

Rich Shaw

From: Carla Banks
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To: Carla Banks
Subject: Press Release- ORANGE COUNTY RECYCLES MORE THAN 30 TONS OF OYSTER SHELLS



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ORANGE COUNTY RECYCLES MORE THAN 30 TONS OF OYSTER SHELLS

ORANGE COUNTY, NC (October 15, 2013)—The Orange County Solid Waste Management Department partners with the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries to collect and send oyster shells back to the coast for reuse in building oyster beds. This year shells filled four dump truck loads with more than 133,000 oyster shells weighing more than 66,000 pounds.

The shells will be sent back to the coast from the stockpile accumulated at the Orange County Landfill over the past year. This is an increase from the 27 tons collected in 2012. The shells are used to replenish the oyster beds in a State program that started 10 years ago.

“As long as the Solid Waste Management Department can provide storage space at the landfill for the shells and the State can provide transportation back to the coast, Orange County will continue to accept oyster shells at no cost. It helps our local business community stay in compliance with the law and the program benefits both the economy and the environment,” said Gayle Wilson director of Orange County Solid Waste.

Most of the shells collected from the landfill this year came from two Orange County restaurants, Huey’s Restaurant and Oyster Bar in Mebane and Squids Oyster Bar in Chapel Hill. But any member of the public who lives or owns a business in Orange County may also bring oyster shells or other shells, such as clams and mussels to the landfill for recycling at no charge. The shells can be dropped off during operating hours from 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. on weekdays and from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

The State tax credit of a dollar a bushel has been eliminated this year along with the formal oyster shell recycling program and most State support for the project. But it is still illegal to landfill oyster

shells and the State Division of Marine Fisheries has found short-term funds to continue to truck shells from public collection sites throughout the state back to the coast. Local support is strong.

“We are trying to help replenish the oyster population for North Carolina We will keep voluntarily doing it and the elimination of the tax credit will not stop us. We do not get a lot of oysters from North Carolina now and we hope this will help some,” said Gary Huey owner of Hueys’ Restaurant.

“Recycling these shells is just the right thing to do. We have made a commitment to sustainable practices and we will continue regardless of the loss of the tax credits. We truly appreciate that Orange County Landfill takes part and provides space for us to bring the shells,” said Greg Overbeck, co-owner and Marketing Director of the Chapel Hill Restaurant Group which includes Squids.



Orange County equipment operator Tommy Scott loads oyster shells as part of the Division of Marine Fisheries project. Photo By: Paul Spire

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Regards,

Carla Banks

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