environment, as well develop the skills needed to succeed in this field. Visit www.anjr.com for more information.

Recycling's Key Role in Greenhouse Gas Reduction

While most people are familiar with recycling's role in conserving natural resources, many are not aware that recycling also plays an important role in reducing greenhouse gas generation. Recycling leads to reductions in greenhouse gas generation by saving energy needed to extract natural resources, by increased forest carbon sequestration (through the saving of trees), by using less energy in manufacturing and by reducing the amount of waste burned or buried. In fact, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, approximately 1.67 metric tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalents are avoided for every ton of municipal solid waste recycled.

The following are material-specific findings on recycling's impact on greenhouse gas reduction:

- Greenhouse gas emissions are reduced by 1/3 per ton for every ton of recycled glass used. (Glass Packaging Institute)
- By using ferrous scrap rather than virgin materials in the production of iron and steel, CO₂ emissions are reduced by 58%. (Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries)
- American Forest and Paper Association member companies' use of recovered fiber resulted in avoided greenhouse gas emissions of more than 19 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalents in 2018.
- For every pound of recycled PET plastic flake used (in lieu of virgin petrochemical feedstock), greenhouse gas emissions are reduced by 71%. (National Association for PET Container Resources)

Did You Know...

- Sustainable Jersey's municipal certification program now includes 83% of the state's municipalities with 91% of New Jersey's population living in these communities. www.sustainablejersey.com.
- Staples stores accept a variety of electronic devices for recycling, as well printer cartridges, batteries, school supplies and more. There is no charge for this service. For details, visit www.staples.com/stores/recycling#rec.
- While not financially or logistically feasible for all municipal recycling programs, a return to dual stream collection from single stream collection would make sense and be beneficial for some local recycling collection programs. For more information, visit www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/Dual%20Stream%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf.
- Repreve® is a 100% recycled polyester fiber, made from post-consumer plastic bottles, that is used to make a wide range of garments and other products. The company has recycled over 40 billion plastic bottles. Visit repreve.com.
- Aero Aggregates North America, in Eddystone, PA, produces lightweight foamed glass aggregate made from 100% recycled container glass. The product can be used in numerous construction applications. Learn more at <https://www.aeroaggna.com/>.
- In 2024, more than 150 colleges and universities from 39 states and Canada participated in the Campus Race to Zero Waste program. Rutgers University was the 2024 winner in the Electronic Waste Recycling category for total pounds recycled. For more details, visit <https://campusracetozero.org/>.
- Terra Cycle operates a free cigarette butt recycling program. Learn more at <https://www.terracecycle.com/en-US/brigades/cigarette-waste-recycling>.

Recycled Product Spotlight Homasote ICE DECK

Homasote ICE DECK is a structural panel made from recycled paper that can be placed directly over indoor ice for temporary conversion of an ice rink for other activities. www.Homasote.com



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