

ORANGE COUNTY



Department of Environment,
Agriculture, Parks & Recreation

November 19, 2013

Donna Baker
Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners
200 South Cameron Street
Hillsborough, NC 27278

Dear Donna:

The Commission for the Environment (CFE) approved the enclosed resolution at its November 11 meeting, and directed me to provide it to the Board of County Commissioners in advance of the Assembly of Governments meeting on November 21.

The resolution pertains to the County's efforts to reduce the volume of food waste delivered to the local landfill and future solid waste transfer station.

The CFE also asked me to provide you a copy of the April 2013 memorandum that the CFE provided to the Board of County Commissioners last spring. That memorandum is also enclosed for the Board's consideration of solid waste and recycling issues.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rich Shaw". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Rich Shaw
Land Conservation Manager

cc: David Neal, Chair
Jan Sassaman, Vice Chair
David Stancil
Gayle Wilson

ORANGE COUNTY COMMISSION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

RESOLUTION

Diversion of Food Waste

WHEREAS, a significant percentage of the waste (generated within Orange County), which is currently deposited into the landfill is soon to be sent to a transfer station, is organic material that can be composted for valuable reuse; and

WHEREAS, the Orange County Commission for the Environment together with the Chapel Hill Sustainability Committee hosted a Solid Waste Forum including consideration of means of minimizing waste at the source, maximizing re-use of waste, and efficient disposal of remaining waste; and

WHEREAS, participants at the Solid Waste Forum recommended that Orange County prioritize expanding commercial composting programs and should implement programs for diversion of organic waste as soon as it becomes economically feasible; and

WHEREAS, Approximately 2,000 tons of organic waste are diverted from the local landfill each year by Orange County Solid Waste Management working with a local contractor to collect food waste and other compostable material from about 30 local restaurants, food-services, establishments, and grocery stores; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned program for collection of commercial food waste represents only a small percentage of the potential number of commercial establishments participating in Orange County;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Orange County Commission for the Environment urges the Orange County Board of County Commissioners to expand commercial food-waste pickup and composting services, as currently serviced by an aforementioned private contractor, and that the Board of Commissioners allocate necessary staff time in Solid Waste Management in order to develop a workable program for such reduction in volumes of food waste delivered to the local landfill and future transfer station.

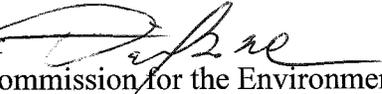
This the 11th day of November, 2013.



David Neal, Chair
Orange County Commission for the Environment

**ORANGE COUNTY
COMMISSION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

MEMORANDUM

To: Orange County Board of Commissioners
From: David Neal, Chair 
Orange County Commission for the Environment
Date: April 8, 2013
Subject: Orange County's Integrated Recycling Program

The Orange County Commission for the Environment (CFE) is writing to urge the Orange County Board of Commissioners to work together with local governments to preserve our successful, integrated recycling program.

The Orange County Solid Waste Management Department is recognized as the leader in the state for waste reduction, reaching 59% of its 61% aggressive reduction goal. The County is disposing only 0.56 tons per person compared to the base-level year of 1991-92, when the disposal rate was 1.36 tons.

The director of the State Recycling Program has recognized Orange County's investments in recycling services and waste reduction achievements. He noted that "Orange County's diversion of valuable materials from disposal is helping us to create jobs and rebuild North Carolina's economy."

According to the National Recycling Coalition, manufacturing recycled products requires, on average, 17 times less energy than manufacturing the same products from virgin materials. Conserving energy reduces the emission of greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. According to the US EPA, recycling results in a net reduction for ten major categories of air pollutants (such as nitrogen oxide, particulates, and sulfur oxides) and eight major categories of water pollutants. Recycling also conserves natural resources, such as timber, water and mineral ores. By diverting recyclable materials from the solid-waste stream, we also reduce the need for landfill space.

Our integrated recycling system takes advantage of economies of scale. The waste reduction achieved through the County's recycling program would be jeopardized by moving to a subscription-based system. Participation in recycling would likely decrease with a subscription-based system and the County would then be faced with additional solid waste to transfer out of county.

The CFE urges the County and town governments not to take precipitous actions that could threaten unraveling the successful integrated recycling and waste reduction programs that have served our residents so well. We urge the towns and County to work together to maintain the integrated recycling program.

The CFE has reviewed the Solid Waste Advisory Board (SWAB) resolution in support of preserving Orange County's integrated recycling program dated April 1, 2013. The SWAB proposal of a single solid waste tax district (pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 153A-301(a)(5)) could serve as the nucleus of a solution to preserve the integrated recycling system that has served our county so well.

The CFE celebrates the commitment made by Orange County to promoting recycling and waste reduction and encourages the Board of County Commissioners and local town governments to carefully consider how any changes to our recycling system might affect the progress made in waste reduction.

The CFE strongly encourages the Board of County Commissioners to find a way to finance the County's recycling program that will not threaten the continued success of the program. Even if the 3-R Fee is subject to legal challenge, the County and towns must work together to find an alternative to bring in the money needed to continue our county's successful program.

cc: Frank Clifton, Jr., Orange County Manager
John Roberts, Orange County Attorney
The Honorable Mark Kleinschmidt, Mayor of Chapel Hill
Roger Stancil, Chapel Hill Town Manager
The Honorable Tom Stevens, Mayor of Hillsborough
Eric Peterson, Hillsborough Town Manager
The Honorable Mark Chilton, Mayor of Carrboro
David Andrews, Carrboro Town Manager
David Stancil, Orange County DEAPR Director