

Memorandum

To: Frank Clifton, County Manager

From: Gayle Wilson, Solid Waste Management Director

Subject: Implementation of Oyster Shell Recycling Program

Date: January 25, 2010

This memorandum provides information regarding the implementation of a drop-off program to accept and recycle oyster shells at the Orange County Landfill effective February 1st 2010.

The State of North Carolina banned oyster shells from landfill disposal effective October 1st, 2009. The State implemented this disposal ban to prevent oyster shells from being discarded in landfills while there is heavy demand for oyster shells as material for building mounds or “oyster reefs” in brackish water as habitat for oysters and other marine organisms. This ban was in part a response to the declining oyster stock in North Carolina and in part to help the health of our costal brackish-water ecosystems. The North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources’ Division of Marine Fisheries is the State agency responsible for operating the State’s Oyster Shell Recycling Program. Orange County has agreed to create an oyster shell recycling location at the Orange County Landfill where oyster shells can be received and stored until such time as we have accumulated a truck load (min. 17 cubic yards) and the State will collect the shells at no cost to the County and use them to reseed oyster beds at the coast.

Beginning in February Orange County businesses and citizens may deliver oyster shells and shells from any other bi-valve shell fish (clams, scallops, mussels) to the Orange County Landfill at 1514 Eubanks Road during our normal operating hours of 7:00 am to 4:00 pm Monday through Friday and 7:30 am to 12:00 noon on Saturday. Customers wishing to recycle oyster shells must cross the landfill scale. There is no charge to deliver shells to the recycling program, and per NC General Statute 105-130.48 a taxpayer who recycles oyster shells is eligible to receive a state tax credit in the value of \$1.00 per bushel of oyster shells recycled. Citizens interested in receiving a receipt for the oyster shells delivered to the County’s recycling collection point must indicate this at the landfill scale.

There has been demand for this service from the few large generators of oyster shells in Orange County including Tom Robinson Seafood and the Chapel Hill Restaurant Group. In addition to these large generators, smaller generators including Orange County households will have access to oyster shell recycling by delivering the shells to the Orange County Landfill’s oyster shell collection point. There is no cost to Orange County to implement this drop-off recycling program for oyster shells. The program will be jointly supervised by Landfill and Recycling staff, and the State’s Division of Marine Fisheries will provide collection and transportation of the shells to the coast. Appropriate advertising, public outreach and other program promotion will be provided.

Please let me know if you require further information regarding this matter.