

RECYCLING NEWS

2023 vol. 1

Lower Allen Township

COMMUNITY SUCCESS

Each month tonnage reports are sent to Lower Allen Township regarding the amount of recycling collected from residents. In the month of November 89.99 tons of single stream materials were collected from residents in Lower Allen Township by Penn Waste. That is more than 178,000 pounds of recycling, equivalent to more than 9 pounds of recycling per resident. Those pounds turn into grant money for the Township when reported yearly to DEP.



New Year New Challenge

How can you improve your recycling efforts in your house? Do you recycle everything that can be recycled curbside? Are those pizza boxes making into the trash and not the recycling? Do your teenagers need a refresher on what can be recycled? Whatever challenge your household is facing regarding recycling, the Township is here to help with monthly informative newsletters to educate and assist in increasing your recycling efforts in your household. Check Penn Waste's website for information on what can be recycled. Consider other ways to recycle, not just curbside, think freecycle Facebook pages or donations to local organizations. Watch for a new monthly newsletter to be posted online and available in the Municipal Building.

January Challenge = Analyze Your Home Recycling

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PAPER PLATE FUN FACTS

Where did the paper plate come from? Whose responsible for the modern convenience? Did you know these facts?

- The paper plate was invented by Martin Keyes in the early 1900's
- The first paper plates shipped in 1904
- Martin Keyes' company is now called Chinet
- Paper accounts for 26% of landfill waste
- Recycling 1 ton of paper saves approximately 17 trees and 1400 liters of oil
- consider chlorine free plates or those made of recyclable material



Can You Make The Switch?

In the January Challenge, residents were asked to analyze their trash. What were you throwing away? Now that a few weeks have passed with time to analyze your trash, can you make a switch? What is in your trash that could be reduced? Do you use paper or disposable plates for every meal? Could you trade out those disposable plates one day? If you could make the switch for just one day, how much would you reduce your trash? One paper plate can take up to 6 months or more to decompose in a landfill. Factors like thickness, material, decorations, contamination, temperature, and moisture content can affect the decomposition of a paper plate in a landfill. Ceramic dishes are still the best option to reduce the trash. Are you trading convenience for green space?

February Challenge = Trash < Recycling

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LAWN MULCHING FACTS:

The great debate with mulching continues in every neighborhood. Mulching can have many benefits for your lawn:

- decreases evaporation rates by as much as 35%
- protects plants from sun and wind
- prevents weeds from germinating
- insulates roots from temperature changes
- provides much needed organic matter to promote healthy growth in the future
- prevents soil erosion



Are you team bag or team mulch?

If you choose to bag your grass, how many bags do you have out for trash? Where do all those bags of grass clipping go? Landfill space is at a premium currently as it is. Continuing to bag your grass and place it out for trash is only decreasing the space in a landfill at a faster rate. How often do you mow your grass? Sources who recommend mulching suggest mowing your lawn no more than once a week.

Mulching more often than once a week can damage the grass. A myth about mulching, it does not cause thatch build up. A typical lawn requires 4 pounds of Nitrogen per year for healthy growth. Mulching can provide as much as 1 pound of the needed Nitrogen, as well as providing nutrients to the microorganisms in the food web. If the soil nutrients aren't enough of a benefit for you, think of all that energy you could be saving for other projects by mulching!

March Challenge = Mulch more than Bag

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3 REASONS TO RECYCLE YARD WASTE

Create Food For the Soil

Using your yellow Lower Allen Township bin for your yard waste pick up will allow your yard to remain clean while providing yourself and other residents with nutrient rich compost. Compost that is added back into soil allows for water retention and reduces the need for Nitrogen fertilizers.

Control Erosion

Composting and adding compost allows the soil to act as a sponge to retain water, in turn reducing erosion.

Simplify Your Clean Up

Tree branches, bush trimmings and tree stumps up to 14" are all considered yard waste and can be dropped off at the Public Works Facility.



Do You Have A Yellow Bin?

Yellow yard waste bins are available for every residence in Lower Allen Township at the Municipal Services Building on Gettysburg Road. The yellow yard waste bins allow residents to compost their yard waste for weekly collection, reducing the amount of trash that is collected curbside. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, if all yard clippings were composted by either curbside pick-up or mulching back into the yard, approximately 33 million pounds of organic waste would be kept out of landfills. Yard waste can be dropped off at the Public Works Facility between 7 am and 3 pm Monday through Friday and the second Saturday of the month from April to November. Curbside collection of the yellow bins resumes in April. If you find yourself searching for more ways to recycle or compost at your residence, reach out to the Lower Allen Township Environmental Coordinator to discuss a waste analysis.

April Challenge = Use Your Yard Waste Bin

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WHAT HAPPENS TO THE TIRES

- Tire Derived Fuel, 43% of tires that are recycled in the world can be used as a fuel. Once heated to the point of the polymers breaking apart, the product can be used as fuel.
- Recycled tires are 25% more efficient than coal when used as fuel.
- Every tire contains 5 gallons of oil.
- Recycled tires can be used to reduce vibrations on railroad tracks.
- Crumb rubber, or finely ground tires, can be used to make items such as mud flaps and anti-fatigue mats.



When the Wheel Doesn't Roll

Tires can be difficult to dispose of although they are capable of being recycled. In the United States alone, 3.9 million tons of waste tires are generated each year. Consider all the items in the world that use tires. The month of May, Cumberland County Solid Waste Authority and Cumberland County Vector Control will be holding a tire recycling event. The event is open to the public through registration on the county website. At the time of this article, more than 1000 tires are scheduled to be recycled. For more information regarding the event, refer to the website:

www.cumberlandcountypa.gov/recycling.

May Challenge = Can You Recycle That?

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HOW CAN YOU AVOID BEING A WISHCYCLER?

- Check with your municipality. Only put in the recycling toter what can be recycled by the hauler curbside.
- Be aware of any product changes. Manufacturers can change the packaging that will eliminate it from the recycling bin. That item you have recycled for years is now not able to be recycled.
- Check with your municipality's environmental coordinator to discuss options to recycle items that can not be taken curbside.



The Best of Intentions

According to national surveys, Americans are embracing recycling as a necessary routine in their daily lives. With the growth of recycling and the changes across the country and world as to what can be recycled, a generation of aspirational recyclers has been created. Aspirational recyclers, or wishcyclers, are those who throw anything into their recycling bins curbside because "it can be recycled". Wishcycling can be detrimental to municipalities causing contamination in the recycling stream and reducing the amount of recycling able to be reported to the state. To avoid being a wishcycler, be sure every item that goes into your recycling toter can be recycled curbside. Any questions regarding recycling, contact 717-975-7575 ext 1014.

June Challenge = Are You A Wishcycler?

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COMMON VACATION AREAS & THEIR RECYCLING RULES:

- May 4, 2022 - New Jersey issues a state wide ban on single use plastic bags
- March 15, 2023 - Radnor Township, Pennsylvania followed the City of Philadelphia, Howard County Maryland and other surrounding municipalities with a single use bag ban
- June 30, 2023 - officials at Los Angeles International Airport announce ban on the sale of plastic water bottles. The airport has hydration stations throughout the terminals to fill reuseable water bottles



Know the Community

It is that time of year, vacation season! The kids are home from school, COVID seems to be in the past (hopefully), and the tourist industry is in full swing across the east coast and the country. Over the past few years, changes in communities across the country have resulted in changes to recycling laws and plastic bans. Many communities that have been family destinations for years have made recent changes that will affect tourists to the area. It is important to check in with the local government agency or property owners when your traveling to determine how those changes may affect you and your family. I recently visited a new to me city and had a welcome surprise to their recycling laws. Imagine, recycling EVERYTHING! It was definitely something to get used to!

July Challenge = Recycling on Vacation

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WASTE AUDITS:

- Lower Allen Township's Environmental Coordinator is offering FREE waste audits to any resident who wishes to have their waste analyzed.
- What is a waste audit?
 - A waste audit is a review of your refuse and recycling before you curbside collection day. A waste audit can offer alternatives to change your refuse stream and also give some suggestions as to where to dispose of items if curbside collection is not available.
- How can I get a waste audit?
 - Waste audits can be scheduled with the Environmental Coordinator for Lower Allen Township at (717) 975-7575 ext 1014 or by emailing barnold@latwp.org



New Refuse & Recycling Contract

Lower Allen Township has been with the same refuse and recycling hauler since 2014. The time has come for a new contract to be bid for the Township. With the onset of recycling concerns across the state, county, state, and world in the past few years, the Township must look at new ways to increase recycling and lower the amount of refuse produced both residentially and commercially.

Information regarding the new contract will be sent to residents after the contract has been awarded. The hope of staff is to have information ready for residents by the end of September. With many municipalities having their refuse contracts in the spotlight lately, it is important that Lower Allen Township residents be well informed of any upcoming changes. Please consider attending a Township Meeting in September to learn more about the new contract. September Commissioner Meetings are scheduled for the 11th and 25th.

August Challenge = Attend a Meeting

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Plastic Bag Facts

- 160,000 plastic bags are used every second in the world
- the average family will use 60 plastic bags in 4 trips to the grocery store
- the lifespan of a plastic bag is 12 minutes
- the number of plastic bags in the world could circumnavigate the world 4200 times
- it takes 1000 years for a plastic bag to decompose
- 300,000,000 plastic bags make it into the Atlantic Ocean every year
- 100 countries, cities, towns and counties have banned plastic bags or placed a tax on single use plastic bags since 2007
- 1 million seabirds are killed by plastic bags each year



Americans use 10 billion bags

Only 1% of all plastic bags are recycled in the world. The rest end up in landfills or in waterways including local and international waters. Using a reusable bag can replace 22,000 single use plastic bags.

Many will argue that plastic bags can be recycled. This is true but they cannot be recycled in curbside recycling pick up services by contracted haulers. A separate drop off location needs to be sought out to recycle single use plastic bags, then we need to remember to take them back. It's easy to toss them in the trash, taking approximately 12 seconds of our time.

Reusable bags are available for produce, bottles, groceries, wet clothes, zip top, open top, and any other use you can think of.

Municipalities across the state are banning single use plastic bags in an effort to fight the litter that is found along the streets and making its way into be waterways. Local businesses have stopped giving out bags totally or have turned to charging for the use of paper bags.



September Challenge = Take a Reusable Bag (or 2)

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NEW TRASH CONTRACT

Additional services to residents were added to the refuse and recycling contract to start in January 2024:

- Placement of additional corrugated cardboard dumpsters at 4 locations within the Township
- Special Events provided by the hauler (examples of such events: shredding, electronics recycling, hazardous waste collections, etc.)
- Additional drop location for recyclables that can not be collected curbside



What are the changes?

On September 11, 2023 Lower Allen Township Commissioners voted to award the 2024-26 trash contract to the lowest bidder. Penn Waste will continue with the Township's refuse & recycling contract for the next 3 years. Although the hauler will remain the same, changes will take place that will affect all residents.

With the new contract all residents will need to use hauler provided wheeled carts/toters for collection. Refuse collection will remain on the same day. All trash to be collected must be inside the cart or wheeled toter.

Residents have 2 options for their level of service.

Option 1:

- 96 gallon toter for refuse & recycling, yard waste pick up (using yellow bins from the Township, 1 large/bulk item per week)

Option 2: (requires an application submitted & approval)

- 35 gallon toter for refuse & recycling, yard waste pick up (using yellow bins from the Township), & 1 large/bulk item per week
- this option is provided at a lower rate than Option 1

October Oratory = Call (717) 975-7575 ext 1014 for more information

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Recycling Takes Practice

Recycling is not easy! If it were easy everyone would do it. If everyone were doing it, the landfills would not be filling at the rate they are now. Did you know that Cumberland County is required to know the capacity of every landfill used by all residents of the county. Why? Knowing that information allows the county and state officials to plan ahead. Imagine if no one knew that the landfills will all reach maximum capacity in 10 years! Will they? Some may. Recycling helps to keep items out of the landfills and extends the available usage time of landfills for residents. If we all can reduce our waste by a minimum of 10% imagine how much we could save!



Do You Know What Can Be Recycled?

Curbside recycling can be confusing! What will they take, what won't they take, is it clean enough? Some items could be recycled curbside but are not collected.

We all know paperboard (thin cardboard like cracker boxes and cereal boxes) can be recycled but it is one item not collected curbside. The reason this is not recycled is due to the contamination rate. Items that can absorb liquids or food materials can quickly become contaminated making them unable to be recycled efficiently.

Lower Allen Township's curbside recycling hauler accepts the following items in curbside bins:

- newspaper (place in the bottom of the recycling bin to reduce the contamination)
- steel/aluminum cans
- Plastics (ONLY those with a #1, 2, or 5)
- Corrugated cardboard and shipping boxes
- Cartons (think milk, juice, soup, broth cartons)

For information on where to recycle other items, contact barnold@latwp.org.

November Notions = Recycle Something Not Curbside

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Other Contract Information

Included with the new contract for 2024 are additional specifications for residents.

1. The hauler must provide 1 special collection event per year of the contract to residents. Stay tuned to see what the 2024 event will be!
2. Cardboard drop locations will be placed in 4 areas of the Township for the residents to drop flattened cardboard. This can reduce contamination and increase recycling tonnages for the Township.
3. Additional drop off sites for hard to recycle items. Look for more information regarding what else we can recycle in Lower Allen Township!



Lower Allen Township 2024 Contract Awarded to Penn Waste

January 1, 2024 will begin the new refuse and recycling contract for Lower Allen Township. The contract was bid with 4 main components, additional specifications were added within the contract that are part of the cost to residents.

Refuse Pick Up

Residents will be required to use a wheeled cart for pick up. The hauler owns the carts and will deliver the carts to the residents that need serviceable replacements. Continue placing items curbside as usual until carts are delivered. If wheeled carts are in place (either 96 gallon or 64 gallon) the hauler will service those as normal. Each unit will have 1 wheeled cart picked up per week.

Recycling Pick Up

Recycling is mandated by the state in Lower Allen Township. All residents will receive a wheeled cart for recycling.

Yard Waste

Curbside yard waste collection will be March through October starting in 2024. The same yellow bins will be used for curbside yard waste pick up. Bins are available at the Municipal Services Building for a fee.

Bulk Item Pick Up

Every resident will receive 1 bulk item pick up per week. This is for appliances or furniture pick up. Penn Waste will need to be notified of a bulk item pick up before the collection day. For bulk item collection call 717-767-4456.

December Digest = New Contract Review