

County Recycling Performance for Fiscal Year 2009-10

Background:

Each year the North Carolina Division of Environmental Assistance and Outreach uses the data from the Solid Waste and Materials Management annual report that is completed by each local government in North Carolina to assess the total amount of material recycled by North Carolina municipalities and counties.

During FY 2009-10 the recovery of traditional recyclable materials increased compared to previous years, and the proportion of materials recovered and returned to the economy compared to disposal was the highest on record. The ratio of recycling to disposal jumped to an all-time high of 0.14 during FY 09-10. This ratio is used to examine the success of materials recovery from year to year when compared to disposal, and is determined by comparing the amount of materials recovered by local governments to the amount of total waste disposal during any one year.

The disposal bans on plastic bottles, oil filters, and wooden pallets that became effective on October 1, 2009 contributed significantly to the implementation of recovery programs and led to the highest recovery of oil filters and plastic bottles on record. Plastic bottle recovery increased by 22 percent over the previous year, resulting in the sharpest gain in plastics recovery measured during the last ten years. Oil filter recovery and the number of local government operated oil filter recovery programs both increased dramatically, with a 65 percent increase in the number of programs and a 160 percent increase in the tons of oil filters collected.

Publicly operated curbside recycling programs experienced significant growth for the second year in a row, climbing to 259 programs from 214 the previous year. This continues last year's reversal of a decreasing trend in the number of units served that ran from 1998 to 2007. The number of households served by curbside recycling in North Carolina grew to 1.62 million, up from 1.52 million during FY 08-09. Over a third or 37.9 percent of households in the state have access to curbside recycling service.

Market prices for recyclable materials were strong through FY 2009-10, and have thoroughly rebounded from the dramatic drop experienced in late 2008. Prices rose for most commodities through the course of FY 10 before declining slightly toward the end of the fiscal year remaining strong well into FY 2010-11. Spring 2010 was a high water mark for pricing of the whole range of materials during FY 2009-10, with a doubling or greater of prices for steel cans, PET, newsprint, and mixed paper from the beginning of the year.

County Recycling Program Performance:

This document provides the rankings of counties and their recycling performance for FY 2009-10. The total tonnage shown for each county includes materials recycled by both county and the municipal programs within the county.

There are many factors that impact the success of individual counties in diverting waste from disposal. While location, access to recycling markets, and local economic conditions are important, the commitment of communities and local leaders to waste reduction and recycling can allow smaller and more rural counties to perform well relative to more populated areas of the state.

The list detailing per capita annual recycling rates for each North Carolina county is provided below. Yard waste, tires and some special wastes are excluded from the totals to allow consistent comparisons from year-to-year. For more information, contact Rob Taylor at (919) 715-6528.

Rank	County Name	Total Tonnage (FY 0910)	Population	Per Capita Recovery (lbs)
1	PITT COUNTY	49,763	158,541	627.8
2	CATAWBA COUNTY	35,063	157,002	446.7

3	BUNCOMBE COUNTY	45,285	230,421	393.1
4	ORANGE COUNTY	18,274	132,272	276.3
5	SWAIN COUNTY	1,827	13,851	263.8
6	DARE COUNTY	4,461	34,355	259.7
7	WATAUGA COUNTY	5,814	45,377	256.2
8	MACON COUNTY	4,348	34,494	252.1
9	GUILFORD COUNTY	53,168	475,953	223.4
10	PAMLICO COUNTY	1,246	12,838	194.1
11	NEW HANOVER COUNTY	17,978	194,054	185.3
12	HAYWOOD COUNTY	5,231	58,028	180.3
13	BRUNSWICK COUNTY	9,478	107,127	176.9
14	FORSYTH COUNTY	29,941	355,575	168.4
15	MECKLENBURG COUNTY	73,442	894,290	164.2
16	CURRITUCK COUNTY	1,857	23,815	156.0
17	HYDE COUNTY	415	5,391	154.0
18	ALEXANDER COUNTY	2,567	37,316	137.6
19	JACKSON COUNTY	2,572	37,990	135.4
20	TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY	2,085	31,091	134.1
21	CRAVEN COUNTY	6,633	100,261	132.3
22	CHOWAN COUNTY	953	14,818	128.6
23	MADISON COUNTY	1,333	20,846	127.9
24	WAKE COUNTY	56,715	892,409	127.1
25	DURHAM COUNTY	16,627	266,132	124.9
26	BURKE COUNTY	5,576	89,653	124.4
27	YANCEY COUNTY	1,123	18,551	121.0
28	ASHE COUNTY	1,571	26,491	118.6
29	PERQUIMANS COUNTY	730	12,980	112.5
30	CARTERET COUNTY	3,624	64,712	112.0
31	PASQUOTANK COUNTY	2,286	41,845	109.3
32	MOORE COUNTY	4,673	86,945	107.5
33	CHATHAM COUNTY	3,264	62,482	104.5
34	CAMDEN COUNTY	508	9,732	104.4
35	HENDERSON COUNTY	5,483	105,221	104.2
36	ALLEGHANY COUNTY	585	11,258	103.9
37	CABARRUS COUNTY	8,883	174,255	101.9
38	MITCHELL COUNTY	797	15,976	99.8
39	IREDELL COUNTY	7,811	157,013	99.5
40	ONSLOW COUNTY	8,302	179,455	92.5
41	DAVIE COUNTY	1,897	41,752	90.9
42	PENDER COUNTY	2,400	53,095	90.4
43	LINCOLN COUNTY	3,368	75,702	89.0
44	CUMBERLAND COUNTY	14,201	321,071	88.5
45	GATES COUNTY	485	11,814	82.0
46	UNION COUNTY	7,931	196,322	80.8
47	WAYNE COUNTY	4,608	116,554	79.1
48	POLK COUNTY	757	19,355	78.2
49	NASH COUNTY	3,735	95,804	78.0
50	DAVIDSON COUNTY	6,114	159,947	76.5
51	SCOTLAND COUNTY	1,407	36,926	76.2
52	ALAMANCE COUNTY	5,603	148,338	75.6
53	BEAUFORT COUNTY	1,765	47,393	74.5

54	GRAHAM COUNTY	299	8,327	71.8
55	SURRY COUNTY	2,527	73,881	68.4
56	MCDOWELL COUNTY	1,483	44,742	66.3
57	ROCKINGHAM COUNTY	3,000	91,878	65.3
58	LEE COUNTY	1,838	58,563	62.8
59	AVERY COUNTY	564	18,303	61.7
60	GRANVILLE COUNTY	1,767	57,434	61.5
61	WILSON COUNTY	2,397	80,005	59.9
62	YADKIN COUNTY	1,127	37,996	59.3
63	RUTHERFORD COUNTY	1,835	63,821	57.5
64	PERSON COUNTY	1,092	38,272	57.1
65	FRANKLIN COUNTY	1,674	59,191	56.5
66	HARNETT COUNTY	3,189	112,844	56.5
67	CALDWELL COUNTY	2,249	80,130	56.1
68	CLAY COUNTY	288	10,538	54.6
69	RANDOLPH COUNTY	3,887	142,467	54.6
70	CLEVELAND COUNTY	2,633	98,628	53.4
71	LENOIR COUNTY	1,469	57,221	51.3
72	BLADEN COUNTY	816	32,043	51.0
73	GASTON COUNTY	5,265	207,234	50.8
74	MARTIN COUNTY	593	23,855	49.7
75	DUPLIN COUNTY	1,275	53,659	47.5
76	EDGECOMBE COUNTY	1,202	51,327	46.9
77	HOKE COUNTY	1,019	46,134	44.2
78	WILKES COUNTY	1,494	67,519	44.2
79	HERTFORD COUNTY	498	24,010	41.5
80	WASHINGTON COUNTY	268	13,000	41.2
81	ROWAN COUNTY	2,835	140,495	40.4
82	WARREN COUNTY	387	19,932	38.9
83	TYRRELL COUNTY	81	4,251	38.1
84	VANCE COUNTY	825	43,614	37.8
85	MONTGOMERY COUNTY	493	27,983	35.2
86	JOHNSTON COUNTY	2,616	168,217	31.1
87	RICHMOND COUNTY	683	46,847	29.2
88	CHEROKEE COUNTY	381	27,090	28.1
89	GREENE COUNTY	297	21,384	27.8
90	SAMPSON COUNTY	893	65,406	27.3
91	STOKES COUNTY	609	46,792	26.0
92	STANLY COUNTY	688	60,079	22.9
93	CASWELL COUNTY	245	23,571	20.8
94	ANSON COUNTY	196	25,193	15.6
95	BERTIE COUNTY	137	20,114	13.6
96	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	97	21,018	9.2
97	COLUMBUS COUNTY	255	56,309	9.1
98	JONES COUNTY	44	10,150	8.7
99	HALIFAX COUNTY	235	55,173	8.5
100	ROBESON COUNTY	407	131,080	6.2