



Preserving Resources,
Preventing Waste

The New Jersey WasteWise Bulletin

Newsletter of the New Jersey WasteWise Business Network – Spring 2026
*WasteWise ... improving your bottom line and the environment
through waste reduction, recycling, and recycled product procurement.*

'Skip the Stuff' Waste Reduction Law Enacted

Prior to leaving office in January, then-Governor Phil Murphy signed what is known as the "Skip the Stuff" law, which is New Jersey's newest effort to reduce plastic waste and pollution. Taking effect on Aug. 1, 2026, the law prohibits food service businesses from providing single-use utensils and condiments to customers under certain circumstances. Casual dining establishments may continue to provide these products to customers by request or by using self-serve condiment stations. Full-service restaurants may only provide these products upon request if the customer is using online ordering services.

Beginning Aug. 1, 2027, bundled packages that contain more than one type of single-use utensil or condiment are prohibited. Pre-packaged food items are considered exempt if they contain single-use utensils or condiments attached during the manufacturing process.

All K-12 schools, licensed health care facilities, and county or State correctional facilities are exempt from the requirements of this law. Food service businesses located in food courts are exempt until Aug. 1, 2028.

Other Notable Recycling Laws Enacted in 2026

In addition to the Skip the Stuff legislation, Governor Murphy enacted several other recycling and waste laws in January, including:

Solar Panel Recycling – Starting 180 days after a determination by the Department of Environmental Protection that there are a

sufficient number of recycling facilities for end-of-life solar and photovoltaic energy generation facilities or structures, these materials would be required to be recycled.

Use of Recycled Content Plastic Construction Products in State Jobs –

This law mandates that state-funded construction projects must use plastic materials containing at least 10% postconsumer recycled content (increasing to 15% after two years). This requirement applies to construction materials composed of more than 50% plastic by cost.

Food Waste Reduction Plans at County Level -

This law requires each solid waste management district to develop a strategy in its solid waste management plan to reduce food waste by 50% by 2035. The legislation also creates a tiered permitting system that will make it easier for food waste and composting facilities to open.

Food Waste Reduction at New Jersey Colleges and Universities –

This law requires every higher-education institution in New Jersey to implement a food-waste reduction program and submit annual reports detailing surplus food donations and composting efforts.

Soil Transport and Recycling Licensing Modifications -

This law amends the 2020 "Dirty Dirt" law, which addressed the problem of contaminated soil being sold as clean fill. The new law clarifies licensing requirements for the transport of soil and modifies the definition of "soil and fill recyclable materials," among other things.

Scrap Tire Hauler License – This law directs the N.J. Department of Environmental Protection to establish a scrap tire hauler licensing system, as well as a regulatory framework for scrap tire storage, collection, and management.

Did You Know...

- Gravity Wave is a company based in Spain that works with thousands of fishermen in Spain, Italy and Greece, who remove discarded plastic fishing nets from the Mediterranean Sea for recycling. The nets are then processed by Gravity Wave into recycled plastic pellets, as well as recycled plastic panels that can be used in furniture and architectural applications. Learn more at <https://www.thegravitywave.com/>.
- Plastic IQ is a cutting-edge free digital resource to help U.S. companies develop an effective plastic packaging strategy, work together to compare strategies with industry best practices, and prioritize innovative solutions to advance circularity and corporate sustainability goals. Created by The Recycling Partnership and SYSTEMIQ, with support from Walmart, Plastic IQ leverages industry guidance and data to help users turn their plastic packaging strategy into measurable actions to help tackle the plastic waste crisis. Visit <https://recyclingpartnership.org/plastic-iq/> for additional information.
- Clothing and household textiles make up 6.3 % of the waste stream or the equivalent of 81 pounds per person thrown away annually in the U.S. Nearly 95% of used clothing and textiles can be reused and recycled. Collected items can be reused as apparel, converted into industrial wiping cloths or processed into new fiber to be manufactured into new products.
- The Northeast Recycling Council's annual conference, scheduled for Oct. 5-7, 2026, at the Crowne Plaza Princeton Hotel Conference Center in Plainsboro, will focus on strategies designed to drive sustainable practices forward in all communities. Visit <https://www.nerc.org/conference-overview> for details.
- The Electric and Hybrid Vehicle Battery Management Act bans the disposal of propulsion batteries in New Jersey landfills after January 8, 2027.

Spring 2026 WasteWise Webinar:
May 5, 2026
Registration information is available at: <https://anjr.site-ym.com/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=2022907&group=>

LEED Green Building Program Still Going Strong

The U.S. Green Building Council's LEED green building rating system was first launched in 1998 and is now widely used in the United States and throughout the world. The LEED green building program provides a framework for designing, constructing, operating, and maintaining sustainable, energy-efficient, and cost-saving buildings. LEED is for all project types, including new construction, core and shell, interior fit-outs, operations and maintenance. The program awards points across various categories for practices that enhance a building project's environmental friendliness. Points can be earned for waste reduction, recycling and use of recycled content building products, among other things. Learn more about this program at <https://www.usgbc.org/>.

Local Paper Mills Vital to Recycling Success

The New Jersey region is home to four paper mills that use recyclable paper and corrugated cardboard as feedstocks in the production of new paper products:

- Homasote Company, Ewing – Homasote uses mixed paper to make building and industrial packaging products.
- Marcal, Elmwood Park – Marcal utilizes a variety of recyclable paper grades to make bath, towel and tissue products.
- Pratt Industries, Staten Island, NY – Pratt uses mixed paper and old corrugated cardboard to make new boxes and displays.
- Newman & Company, Philadelphia, PA – Newman uses mixed paper grades to make chipboard, which is used in paper boxes, game boards, puzzles and more.



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Steven Rinaldi
DEP, Bureau of
Sustainability

Steven.Rinaldi@dep.nj.gov
<http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/wastewise/brbn03.htm>