

Masthead



[News](#)

Wednesday, Jun. 30, 2010

Recycling rate triples

BY ANDREW KENNEY - Staff Writer

A law that banned most plastics from landfills has tripled the recycling of plastics in Johnston County. In a one-year period ending a few months before the ban took effect last October, the county hauled about 90 tons of plastic bottles from its landfill and recycling sites to nearby recycling centers.

In the eight months after the ban, the county hauled almost 250 tons of plastics to be recycled - that's about triple the pace that Johnstonians set the year before. Those numbers don't include recycling done by towns like Clayton that haul their own materials.

"The plastic recycling is having a very positive effect on the environment," said Tim Broome, director of public utilities for the county. The landfill ban includes any plastic bottle with a base wider than its neck, such as drink bottles, salad dressing bottles and shampoo and soap bottles.

The state didn't include any money with the new law, though, so Broome's department has paid for the additional burden from the fees it charges, which have not increased recently.

The upside, said collection site superintendent Kenneth Evans, is that less plastic is going into the landfill, and more people have begun recycling. The county has also seen more recycling of non-plastic materials. Statewide figures on recent recycling are not yet available, but a state official said Johnston County's numbers were promising.

"That is music to my ears," said Scott Mouw, state recycling director. "That really was the intent of the law." Besides keeping plastic out of the landfills, he said, an increased plastic supply would benefit the large recycling companies that call North Carolina home.

andy.kenney@nando.com or 919-836-5758