
THE ROBBINSVILLE ENVIRONMENTAL NEWSLETTER

Summer 2008 Edition

Dear Friends & Neighbors,
We hope you'll find the following helpful and informative. Please do your part to protect the beauty of our community and our planet.

-The Township of Robbinsville Environmental Commission

Recycling Guidelines for Mercer County

You may be surprised to learn how many different items can be recycled in Mercer County. Review the lists below to see if there's anything your family can start adding to your yellow and green buckets.



In the Yellow Bucket :

- Glass Food Jars & Bottles
- Aluminum & Metal Food & Beverage Containers
- Pet Food Cans
- Plastic Soda Bottles

*Only those marked with a #1 on the bottom;
no other #1's*

- Plastic Milk, Water, Laundry, Detergent, Bleach, Shampoo & Fabric Softener Bottles

*Only those marked with a #2 on the bottom;
no tubs or other #2's*

- Juice Drink Boxes
- Milk & Juice Cartons

DO NOT PUT OUT FOR RECYCLING:

- Pie Tins & Aluminum Foil
- Window Glass/ Drinking Glass
- Yogurt, Margarine, Sour Cream & Cottage Cheese Containers
- Aerosol Cans marked with #'s 3, 4, 5, 6, & 7

In the Green Bucket :

- Newspapers & Inserts
May be put in bucket or tied & placed at curb
- Magazines & Junk Mail
- Paper: Stationery, Computer & Copier
- Boxes: Cereal, Cookie, Cracker, Detergent, Shoe & Gift Boxes (Remove liners)
- Telephone Directories
- Paper Bags
- Greeting Cards & Wrapping paper (no foil paper)
- Corrugated Cardboard (Place next to bucket, 36" square max)

DO NOT PUT OUT FOR RECYCLING:

- Carbon Paper
- Waxed Paper
- Books (hard or soft cover)
- Fax Paper
- Window Envelopes
- Tissue Paper, Napkins, or Paper Towels
- Pizza, Soda, Beer Boxes
- Frozen Food Boxes
- Paper Plates
- Packing Paper
- Paper in Plastic or Coated with Plastic
- Styrofoam

For more information see: www.mcia-nj.com/recycling.html

Top 10 Reasons Why We Should Recycle

Source: Natural Resources Defense Council (www.nrdc.org)

1. **Recycling saves trees.** Half the Earth's forests are gone, and up to 95 percent of the original forest area in the U.S. has been cut down.
2. **Recycling protects wildlife habitat and biodiversity.** Using recycled materials reduces the need to chop down, extract, process, refine and transport natural resources such as timber, crude petroleum and mineral ores. As a result, destruction of forests, wetlands, rivers and other places essential to wildlife is also reduced.

“What’s the use of a fine house if you haven’t got a tolerable planet to put it on?”

- Henry David Thoreau

3. **Recycling lowers the use of toxic chemicals.** Making products from already refined waste materials reduces -- and often avoids altogether -- the need for manufacturers to use toxic chemicals, essential when using virgin materials.
4. **Recycling helps curb global warming.** Using recycled materials cuts down on the energy used in the manufacturing process, dramatically reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and other air pollutants.
5. **Recycling stems the flow of water pollution.** Making goods from recycled materials generates far less water pollution than manufacturing from virgin materials. Turning trees into paper uses more water than any other industrial process in the U.S., dumping billions of gallons of wastewater -- contaminated with pollutants such as chlorinated dioxin -- each year into rivers, lakes and streams.
6. **Recycling reduces the need for landfills.** Toxic pollution from landfills -- including cyanide, dioxins, mercury, methane, hydrochloric acid, sulfuric acid and lead -- escapes into the air and leaches into groundwater.
7. **Recycling reduces the need for incinerators.** Municipal waste incinerators spew out all kinds of air pollutants; in addition they produce contaminated ash. Keeping paper, glass, plastic and metal out of incinerators by recycling them cuts both how much incinerators pollute and how harmful the emissions are.
8. **Recycling creates jobs and promotes economic development.** A study by the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission found that recycling added about \$18.5 billion in value to the economies of 12 Southern states and Puerto Rico in 1995.
9. **Cities may profit by selling recyclables.** While landfills are *always* dumping grounds for municipal money as well as garbage, cities with high recycling rates can actually make money selling recyclables when markets are good.
10. **Buying recycled products contributes to the demand for *more* recycled products.** This will, in turn, save even *more* resources, reduce *more* pollution and protect *more* people's

health. On the other hand, as the size of the market grows, recycled products will cost *less*.

Eco-Friendly Disposal of Pharmaceuticals at Home

Leftover drugs are a prescription for trouble, but so perhaps is prescription drug disposal, says the *Harvard Heart Letter*. Cleaning out your medicine cabinet once a year is a good idea. Hanging onto unused medicine can increase the chances of taking the wrong one, and old drugs can lose their potency. But have you ever thought about where the medicine will end up? Scientists are finding everything from aspirin to Zolofit in our streams, rivers, and lakes.

The traditional advice has been to flush unused drugs down the toilet or put them in the trash. Neither is a good method, says the *Harvard Heart Letter*. Drugs can kill helpful bacteria in septic systems and pass largely untouched through sewage treatment plants. Children and animals can get into drugs tossed into the trash, and once in landfills, drugs can trickle into groundwater.

Regulations prohibit medication recycling. However, there are a few innovative drug disposal programs in which citizens can drop off medication along with household hazardous waste, mail unused drugs to their state's Drug Enforcement Agency, or donate drugs to the needy.

The *Harvard Heart Letter* offers these suggestions:

1. Ask your pharmacist if he or she can take back medications.
2. Call your city or state to ask about disposal programs like those mentioned above.
3. If you need to put your medications in the trash, keep them in their original childproof and watertight containers. Leave the label on, but scratch out your name and address to protect your privacy. Add some water to pills and put some flour in liquids. Conceal the vials by putting them in empty margarine tubs or paper bags before throwing them out.
4. Mixing prescription drugs with an undesirable substance such as used coffee grounds or used cat litter and putting them in impermeable, non-descript containers, such as empty cans or sealable bags, will further ensure the drugs are not diverted.²

Article

researched and formatted by B.G. Sohoni

²Excerpted from article from Office of National Drug Control Policy, Washington, D.C.

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