



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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State report: North Carolina sets record for lowest disposal rate

Pitt County leading N.C.'s recycling efforts

RALEIGH – North Carolina has for the second straight year set a record for the lowest solid waste disposal rate since measurement of tonnage deposited in the landfill began in 1991, according to data released Thursday by the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The record-breaking disposal rates are helped by local government recycling programs, which are making progress in removing valuable materials from the waste stream and returning them to the economy. Among the state's recycling leaders are Pitt and Catawba counties, where public recycling efforts combined to recycle more than 700 pounds of materials per person during the past year. Recycling efforts in these communities include a broad range of programs addressing household recycling and services for commercial, industrial and construction wastes.

“We are pleased to see the progress that municipal and county recycling programs are making,” said John Skvarla, secretary of the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources. “Recyclable commodities are increasingly important feedstocks for North Carolina manufacturers, and community collection services are a vital part of the material supply chain.”

DENR tracks data statewide about recycling and disposal rates, and then publicizes its findings along with two different rankings of community recycling programs each spring. The latest rankings of community recycling programs can be found at the bottom of this news release.

The report made a number of encouraging findings, including that:

- The collection of common household recyclable materials such as paper, glass and plastics as well as construction debris and electronics, increased in fiscal 2011-12, helping North Carolina exceed 300 pounds per capita of recycling through municipal and county programs, according to the report.
- Recovery of common household recyclables rose in fiscal 2011-12 by about 2 percent from the previous year, approaching 500,000 tons collected statewide.
- Curbside recycling services are expanding and improving, giving more North Carolinians convenient opportunities to recycle.
- A record-breaking 298 curbside programs served 1.8 million households across the state in fiscal 2011-12, jumping up 7 percent in one year.
- Collection of electronics such as television sets and computers also saw a big increase, almost doubling in tonnage as more communities offered collection programs.

Some materials, such as large appliance metals, declined slightly, in part because healthy metal prices prompted residents to take the large appliance metals to private scrap yards instead of county drop-off sites, the report states. The state agency also found that community collection of special wastes, such as used oil, oil filters, batteries, and household hazardous materials, stayed relatively flat.

In general, the momentum in local recycling programs is helping suppress the state's dependence on solid waste landfills, said Scott Mouw, the state's recycling coordinator.

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“Our efforts to help improve the efficiency of local recycling programs are paying off,” Mouw said. “DENR will continue to try to help communities expand their recycling services while also helping make those services more cost effective.”

The state is also seeing continued expansion of recycling in the private sector, including the establishment of new material processing facilities and expanded operations of manufacturers such as Unifi, a textile company that uses recycled plastic bottles to make polyester for clothing and other products. Also, the state is making strides in the recycling of materials such as asphalt shingles, which can be used by paving companies as a cheaper feedstock for highway construction. Likewise, food waste represents a large waste stream that can be used to make compost and renewable energy.

Still, local government recycling programs remain a critical part of the state’s strategy to reduce waste sent to landfills and recover discarded commodities, according to Rob Taylor, local government recycling assistance team leader for DENR. The rankings published below are produced from annual reports submitted by every county and municipality, and each county’s ranking includes data from the municipalities within its borders. The first ranking lists the counties in order of their total tonnage of recycled materials; the second lists the counties in order of their recovery of common household recyclables.

For information on recycling and solid waste disposal, see the FY2011-12 North Carolina Solid Waste and Materials Management Annual Report at <http://bit.ly/1InK3m6>.

Total Public Recycling, Per Capita Recovery		
Rank	County	Lbs/person
1	PITT COUNTY	763.2
2	CATAWBA COUNTY	701.1
3	PASQUOTANK COUNTY	390.5
4	DARE COUNTY	341.6
5	CUMBERLAND COUNTY	313.8
6	ORANGE COUNTY	306.4
7	MACON COUNTY	284.7
8	WATAUGA COUNTY	260.5
9	BRUNSWICK COUNTY	206.9
10	MECKLENBURG COUNTY	202.6
11	IREDELL COUNTY	197.8
12	CURRITUCK COUNTY	197.7
13	BUNCOMBE COUNTY	188.7
14	SWAIN COUNTY	188.6
15	FORSYTH COUNTY	188.2
16	ONSLOW COUNTY	180.3
17	GUILFORD COUNTY	180.0
18	ALEXANDER COUNTY	172.0
19	NEW HANOVER COUNTY	171.1
20	ALLEGHANY COUNTY	169.8
21	HAYWOOD COUNTY	169.7
22	CRAVEN COUNTY	167.5
23	CABARRUS COUNTY	152.2
24	MOORE COUNTY	135.3

Common Household Recyclables, Per Capita Recovery		
Rank	County	Lbs/person
1	PITT COUNTY	340.7
2	DARE COUNTY	262.2
3	WATAUGA COUNTY	243.3
4	CATAWBA COUNTY	229.2
5	BRUNSWICK COUNTY	192.0
6	ORANGE COUNTY	190.5
7	BUNCOMBE COUNTY	183.4
8	GUILFORD COUNTY	175.1
9	CURRITUCK COUNTY	173.2
10	ONSLOW COUNTY	173.1
11	IREDELL COUNTY	172.6
12	CRAVEN COUNTY	156.6
13	ALLEGHANY COUNTY	155.1
14	CABARRUS COUNTY	149.4
15	HAYWOOD COUNTY	137.2
16	MECKLENBURG COUNTY	136.3
17	MACON COUNTY	132.4
18	ALEXANDER COUNTY	125.9
19	NEW HANOVER COUNTY	124.9
20	TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY	117.6
21	WAKE COUNTY	117.6
22	SWAIN COUNTY	116.6
23	DURHAM COUNTY	115.6
24	MOORE COUNTY	112.3

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25	JACKSON COUNTY	133.8
26	WAKE COUNTY	133.1
27	HYDE COUNTY	129.9
28	MADISON COUNTY	129.0
29	TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY	126.2
30	DURHAM COUNTY	126.0
31	CHOWAN COUNTY	120.0
32	SCOTLAND COUNTY	114.3
33	GRANVILLE COUNTY	112.1
34	ASHE COUNTY	109.4
35	PENDER COUNTY	107.7
36	CAMDEN COUNTY	106.6
37	YANCEY COUNTY	99.2
38	PAMLICO COUNTY	99.2
39	DAVIE COUNTY	98.6
40	CHATHAM COUNTY	96.3
41	CARTERET COUNTY	95.5
42	POLK COUNTY	94.4
43	MCDOWELL COUNTY	92.6
44	LINCOLN COUNTY	91.9
45	BURKE COUNTY	89.9
46	PERQUIMANS COUNTY	89.5
47	MITCHELL COUNTY	88.6
48	NASH COUNTY	86.5
49	PERSON COUNTY	83.8
50	GASTON COUNTY	82.3
51	WAYNE COUNTY	79.7
52	CLAY COUNTY	79.3
53	LEE COUNTY	78.6
54	CLEVELAND COUNTY	78.0
55	WILSON COUNTY	73.8
56	ALAMANCE COUNTY	72.2
57	UNION COUNTY	67.6
58	AVERY COUNTY	66.6
59	SURRY COUNTY	65.6
60	HENDERSON COUNTY	64.7
61	WASHINGTON COUNTY	62.4
62	DAVIDSON COUNTY	61.7
63	MONTGOMERY COUNTY	60.9
64	DUPLIN COUNTY	60.9
65	GATES COUNTY	59.9

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25	HYDE COUNTY	103.6
26	JACKSON COUNTY	99.1
27	CHOWAN COUNTY	94.8
28	DAVIE COUNTY	94.4
29	MADISON COUNTY	93.1
30	FORSYTH COUNTY	91.3
31	SCOTLAND COUNTY	89.3
32	PAMLICO COUNTY	89.3
33	PENDER COUNTY	82.7
34	CUMBERLAND COUNTY	81.7
35	POLK COUNTY	79.8
36	CARTERET COUNTY	75.7
37	GASTON COUNTY	75.0
38	CHATHAM COUNTY	74.6
39	PASQUOTANK COUNTY	73.4
40	ASHE COUNTY	72.8
41	NASH COUNTY	71.3
42	CAMDEN COUNTY	70.6
43	PERSON COUNTY	69.1
44	PERQUIMANS COUNTY	63.9
45	WAYNE COUNTY	63.3
46	ALAMANCE COUNTY	60.6
47	UNION COUNTY	60.5
48	GRANVILLE COUNTY	59.4
49	MITCHELL COUNTY	58.9
50	LEE COUNTY	58.4
51	YANCEY COUNTY	57.5
52	SURRY COUNTY	57.5
53	WILSON COUNTY	56.5
54	MONTGOMERY COUNTY	56.4
55	MCDOWELL COUNTY	56.3
56	HENDERSON COUNTY	55.8
57	LINCOLN COUNTY	54.6
58	RANDOLPH COUNTY	51.9
59	YADKIN COUNTY	48.9
60	DUPLIN COUNTY	47.9
61	LENOIR COUNTY	47.6
62	DAVIDSON COUNTY	47.6
63	BEAUFORT COUNTY	47.4
64	GATES COUNTY	46.5
65	ROWAN COUNTY	46.1

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66	RUTHERFORD COUNTY	59.6
67	BLADEN COUNTY	59.6
68	RANDOLPH COUNTY	58.6
69	MARTIN COUNTY	58.1
70	ROWAN COUNTY	57.4
71	JOHNSTON COUNTY	57.0
72	LENOIR COUNTY	55.7
73	FRANKLIN COUNTY	54.8
74	BEAUFORT COUNTY	54.2
75	YADKIN COUNTY	53.3
76	WARREN COUNTY	52.3
77	ANSON COUNTY	49.2
78	HARNETT COUNTY	46.1
79	STANLY COUNTY	44.1
80	HERTFORD COUNTY	43.9
81	WILKES COUNTY	43.0
82	VANCE COUNTY	41.3
83	HOKE COUNTY	40.5
84	EDGECOMBE COUNTY	40.1
85	RICHMOND COUNTY	39.2
86	CALDWELL COUNTY	38.5
87	SAMPSON COUNTY	37.8
88	ROCKINGHAM COUNTY	35.3
89	STOKES COUNTY	32.7
90	TYRRELL COUNTY	31.5
91	GREENE COUNTY	28.8
92	CHEROKEE COUNTY	27.9
93	COLUMBUS COUNTY	18.5
94	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	15.2
95	CASWELL COUNTY	13.5
96	BERTIE COUNTY	12.6
97	GRAHAM COUNTY	11.2
98	ROBESON COUNTY	9.8
99	JONES COUNTY	9.0
100	HALIFAX COUNTY	5.5

66	WARREN COUNTY	46.1
67	MARTIN COUNTY	45.7
68	CLEVELAND COUNTY	43.5
69	BURKE COUNTY	41.1
70	RUTHERFORD COUNTY	40.3
71	JOHNSTON COUNTY	38.9
72	WASHINGTON COUNTY	38.4
73	VANCE COUNTY	35.9
74	WILKES COUNTY	35.9
75	HERTFORD COUNTY	35.8
76	FRANKLIN COUNTY	35.4
77	CLAY COUNTY	34.6
78	STANLY COUNTY	33.0
79	SAMPSON COUNTY	33.0
80	BLADEN COUNTY	32.0
81	HARNETT COUNTY	30.4
82	AVERY COUNTY	29.5
83	TYRRELL COUNTY	28.9
84	STOKES COUNTY	27.7
85	GREENE COUNTY	26.6
86	CALDWELL COUNTY	25.8
87	ROCKINGHAM COUNTY	25.7
88	HOKE COUNTY	25.5
89	CHEROKEE COUNTY	22.8
90	RICHMOND COUNTY	22.5
91	EDGECOMBE COUNTY	22.0
92	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	13.3
93	CASWELL COUNTY	13.0
94	BERTIE COUNTY	11.1
95	JONES COUNTY	8.4
96	GRAHAM COUNTY	5.9
97	ANSON COUNTY	5.7
98	ROBESON COUNTY	3.7
99	HALIFAX COUNTY	2.9
100	COLUMBUS COUNTY	2.8

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