



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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Public recycling programs contribute to record low disposal rates; state rankings profile the most effective recycling communities in North Carolina

RALEIGH – North Carolina recorded the lowest per-capita rate for solid waste disposal in 2013 since measurement began in 1991, continuing a steady downward trend in disposal per person that started in 2006.

Public recycling programs across the state are contributing to this trend by providing services that divert materials from disposal and return them to the state's recycling economy.

The N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources collects data on disposal and public recycling programs each year, tracking progress being made in recycling efforts.

“The business of recycling is an increasingly dynamic contributor to the North Carolina economy and public recycling programs serve as a critical link in the supply chain delivering materials to industry,” said Scott Mouw, state Recycling Program director in the Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service.

The nature of materials collected and managed by public recycling programs continues to change, as does the types of recycling services provided. Fiscal Year 2012-13 saw the launch of the state's first public program collecting food waste from citizens for composting in Orange County. More citizens than ever have access to curbside recycling, with 315 public curbside recycling programs serving more than 1.84 million N.C. households. Efforts to collect special wastes such as electronics, fluorescent lights and used cooking oil also grew last year. Public recycling programs have tripled the amount of construction and demolition waste they recycle in the last ten years, with more public programs collecting used shingles for use as an ingredient in asphalt pavement.

DENR uses municipal and county report data to profile public recycling efforts and to measure the per-capita recycling rates for each county in the state. Counties are then ranked based on their program performance. A copy of the rankings for FY 2012-13 is included below. Counties are ranked in two different ways: first based on their total recycling of all materials, and second based on their recycling of common household recyclables. In each case, data on the recovery of yard waste and tires is excluded from the totals to allow for consistency. Tire and yard waste generation can vary widely from year to year and by region based a number of conditions.

The per capita recovery rate for common household recyclables helps compare the relative effectiveness of residential recycling services, while total recycling measures broader community efforts. Communities ranked high on each list offer examples of the most effective recycling programs in North Carolina.

“Catawba, Pitt, Dare, Orange and Watauga Counties have demonstrated longstanding leadership, and continue to serve as models for the rest of the state by operating an array of programs that target a wide range of materials” said Rob Taylor, DENR's Local Government Recycling Assistance team leader.

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Onslow and Currituck Counties continue to improve their performance by growing their recovery of common household materials, while Pasquotank and Cumberland Counties push towards the top of the Total Public Recycling list through efforts that target materials such as concrete, bricks and shingles. Pitt and Catawba Counties have traded places for the number 1 and number 2 spots on the Total Public Recycling list for the last several years, with Catawba County reclaiming the top spot for FY 2012-13.

For information on recycling and solid waste disposal, see the FY 2012-13 North Carolina Solid Waste and Materials Management Annual Report at:

http://portal.ncdenr.org/c/document_library/get_file?p_l_id=4649434&folderId=15429422&name=DLFE-81517.pdf.

Total Public Recycling Per Capita Recovery			Common Household Recyclables Per Capita Recovery		
Rank	County	Lbs/person	Rank	County	Lbs/person
1	CATAWBA COUNTY	638.73	1	DARE COUNTY	279.59
2	PITT COUNTY	420.25	2	PITT COUNTY	245.81
3	PASQUOTANK COUNTY	376.29	3	WATAUGA COUNTY	233.08
4	DARE COUNTY	309.92	4	CATAWBA COUNTY	223.17
5	CUMBERLAND COUNTY	304.56	5	BRUNSWICK COUNTY	215.80
6	ORANGE COUNTY	287.52	6	ONSLow COUNTY	193.82
7	MACON COUNTY	253.95	7	CURRITUCK COUNTY	192.71
8	WATAUGA COUNTY	247.99	8	ORANGE COUNTY	186.60
9	BRUNSWICK COUNTY	234.28	9	CABARRUS COUNTY	154.89
10	CURRITUCK COUNTY	218.11	10	GUILFORD COUNTY	151.91
11	ONSLow COUNTY	200.09	11	NEW HANOVER COUNTY	140.48
12	IREDELL COUNTY	198.03	12	MECKLENBURG COUNTY	137.99
13	NEW HANOVER COUNTY	194.19	13	MACON COUNTY	137.68
14	BUNCOMBE COUNTY	173.97	14	HAYWOOD COUNTY	134.42
15	NASH COUNTY	168.70	15	MOORE COUNTY	128.74
16	ALEXANDER COUNTY	166.59	16	ALEXANDER COUNTY	128.18
17	HAYWOOD COUNTY	162.42	17	BUNCOMBE COUNTY	127.85
18	MECKLENBURG COUNTY	161.20	18	CRAVEN COUNTY	127.69
19	CABARRUS COUNTY	161.13	19	TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY	120.91
20	GUILFORD COUNTY	160.07	20	WAKE COUNTY	119.75
21	MOORE COUNTY	146.57	21	FORSYTH COUNTY	115.31
22	HYDE COUNTY	146.30	22	DURHAM COUNTY	114.66
23	FORSYTH COUNTY	145.17	23	PAMLICO COUNTY	110.83
24	WAKE COUNTY	134.32	24	PENDER COUNTY	106.83
25	CRAVEN COUNTY	132.97	25	DAVIE COUNTY	105.21
26	TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY	132.08	26	ALLEGHANY COUNTY	102.59
27	PENDER COUNTY	131.80	27	JACKSON COUNTY	97.85
28	GRANVILLE COUNTY	128.94	28	GRANVILLE COUNTY	97.52
29	ASHE COUNTY	125.42	29	HYDE COUNTY	95.60
30	PAMLICO COUNTY	124.77	30	CHATHAM COUNTY	95.48
31	MADISON COUNTY	124.47	31	GASTON COUNTY	91.40

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32	JACKSON COUNTY	124.16
33	ALLEGHANY COUNTY	120.97
34	CHATHAM COUNTY	120.57
35	DURHAM COUNTY	120.31
36	DAVIDSON COUNTY	119.93
37	SWAIN COUNTY	111.02
38	DAVIE COUNTY	109.34
39	GASTON COUNTY	105.20
40	HENDERSON COUNTY	102.70
41	YANCEY COUNTY	101.76
42	CARTERET COUNTY	97.60
43	CAMDEN COUNTY	96.47
44	POLK COUNTY	93.21
45	CHOWAN COUNTY	92.29
46	UNION COUNTY	92.26
47	SCOTLAND COUNTY	92.11
48	LEE COUNTY	90.71
49	MCDOWELL COUNTY	90.04
50	BURKE COUNTY	88.50
51	ALAMANCE COUNTY	86.78
52	MITCHELL COUNTY	83.96
53	PERSON COUNTY	83.05
54	AVERY COUNTY	79.80
55	PERQUIMANS COUNTY	79.50
56	CLEVELAND COUNTY	78.40
57	LINCOLN COUNTY	78.36
58	HERTFORD COUNTY	77.49
59	WILSON COUNTY	76.13
60	CLAY COUNTY	74.07
61	SURRY COUNTY	68.97
62	WAYNE COUNTY	67.65
63	WASHINGTON COUNTY	65.76
64	MONTGOMERY COUNTY	60.02
65	FRANKLIN COUNTY	59.95
66	RANDOLPH COUNTY	56.18
67	BEAUFORT COUNTY	55.39
68	RUTHERFORD COUNTY	55.27
69	CALDWELL COUNTY	54.24
70	GATES COUNTY	52.67
71	ROWAN COUNTY	50.70
72	BLADEN COUNTY	50.66
73	LENOIR COUNTY	50.41
74	YADKIN COUNTY	50.19
75	WARREN COUNTY	48.75
76	JOHNSTON COUNTY	48.70

32	ASHE COUNTY	90.75
33	MADISON COUNTY	90.43
34	SCOTLAND COUNTY	87.68
35	UNION COUNTY	85.77
36	CUMBERLAND COUNTY	83.67
37	HENDERSON COUNTY	82.66
38	POLK COUNTY	81.13
39	CARTERET COUNTY	80.27
40	MCDOWELL COUNTY	78.89
41	ALAMANCE COUNTY	75.33
42	LEE COUNTY	74.43
43	NASH COUNTY	72.75
44	SWAIN COUNTY	71.63
45	CHOWAN COUNTY	71.44
46	PERSON COUNTY	71.37
47	PASQUOTANK COUNTY	67.99
48	HERTFORD COUNTY	67.53
49	CAMDEN COUNTY	63.24
50	PERQUIMANS COUNTY	61.61
51	DAVIDSON COUNTY	60.70
52	MONTGOMERY COUNTY	58.49
53	MITCHELL COUNTY	58.40
54	SURRY COUNTY	57.91
55	YANCEY COUNTY	57.59
56	IREDELL COUNTY	55.36
57	WILSON COUNTY	53.87
58	RANDOLPH COUNTY	51.88
59	WAYNE COUNTY	51.34
60	CLEVELAND COUNTY	50.01
61	ROWAN COUNTY	48.95
62	BEAUFORT COUNTY	47.84
63	CALDWELL COUNTY	46.23
64	WARREN COUNTY	45.35
65	YADKIN COUNTY	45.32
66	LENOIR COUNTY	42.49
67	FRANKLIN COUNTY	41.21
68	BURKE COUNTY	41.10
69	GATES COUNTY	40.76
70	JOHNSTON COUNTY	40.61
71	VANCE COUNTY	39.63
72	CLAY COUNTY	37.72
73	RUTHERFORD COUNTY	37.00
74	DUPLIN COUNTY	36.65
75	STANLY COUNTY	35.63
76	SAMPSON COUNTY	33.09

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77	DUPLIN COUNTY	47.60	77	WILKES COUNTY	32.71
78	VANCE COUNTY	45.46	78	ROBESON COUNTY	32.54
79	STANLY COUNTY	44.05	79	BLADEN COUNTY	32.41
80	ROCKINGHAM COUNTY	43.31	80	AVERY COUNTY	30.82
81	HARNETT COUNTY	41.28	81	LINCOLN COUNTY	30.58
82	WILKES COUNTY	39.57	82	HARNETT COUNTY	30.12
83	SAMPSON COUNTY	38.96	83	GRAHAM COUNTY	27.17
84	ROBESON COUNTY	38.84	84	EDGECOMBE COUNTY	26.09
85	HOKE COUNTY	36.90	85	HOKE COUNTY	25.04
86	EDGECOMBE COUNTY	36.69	86	STOKES COUNTY	24.07
87	STOKES COUNTY	31.97	87	ROCKINGHAM COUNTY	23.91
88	RICHMOND COUNTY	31.42	88	GREENE COUNTY	23.79
89	MARTIN COUNTY	30.20	89	TYRRELL COUNTY	23.64
90	GRAHAM COUNTY	30.15	90	CHEROKEE COUNTY	22.24
91	TYRRELL COUNTY	28.49	91	CASWELL COUNTY	19.32
92	CHEROKEE COUNTY	26.24	92	WASHINGTON COUNTY	18.85
93	CASWELL COUNTY	25.95	93	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	13.22
94	GREENE COUNTY	25.78	94	BERTIE COUNTY	11.26
95	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	16.50	95	RICHMOND COUNTY	9.70
96	COLUMBUS COUNTY	13.11	96	MARTIN COUNTY	9.36
97	BERTIE COUNTY	12.81	97	JONES COUNTY	7.44
98	ANSON COUNTY	11.06	98	COLUMBUS COUNTY	5.02
99	JONES COUNTY	7.80	99	ANSON COUNTY	3.58
100	HALIFAX COUNTY	4.67	100	HALIFAX COUNTY	2.35

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