

Waste Matters

Summer 2022

www.orangecountync.gov/recycling

Services available to Orange County residents

Orange County Recycling Stars Program

Seeing star stickers on recycling carts in your area? Here's what they mean:

The Orange County Solid Waste Department is launching a new **Recycling Stars Program**. The program's goal is to improve the overall quality and quantity of recyclables collected from households around the County. Residents who recycle properly will be rewarded with star stickers and raffle entries. Residents needing additional information on how to recycle properly will receive "oops" tags, personalized contamination letters, and other educational materials. Any recycling cart with contamination will be marked with an "oops" tag and will not be collected during that collection period.

Interested in being an Orange County recycling star? Make sure you recycle right! See page 4 for "Recycle Right" information. **If your household receives two star stickers in a row, you will be entered into a raffle for a chance to win a \$50 gift certificate to a local farmer's market, a \$50 Visa gift card, or an Earth Machine Composter!** In addition, yard signs will be offered to households that received at least two orange star stickers (while supplies last).

The Stars program will help create awareness of the need to recycle right and ultimately reduce the contamination rate in the County's single-family curbside recycling program. Based on the County's 2019 recycling composition study, about 14% of recycling in residential curbside carts consisted of contamination.

By enhancing the cart-tagging program and providing consistent educational materials coupled with direct feedback to residents, the Solid Waste Department aims to reduce the number of contaminants in the recycling program and improve the overall quality and quantity of recyclables collected.



New "Recycle Right" Cart Stickers: To allow solid waste staff to update the cart stickers which provides recycling information, please place your cart on the curb no later than 7am the day of collection and leave it out until at least 3pm. Please let your neighbors know of this request as well to ensure as many carts as possible receive new stickers! ♻️

Director's Corner

Solid Waste Master Plan – Zero Waste Goal

The Orange County Board of County Commissioners recently authorized the development of a Solid Waste Master Plan. The overarching goal for the solid waste master plan is to develop a comprehensive strategy that by 2045 will lead to "Zero Waste."

The plan development will use an equitable and comprehensive public engagement process that includes input from the general public, with particular efforts being made to include groups that have been historically marginalized.

The plan aims to identify a sustainable business model for managing waste that considers the financial, social, and environmental impacts on the community while setting forth the future programs, initiatives, facilities, and infrastructure needed to achieve the "Zero Waste" goal.

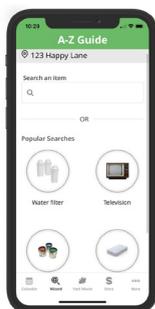
In the coming months, there will be multiple opportunities and methods for residents to provide input on the plan. There will be a series of public meetings/listening sessions as well as surveys for gathering resident's ideas and input. Announcements of those opportunities will be on our website, in the Waste & Recycling e-news, on the Department's social media sites, and in various advertisements (see back page for media information).

Please watch for these opportunities, give your input, and help us to develop a comprehensive plan for moving Orange County toward Zero Waste. ♻️



New Recycling App

"OCNC Recycles" is a new app to assist residents with recycling. The collection calendar and A-Z Waste & Recycle Guide will be available on both the app and the Solid Waste website. Through the collection calendar, residents will be able to enter their address, access their collection schedule, and set reminders for their collection days. Notification preferences can be selected through the app or the website allowing for reminders to be sent via email, text, or phone call. The new A-Z Waste & Recycle Guide will have a built-in search tool to help residents quickly find proper recycling and disposal guidelines.



Tens of thousands of postcards are sent out each year to residents. With the collection calendar and recycle guide on the app, postcards will no longer be necessary, helping the County to significantly reduce its paper usage and save money. Residents will still have the option to print their collection calendar and can also request to have it printed and mailed to them. The app will be more effective at informing residents of urgent schedule changes due to inclement weather or other unforeseen events.

The "OCNC Recycles" app will be available to download on the App Store and Google Play Store for free in the coming months. For updates on the availability of the app, check the department's monthly e-newsletter, website, and social media platforms. ♻️

KNOW YOUR NO'S
Don't tangle or contaminate. Recycle right for our state!

NO TANGLERS
Hoses, cords, holiday lights, plastic bags, etc.
tangle up the recycling equipment.

For the current Orange County Solid Waste
Holiday Collection Schedule go to
orangecountync.gov/HolidaySchedule

Waste Matters is a publication of the Orange County Solid Waste Management Department. Its purpose is to provide information to citizens and businesses of Orange County on solid waste management issues. Orange County Solid Waste Management does not endorse the businesses or products mentioned in this newsletter.

Where Does My Recycling Go?

With growing concerns and awareness of waste generation, fluctuating recycling markets, and talk of recycling being a “hoax”, residents have reached out to ask where their recycling is sent after they put materials in their blue cart. Orange County sends single-stream recycling to a materials recovery facility (MRF) in Morrisville, NC. When materials are properly prepared, residents and businesses in Orange County can rest assured that those materials are being recycled into new products!



The collected materials are not landfilled, shipped to unverified overseas or domestic markets, incinerated, or otherwise improperly discarded. Most of the materials are used here in the southeastern US to create new products and, in doing so, reduce landfill use, create jobs, and save natural resources.

For more info, please visit Southeast Recycling Development Council (SERDC.org) or YourBottleMeansJobs.com

Plastic

Plastic recycling remains complicated. The best thing to do is reduce overall plastic usage. Two of the largest, most innovative plastics processors are in Reidsville, NC. The first, Unifi, is a processor of #1 PETE plastics and creates fibers with recycled plastic bottles to make products such as jeans, outerwear, car seats, and curtains. The second, Envision, processes #2 HDPE plastics. They sort the plastics by color and sell the plastic pellets to companies that make flexible plastic packaging for food and beverages, as well as plastic bottles and containers.

Steel Cans

Steel cans are sold to smelters at mini mills, like Nucor operating in NC. Aluminum cans are sold to smelters as well –

often in nearby states like Tennessee. Smelters make sheet aluminum that is sold to can makers or ingots (blocks of metal) that are sold to other aluminum product producers.

Cardboard

Cardboard goes to a variety of different mills, all located in the southeast.

Glass

The County has a “Glass On The Side” (GOTS) program to separate glass for more efficient recycling. Separate glass recycling provides savings and efficiency gains resulting in higher quantities of glass recovery. Separated glass is sent to Strategic Materials, a glass recycling facility in Wilson, NC. Although separate glass recycling is available, residents can still recycle glass in their blue recycling cart that will be processed at the Materials Recovery Facility. ♻️

Dumpster Dive: What do we throw away?

The County’s last waste composition study from 2017 gathered 101 samples of waste from residential, commercial, and apartment waste loads from all three Towns, rural Orange County, private haulers, and UNC. The Solid Waste Department is planning another waste composition study beginning in the Fall of 2022. This study will track progress in recycling and waste reduction and provide insight into which areas offer opportunities for improvement.

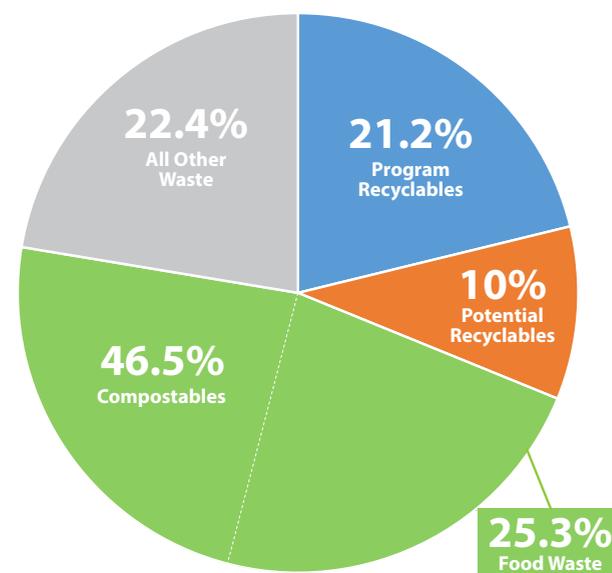
The pie chart shown summarizes the key findings from the 2017 County-wide study. Over 20% of the materials being thrown away at that time could have been recycled curbside, at Waste & Recycling Centers or drop-off sites. This included cardboard, paper, metal cans, bottles, and recyclable plastic containers. Another 10% of waste could have been recycled through specialty recycling programs such as clothing, scrap metal, plastic bags/film, and hazardous

materials. The largest category of waste is compostables – 46.5% of what was thrown away could have been composted. Food waste accounted for slightly over 25% of the compostable material thrown away. Residents can drop off their food scraps at the various drop-off sites in the County (see page 7 for locations)

Only 22% of waste generated in Orange County cannot be diverted with current market conditions and must be landfilled. This means that 78% of what is being thrown away can be diverted from the landfill instead!

Take Action: Think before you throw, familiarize yourself with the County’s recycling guidelines, and utilize the Waste & Recycling Centers to recycle items not accepted in your blue cart. ♻️

Orange County Waste Composition (2017)



Inside the Cart: What do we recycle?

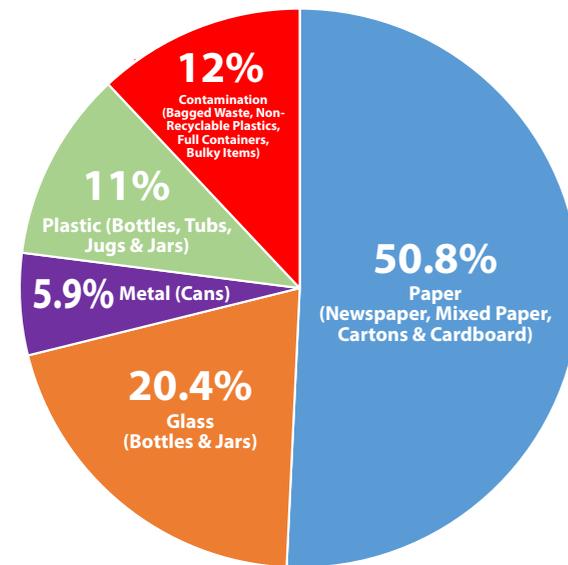
A recycling composition study took place in April 2019 and assessed the composition of materials deposited in recycling containers at residential, commercial, and apartment collection programs from all three Towns, rural Orange County, private haulers and UNC.

The pie chart highlights the key findings from the study. About 50% of the County-wide recyclables were recyclable paper. Recyclable containers accounted for nearly 40% of the recyclables. Slightly over half of recycled containers were glass. Plastic bottles and metal cans were the other major type of recyclable containers in the stream. Roughly 12% of materials placed in recycling were considered contaminants, with bulky items and bagged waste being the most significant contaminants.

While the County strives to recycle more, it’s important to avoid “wishcycling”. Wishcycling is when someone puts something in the recycling bin and hopes that it gets recycled. This often stems from people being unsure of their local recycling guidelines or seeing a recycling symbol on a product and assuming it can be recycled. Contamination is costly for both recycling facilities and local governments. Items like plastic bags, clothes, and hoses are a particularly costly type of contamination; these “tangles” wrap around machinery, damaging the equipment and causing delays at the recycling facility.

Review the Recycle Right flyer on page 4 and, for a more comprehensive list, visit the A-Z Recycle Guide online at orangecountync.gov/Recycling. ♻️

Orange County Recycling Composition (2019)



Apartment Bag Recycling Program

The Orange County Solid Waste Department is working with apartment managers to improve recycling quality and quantity at apartment complexes. Reusable, washable tote bags are offered to complexes at no cost so all residents can have a convenient, lightweight receptacle to transport their recyclables to their complexes’ recycling area.



According to the County’s last waste composition study, over 25% of what is put in the trash at

apartments can be recycled in the blue carts and 11% of what is put in recycling carts does not belong there. This tote bag helps address both problems. The messaging on the bag serves as a guide to what can be recycled in Orange County while providing a convenient receptacle that replaces either plastic bags or a bulky bin that may be in use for collecting recyclables inside the home.

To date, the program has been implemented at 30 participating apartment complexes with over 3,600 total units. The bag program has proven to be beneficial to the majority of participating complexes. 21 complexes saw an overall reduction of contamination in their recycling carts and 18

complexes saw an increase in the volume of recyclables.

An evaluation of every recycling cart at each complex was conducted and documented for contamination and volume. Each cart was graded based on the number of contaminants recorded. A comparison of grades and volumes before and after bag distribution revealed improvements.

All multi-unit complexes in Orange County are eligible for this program. If you are a complex manager interested in getting this program started at your complex, call (919)968-2788 or email recycling@orangecountync.gov for more information. ♻️

Glass On The Side

The Glass On The Side (GOTS) program collects glass bottles and jars separately from other single-stream recycling. The County started this program because of savings and efficiency gains from recycling glass bottles and jars separately. Separately collected glass yields close to 100% recovery, whereas commingled (mixed with other recyclables) glass only recovers about 60% of glass. Based on the 2019 Recycling Composition study, 2,600 tons of glass can be recovered annually. The majority of the glass in the County's recycling stream comes from commercial locations such as restaurants and bars, followed by Waste & Recycling centers and 24-hr recycling drop-off sites. Almost 50% of the commercial recycling stream is comprised of glass, leading the County to focus the initial program efforts on restaurants and bars.



In September 2019, the Solid Waste Department launched the GOTS program focusing on restaurants and bars in downtown Chapel Hill and Carrboro. There are currently 41 glass sites serving over 100 businesses.

When COVID-19 hit in the spring of 2020, restaurants and bars closed and the program was paused. The program resumed in August 2021 and expanded to the remaining eligible sites in downtown Chapel Hill and Carrboro. The Solid Waste Department would like to give a special shout-out to the various UNC Eco Studio interns, Joey Carter, Taylor Cooleen, Caroline Hausler, and

Madhavi Trikha, who helped expand the GOTS program over the last few years.

In November 2019 for America Recycles Day, two glass sites were added at the Waste & Recycling Centers. Thanks to help from the Glass Recycling Coalition, the Solid Waste Department was able to repurpose old roll-offs and expand the program to the remaining three Waste & Recycling Centers and 24-hr recycling drop-off sites. Separate glass collection is now available at all five Waste & Recycling centers and all drop-off sites, making it convenient for residents to recycle their glass separately.

In addition, thanks to financial assistance from the NC Department of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service (DEACS), OC Solid Waste also collaborates with Alamance and Durham counties which separately collect and recycle glass at their recycling sites. These neighboring counties bring their separately collected glass to Orange County, where it is combined with Orange County's collection and hauled to Strategic Materials in Wilson, NC, a glass recycling company.

From the start of the glass program until the end of 2021, the County collected 830 tons (1.66 million pounds) of glass! In lieu of paying for processing at the recycling facility, the County is compensated for delivering clean, separated glass. At the processor, the clean, sorted glass is converted into feedstock for new bottles, fiberglass insulation, sandblasting media, and reflective paint beads, all largely made here in North Carolina!

Orange County does not recommend making special trips to the recycling sites just to recycle glass separately. However, if you are already heading to the sites or nearby, please bring your separated glass bottles and jars! ♻️

Fork it Over

Ditch the single-use plastic utensils at your event and borrow reusable stainless steel utensils instead! The Solid Waste Department started the "Fork it Over" program in 2015 to promote local reuse and waste reduction. The program, on hold over the last two years due to COVID, restarted in April 2022.

Anyone in Orange County can borrow up to 200 sets of utensils at no cost. The sets include mix and match forks, spoons, and knives. All borrowers must pledge to wash, sort, and return all items after use. The utensils have been used for a variety of events, including weddings, parties, and conferences, and are a great way to reduce waste and an event's carbon footprint while saving money!

To make a reservation, call (919) 968-2788 or email recycling@orangecountync.gov. If you have any stainless steel utensils that you would like to donate, please contact the Solid Waste office. ♻️



Salvage Sheds

Reuse is an essential component of overall waste reduction. The Salvage Sheds serve as mini thrift stores for community members to take what they need and donate items that no longer serve them. The sheds are great examples of local reuse systems and build a sense of community around waste reduction.

Orange County residents can visit a salvage shed once per day for ten minutes to donate or collect items. Residents can drop off small appliances, kitchenware, books, electronics, non-upholstered furniture, and small sports equipment (no large items like Treadmills and no helmets) and take any items in the sheds. The items dropped off must be clean and in working condition. Clothing and shoes should be donated in the bins next to the Salvage Shed (at Eubanks Rd. and Walnut Grove Church Rd. only). Clothing and shoe donations must be bagged, clean and odor-free. The clothing and shoe donations support local non-profits. Another option is to donate directly to local thrift stores.

The Salvage Sheds require daily upkeep by solid waste staff. Please help keep them clean and free of trash so the County can continue to offer this space. The sheds are located at all waste and recycling centers (except Bradshaw Quarry Rd.). For hours of operation, see page 5. ♻️



Environmental Enforcement

Don't Dump and Run!

Dumping your trash where you're not supposed to can have several serious consequences. First of all, illegal dumping is a crime that may result in charges. Illegal dumping, depending upon circumstances, can be a misdemeanor or a felony, and fines associated with these charges can be significant.



Illegal dumping can also provide a breeding place for insects, rodents, and other pests. Tires and other hollowed objects can hold large quantities of stagnant water, providing a breeding ground for mosquitos. This water allows mosquitos, which carry dangerous diseases, to breed 100 times faster than normal.

Illegal dumps can contaminate surface and groundwater, disrupt wildlife habitats, and negatively impact human health.

When bags of trash and old appliances are found on the side of the road, some residents' sense of pride in their community is diminished. Illegal dumping burdens residential areas with unsightly litter and can lead to lower property values.

See an illegal dumper? Report it!

Contact the Orange County Solid Waste Department with any information you have, such as specific location, time of day, license plate number and type of vehicle (color, make and model). You can also contact local law enforcement officials to report the activity.

Don't Burn Garbage!

North Carolina prohibits burning household garbage because it is dangerous to people's health and the environment. Burning garbage releases toxic chemicals that can impact nearby individuals' respiratory systems, leading to harmful long-term health impacts.

As an example, when burning plastics, such as Styrofoam cups, toys, utensils, deli containers, flooring, siding materials, and cosmetic products, harmful chemicals are released which can irritate and burn lungs, damage eyes and mucous membranes, cause cancer, have reproductive effects, and lead to a variety of respiratory issues. Even if immediate effects are not experienced, the longer the exposure to the toxins, the higher the chances of serious health issues.

Aside from the health impacts burning trash can have, it also affects the environment. Some chemicals from the fire can remain in the environment for a long time and remain on the property in the soil, garden beds, and dust inside the home. Burning trash produces various compounds that are toxic to the environment and contribute to acid rain, smog, poor air quality, and climate change.

To avoid burning trash, contact your Town or private waste hauler to set up a trash collection service for your home or take your trash to one of the 5 Waste and Recycling Centers located throughout the County. ♻️



High Rock Renovation

The renovations at High Rock Rd Waste & Recycling Center began in March 2022 and are anticipated to be completed in August 2022. The improved High Rock site will have additional disposal and recycling services including food waste, used cooking oil, and textiles.

The Solid Waste team appreciates patience and cooperation from residents while the site is improved. For more information on what materials you can bring to the High Rock site, see page 6. ♻️

RECYCLE RIGHT

PLASTIC Bottles, tubs, jugs, jars



Empty & rinse. No pumps, no plastics that contained hazardous waste. Lids and caps OK.

METAL Cans



Empty & rinse

GLASS Bottles & jars



Empty & rinse. Lids and caps OK.

PAPER Paper, cartons & cardboard



Clean & dry. No tissues or towels.

KEEP ITEMS CLEAN & DRY & MIXED LOOSELY!



Carts out by 7am

Use your blue cart for recycling only. Items outside the cart will not be collected.

CARDBOARD



Empty and flatten cardboard. Make sure to remove all Styrofoam and plastic wrap from boxes before recycling.

Urban/Rural Curbside Recycling



Recycle cardboard loose in cart.
Clean, dry cardboard must fit loosely in cart.

Multi-Unit Housing, Commercial, Waste & Recycling Centers & 24-Hr Drop-off Sites

Recycle cardboard separately at apartments, businesses and recycling sites.
Empty, flatten and fold clean, dry cardboard.
Place inside Cardboard Recycling Dumpster.

For more information see your facility manager.



DON'T BAG 
Recyclables



NO PLASTIC BAGS IN RECYCLING

Visit our website for more information on hard-to-recycle items such as smoke detectors, fluorescent lights or clothes hangers (the **A-Z Waste & Recycling Guide**) and sign up to receive the **Orange County Solid Waste E-News**.

www.orangecountync.gov/recycling

Waste & Recycling Centers and 24-Hr Drop-Off Sites

Orange County Residents only.

WASTE AND RECYCLING CENTERS	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
A Walnut Grove Church Rd. 3605 Walnut Grove Church Rd., Hillsborough	7am-6pm	7am-6pm	CLOSED	7am-6pm	7am-6pm	7am-5pm	1pm-6pm
B High Rock Rd. 7001 High Rock Rd, Efland	CLOSED	7am-6pm	CLOSED	CLOSED	7am-6pm	7am-5pm	1pm-6pm
C Bradshaw Quarry Rd. 6705 Bradshaw Quarry Rd, Mebane	CLOSED	7am-6pm	CLOSED	CLOSED	7am-6pm	7am-5pm	1pm-6pm
D Ferguson Rd. 1616 Ferguson Road, Chapel Hill	CLOSED	7am-6pm	CLOSED	CLOSED	7am-6pm	7am-5pm	1pm-6pm
E Eubanks Rd. 1518 Eubanks Road, Chapel Hill	7am-6pm	7am-6pm	CLOSED	7am-6pm	7am-6pm	7am-5pm	1pm-6pm



24-HR RECYCLING DROP-OFF SITES

- 1 Hampton Pointe**
625 Hampton Pointe Blvd., Hillsborough
Hwy 86, behind Home Depot
- 2 Cedar Falls Park**
401 Weaver Dairy Rd., Chapel Hill
1 mile east of MLK Blvd.
- 3 Meadowmont**
116 W Barbee Chapel Rd., Chapel Hill
Behind Harris Teeter

**Open 24 Hours
7 Days A Week.**

**Single-stream recycling,
cardboard and separate
glass recycling.**

(HHW) Household Hazardous Waste

ACCEPTED ITEMS AT WASTE & RECYCLING CENTERS

ITEMS		RULES
Mixed Recyclables (single-stream recycling)		Refer to the "Recycle Right" guide on page 4.
Household Trash and Bulky Items, Furniture		Limit one load per household per day or weekend. Load may not exceed 120 cubic feet.
Rigid Plastics		NO metal, dirt, or wood.
Yard Waste		Limit one load per day or weekend period. NOT accepted at Bradshaw Quarry Center. Load may not exceed 120 cubic feet.
Clean, unpainted, untreated wood and pallets		Limit one load per day or weekend period. Load may not exceed 120 cubic feet.
Large Appliances		Limit two per day or weekend period. Refrigerators and freezers must be emptied.
Scrap Metal		Limit one load per day or weekend period. Load may not exceed 120 cubic feet.
Tires		Limit five tires per month.
Electronics		Limit five TVs or Computer Monitors per visit.
Motor Oil, Oil Filters, Antifreeze. All Batteries.		Look for the labeled containers.
Food Waste		ONLY accepted at Walnut Grove Church Rd., Eubanks Rd. and High Rock Rd. facilities.*
Clothing and Shoes		ONLY accepted at Walnut Grove Church Rd., Eubanks Rd. and High Rock Rd. facilities.*
Plastic Bag and Film packaging		ONLY accepted at Walnut Grove Church Rd. and Eubanks Rd. facilities.
Used Cooking Oil		ONLY accepted at Walnut Grove Church Rd., Eubanks Rd. and High Rock Rd. facilities.*
Mattresses		ONLY accepted at Walnut Grove Church Rd. and Eubanks Rd. facilities. Limit 4.

*Services available upon opening of renovated High Rock site

Salvage Sheds

Salvage Sheds accept clean, reusable household items in good condition. **DO NOT LEAVE** clothing, carpet, or trash items.

(Salvage Sheds are at all centers except Bradshaw Quarry Rd.)



HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DROP-OFF

Bring paint, non-empty aerosol cans, automotive fluids, pesticides, cleaning chemicals, fluorescent lights, and more.

Limit 20 items per trip. No more than 10 paint containers per day, cannot exceed a total of 10 gallons of paint.

REMEMBER: Small amounts of latex paint can be safely dried out and disposed of at home. Paint can be air-dried or add an absorbent like kitty litter or sand. Dispose of the can with the lid off.



Residential Waste Only

CONSTRUCTION & DEMOLITION WASTE

Limited amounts of residential construction and demolition (C&D) waste may be brought in by Orange County Residents from their primary residence to a Waste and Recycling Center (other than Bradshaw Quarry which will NOT accept construction and demolition waste).

Orange County residents may bring up to 60 cubic feet of residential construction and demolition (C&D) waste per household per day or weekend period from their primary residence to either the Ferguson Rd, High Rock, Walnut Grove Church Rd or Eubanks Waste and Recycling Centers. C&D is not accepted at the Bradshaw Quarry Location.

- Loads exceeding 60 cubic feet of C&D waste will not be accepted.
- Unloading part of a load larger than 60 cubic feet of C&D waste will not be allowed. If the load exceeds 60 cubic feet of C&D, no material may be unloaded.
- Proof of residency is required prior to unloading of material.
- Separate dumpsters will be provided for C&D only.
- Hired contractors may not use the Center. No commercial use.

Allowable construction and demolition waste for this purpose is limited to:

- Kitchen cabinets
- Insulation
- Carpet/ flooring
- Wood: including lumber, plywood/ pressed board or any wood that is painted, pressure treated or stained
- Doors, windows, siding
- Deconstructed Playground set made of lumber
- Decks, stairs

*NOTE: any scrap metal, corrugated cardboard or, unpainted, untreated, solid sawn lumber associated with construction must be recycled in the appropriate bin at the WRCs



Composting in the County

Composting, nature's way of recycling, plays a vital role in keeping valuable materials out of the landfill. Composting has been a part of Orange County Solid Waste services since 1990.

From late 2016 to 2021, the County has diverted 5,264 tons (10,528,000 pounds) of food waste from the landfill! This effort has prevented the release of over 4,953 tons of CO₂ emissions into the atmosphere, equivalent to taking 12,833 cars off the road.

Currently, the County has over 50 restaurants and businesses on the food waste collection program. Thank you to all participating restaurants and businesses for prioritizing sustainable practices at your establishment.

An additional thanks to the Carrboro, Chapel Hill, and Eno River Farmer's Markets for being fantastic partners, advancing waste reduction practices, and providing a convenient and accessible drop-off location for residents.



Food Waste Drop-Off Locations:

- Eubanks Rd. Waste & Recycling Center (1518 Eubanks Rd., Chapel Hill)
- Walnut Grove Church Rd. Waste & Recycling Center (3605 Walnut Grove Church Rd., Hillsborough)
- Carrboro Farmers Market (301 W Main St., Carrboro)
- Chapel Hill Farmers Market (201 S Estes Dr., Chapel Hill)
- Eno River Farmers Market (144 E Margaret Ln., Hillsborough)



Materials accepted at these drop-off sites include all food waste (fruit/vegetable scraps, eggs and dairy products, bread, pasta, grains, meat, and bones), coffee grounds and filters, tea bags, paper towels, napkins, greasy cardboard pizza boxes, floral waste, and certified compostable serving ware. For a comprehensive list of accepted materials, please visit www.orangecountync.gov/Compost. ♻️

Compost-a-thon

Food waste is the #1 contributor to US landfills, and it surged during the pandemic. This motivated Bo Chi, a local student and Boy Scout of the Chapel Hill based Troop 39, to act to divert food waste. Bo initially worked on "GoCompost", a mobile app that informs and motivates residents to compost. Working on the app inspired Bo to organize a community engagement project focused on local composting efforts for his Eagle Project. An Eagle Project is a community service project required to complete the Boy Scout Eagle Rank. With support from his Troop leaders and



Orange County Solid Waste, the Compost-A-Thon had a mission to divert food waste from landfills.

The Compost-A-Thons took place at the Carrboro, Chapel Hill, and Eno River Farmer's Markets. At these events, hundreds of market-goers participated in educational games to learn about composting and win prizes. Over the three events, Bo and his team collected and recorded 355 survey entries; 18.5% of survey participants responded they were new composters.

No better time to start composting than now! If you are already composting, help others in your community get started. Check out the "GoCompost" app and visit compostathon.org for more information. ♻️

CompostMates, a student-led group at UNC-CH, is on a mission to expand access to composting among off-campus students who are unable to donate or maintain their own compost pile. This group began when two separate teams working on the same idea learned of one another. With the same goals in mind, the teams joined forces.

CompostMates at Carolina

The group started its collection efforts in the spring of 2021 and has diverted over 3,240 pounds of food waste from the landfill. Food eaten by community members is turned into compost used in gardens that grow food to feed more community members- a stellar example of a local closed-loop system!

Volunteer drivers collect the food scraps twice a month. Collected materials are taken to one of three community gardens: Carolina Community Garden, Giving Garden, or UNC Edible Campus.

These gardens utilize the food scraps in their compost piles and once cured, the compost is added to their garden beds to help grow healthy fruits, vegetables, and herbs. The gardens donate their produce to community members in need.

This food-waste fighting group not only helps reduce methane emissions, it works to instill sustainable and environmentally conscious practices into its members, volunteers, and fellow students. To learn more about the group and how to help, visit compostmatesunc.weebly.com ♻️



Household Hazardous Waste Corner

A variety of household items, including paint, cleaners, pesticides, hair spray, nail polish, and fluorescent bulbs, contain hazardous chemicals and require special care when being disposed of. These materials cannot be disposed of with regular household trash, poured down the drain, or on the ground. When household hazardous waste (HHW) is improperly disposed of it can contaminate lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater. About 2.4 million North Carolinians rely on groundwater as their primary source of drinking water (NC Dept. of Health and Human Services). In addition to polluting the environment, improperly discarded HHW poses a threat to human health.

To avoid the potential risks associated with HHW, the Solid Waste Department advises residents to monitor the use, storage, and disposal of products with potentially hazardous chemicals.

Some quick tips from the NC Department of Environmental Quality on safely handling household hazardous wastes:

- Carefully follow any instructions for use and storage provided on product labels to prevent any accidents at home.
- Read product labels for disposal directions to reduce the risk of products exploding, igniting, leaking, mixing with other chemicals, or posing other hazards on the way to a disposal facility.
- Never store hazardous products in food containers; keep them in their original containers and never remove labels.
- When leftovers remain, never mix HHW with other products. Incompatible products might react, ignite, or explode, and contaminated HHW might become unrecyclable.
- Remember, even empty containers of HHW can pose hazards because of the residual chemicals that might remain so also handle them with care.
- Prior to disposal, pack HHW materials upright in a sturdy storage box. If containers are leaking, place in a leak-proof container with adsorbent material such as kitty litter, sawdust, or newspaper.

- Place packed HHW materials in a cool, dry, well-ventilated location where children or animals cannot reach until scheduled disposal.

Orange County has two Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facilities for residential use ONLY:

- Eubanks Rd. Waste & Recycling Center in Chapel Hill
- Walnut Grove Church Rd. Waste & Recycling Center in Hillsborough

For the address and hours of operation, see page 5. For a full list of accepted HHW materials at these facilities, please visit the Waste & Recycling Center page at orangecountync.gov/recycling.

Latex Paint

While we encourage citizens to take their leftover oil-based paint and stains to the Household Hazardous Waste collection facility, there are other methods for getting rid of small amounts of latex paint.

- Latex paint may be safely dried out by simply air-drying the can if there is less than 1/2 inch of paint, or by adding an absorbent such as kitty litter or sand to the can contents. When dry, dispose of the can with household waste. Make sure to leave the lid off of the can, so the waste collectors can see that it is nearly empty and dry.
- If metal and completely empty with only a dried residue of paint, paint cans may be recycled with scrap metal at Waste & Recycling Centers. Paint cans should not be recycled at the curb, even if empty. The cans are not recyclable in single-stream recycling and are considered contamination.



Fluorescent Bulbs

Compact fluorescent (twirly) lights, also known as CFLs, circular fluorescent bulbs, and fluorescent tubes and ballasts may contain mercury, a hazardous material.



Orange County residents can bring a maximum of 20 residential fluorescent bulbs and other items containing mercury to a HHW facility. Do not break fluorescent tubes!

Aerosol Cans Containing Hazardous Substances

Insect repellent, oven cleaners, furniture polish, spray paint, and air freshener are examples of products that contain hazardous substances and commonly come in aerosol cans. If the can is not empty, please bring it to an HHW facility for safe disposal. If the can is empty, it can be recycled with scrap metal at the Waste & Recycling Centers. If you are unsure if the can is completely empty, please ask a site attendant for assistance.



Batteries

All types of batteries can be recycled at Waste and Recycling Centers.

- Wet-cell batteries such as automobile batteries can be stacked on pallets located at each center. Auto-battery retailers in North Carolina are also required by law to take these batteries back. Please do not place lead-acid batteries in the dry-cell battery receptacle.
- Dry-cell batteries of all types, including flashlight, button cell, hearing aid, and camera, can be dropped off at special containers located at each Waste & Recycling Center.
- Rules for Lithium Battery Recycling: Please separate and tape the ends/terminals (if button cell, tape the entire battery), before bringing them to Waste & Recycling Centers. The tape prevents the batteries from connecting to each other and potentially exploding. Please only place Lithium and Lithium-ion batteries in receptacles labeled for Lithium batteries. ♻️



Congratulations to Our Retirees!

Blair Pollock

Blair Pollock, former Solid Waste Planner, retired in July 2021 after 34 years of service. Blair likes to say that he accidentally “invented” his recycling career. It all started in 1984 when he attended a public meeting to discuss the siting of another landfill on Eubanks Rd. On the podium, Blair talked about exploring ways to reduce the use of current and future landfills by recycling, examining other alternative technologies including incineration and composting, and conducting a more comprehensive and technical landfill site search instead of buying what seemed expedient. Several weeks after the public meeting, he was asked to serve on the County's newly formed Solid Waste Task Force. Roughly three years and one solid waste report later, Blair was hired as the Town of Chapel Hill's first recycling coordinator.



Blair got to work setting up recycling drop-off sites and the following year began piloting residential curbside recycling programs. Now, all single-family homes and over 90% of apartments have County recycling. He also played a vital role in developing and implementing the food waste collection program, Salvage Sheds, and the Glass On The Side (GOTS) program.

Recycling can't be accomplished alone – it is a team sport and Blair served as the highly motivated and tenacious head coach. While he may be retired, he is still active in the community and helps spread the good word on recycling.

To Blair Pollock, from the Solid Waste Team: Your dedication, passion, and eagerness to serve your community were instrumental in the creation and implementation of the County's successful recycling program. You not only laid the groundwork for recycling in the County but also constructed a community culture around recycling. Thank you for everything you've done for this community and for the wealth of knowledge you've shared with us along the way.

Alvin Frazier

Alvin Frazier, a former Waste and Recycling Center Operator, retired in February 2022, after serving the county for 28 years. Alvin was one of the first site attendants hired by the County. Having worked at the centers since 1994, he has witnessed how they have grown and evolved over the years. When he first started working, the recyclable items were placed on the ground and hand-collected. Over time, more efficient waste/recycling management systems were developed and additional services were offered.

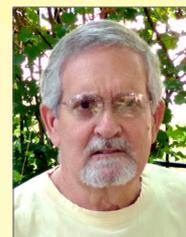


Alvin was one of the many friendly faces at the Waste & Recycling Centers and was on a first-name basis with numerous residents. Being a people person, he enjoyed developing relationships with residents, many of whom had been using the centers for decades. Alvin rarely missed work and proudly tells his story of spending a night in the break room because an ice storm was about to hit and he was unable to make it home.

From the Solid Waste Team: Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication over the years. Your ability to connect with residents and coworkers made a lasting impact in Orange County and you are missed by many!

Jeff Scouten

Jeff Scouten, former Environmental Enforcement Officer, retired in July 2021 after 10 years of service. Jeff made sure that the County's safety policies and rules were being followed, which helped protect the environment. He also oversaw the enforcement of the Solid Waste Ordinances and Regulated Recyclable Materials Ordinance. Jeff was an integral part of the committee that brought in a new permitting system to Orange County.



Overall, Jeff was a fantastic team member – always willing to lend a helping hand and teach others. Jeff's successor speaks very highly of Jeff and notes that he is by far the best supervisor and colleague he has had throughout his time in the workforce.

From the Solid Waste Team: Thank you for playing an essential role in keeping our surrounding environment safe. You were an exquisite team member and your years of hard work are greatly appreciated.

WASTE & RECYCLING E-NEWS



This monthly E-Newsletter provides information on:

- Holiday Schedule for Curbside Recycling & Facilities
- Recycling Program Updates
- FAQ's
- Webinars & Events
- Waste Reduction Tips & Tricks

SIGN UP TODAY!

Visit orangecountync.gov/recycling

SECURE YOUR LOAD

Driving with an unsecured load is a crime.



(919) 968-2788

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orangecountync.gov/recycling



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Hillsborough Public Works
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