



## N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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### **NORTH CAROLINA RECYCLING DATA SENDS MIXED SIGNALS**

**RALEIGH** – Total recovery from local government recycling programs dropped by more than 90,000 tons last year as revealed in a recent analysis conducted by the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

According to the FY 07-08 Solid Waste Management Annual Report and an annual performance analysis conducted by the department, recovery from local government programs fell from almost 1.35 million tons to approximately 1.26 million tons. The 90,000 ton decrease represents a 6.8 percent decrease in recovery. During the same period, waste disposed in North Carolina fell roughly 4.7 percent. The analysis identified decreases in yard waste recovery and tire recycling as the primary reasons for the overall decline in recovery.

“Despite this drop in recovery, there are some very positive trends,” said Jim Hickman, local government assistance team leader for the state Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance. “If you look at the materials commonly accepted in curbside recycling programs, such as paper and beverage containers, you’ll actually find that tonnage continued to climb. The decline in yard waste recovery is mostly due to the drought – in normal years, yard waste would be 10 to 15 percent higher. However, overall there is still a lot of room for improvement in local recycling efforts.”

The analysis shows that when yard waste and tire recovery data were removed, the state experienced relatively strong recycling growth during the last decade with raw tonnage increasing by more than 28 percent and per capita recovery increasing by more than 10 percent. The average county per capita recovery rate, excluding tires and yard waste, fell slightly from last fiscal year to approximately 113 pounds per capita, while the counties with the top 10 recovery rates remained relatively unchanged.

“Improving the performance of local recycling programs has never been more important to North Carolina, especially when it comes to economic development,” according to Scott Mouw, chief of the Community and Business Assistance Section of the state Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance. “We have companies in the state that rely on the flow of materials from recycling programs to sustain and create new jobs. If we are able to meet our ambitious goal to recycle 2 million tons annually from local programs by 2012 and if we successfully implement the upcoming disposal bans plastic bottles, wooden pallets and oil filters, the result will be new employment opportunities for North Carolinians.”

As an example, in the past year, two plastic recycling companies made major commitments to creating recycling jobs in the Carolinas. NURRC LLC recently expanded a PET plastic recycling facility in Spartanburg, S.C. The plant is expected to recycle more than 100 million pounds of soda and drink bottles each year. Most of the recycled resin produced at the plant is shipped to Southeastern Container in Enka, where it is turned back into new soda bottles. And Clear Path Recycling LLC recently announced that it will build a PET plastic recycling facility in Fayetteville. The plant is expected to create 100 new jobs and consume 280 million pounds of recycled soda and drink bottles each year.

A list detailing per capita annual recycling rates for each North Carolina county is listed below. The totals include tonnage recycled by both county and municipal programs within the county. Yard waste, tires and some special wastes are excluded from the totals to allow consistent comparisons from year-to-year. For more information, contact Hickman at (919) 715-6528.

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County	Population	Total Recovery (tons)	Per Capita Recovery (lbs)
ALAMANCE COUNTY	143,154	6,232.30	87.07
ALEXANDER COUNTY	36,656	2,073.60	113.14
ALLEGHANY COUNTY	11,088	535.50	96.59
ANSON COUNTY	25,332	206.00	16.26
ASHE COUNTY	26,003	1,320.57	101.57
AVERY COUNTY	18,292	916.14	100.17
BEAUFORT COUNTY	46,070	2,402.43	104.29
BERTIE COUNTY	19,971	153.79	15.40
BLADEN COUNTY	32,500	685.41	42.18
BRUNSWICK COUNTY	99,440	4,321.03	86.91
BUNCOMBE COUNTY	225,609	50,726.73	449.69
BURKE COUNTY	88,439	3,464.22	78.34
CABARRUS COUNTY	164,384	6,477.37	78.81
CALDWELL COUNTY	79,376	1,869.03	47.09
CAMDEN COUNTY	9,519	1,251.12	262.87
CARTERET COUNTY	63,294	4,376.97	138.31
CASWELL COUNTY	23,508	258.57	22.00
CATAWBA COUNTY	153,404	52,609.31	685.89
CHATHAM COUNTY	59,168	2,637.98	89.17
CHEROKEE COUNTY	27,026	429.75	31.80
CHOWAN COUNTY	14,660	1,057.48	144.27
CLAY COUNTY	10,326	515.00	99.75
CLEVELAND COUNTY	97,144	2,353.64	48.46
COLUMBUS COUNTY	54,460	1,185.89	43.55
CRAVEN COUNTY	96,406	6,971.09	144.62
CUMBERLAND COUNTY	313,616	14,480.89	92.35
CURRITUCK COUNTY	23,731	1,713.42	144.40
DARE COUNTY	34,272	17,024.19	993.48
DAVIDSON COUNTY	156,400	4,130.18	52.82
DAVIE COUNTY	40,447	1,869.31	92.43
DUPLIN COUNTY	53,133	2,157.89	81.23
DURHAM COUNTY	254,740	14,786.60	116.09
EDGECOMBE COUNTY	51,813	823.37	31.78
FORSYTH COUNTY	338,679	16,787.15	99.13
FRANKLIN COUNTY	56,456	2,244.26	79.50
GASTON COUNTY	200,972	4,704.75	46.82
GATES COUNTY	11,819	622.10	105.27
GRAHAM COUNTY	8,144	40.00	9.82
GRANVILLE COUNTY	55,667	1,890.52	67.92
GREENE COUNTY	21,110	248.08	23.50
GUILFORD COUNTY	460,780	46,187.78	200.48
HALIFAX COUNTY	55,352	376.75	13.61

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HARNETT COUNTY	106,506	1,091.63	20.50
HAYWOOD COUNTY	57,031	3,483.58	122.16
HENDERSON COUNTY	102,142	5,591.17	109.48
HERTFORD COUNTY	23,730	464.82	39.18
HOKE COUNTY	42,932	891.10	41.51
HYDE COUNTY	5,447	186.34	68.42
IREDELL COUNTY	150,421	10,420.93	138.56
JACKSON COUNTY	36,815	2,669.69	145.03
JOHNSTON COUNTY	157,296	2,103.69	26.75
JONES COUNTY	10,315	317.13	61.49
LEE COUNTY	56,376	2,221.50	78.81
LENOIR COUNTY	57,642	1,769.05	61.38
LINCOLN COUNTY	72,776	3,217.94	88.43
MACON COUNTY	33,626	5,019.52	298.55
MADISON COUNTY	20,495	1,299.03	126.77
MARTIN COUNTY	23,906	552.23	46.20
MCDOWELL COUNTY	44,064	2,820.60	128.02
MECKLENBURG COUNTY	863,147	78,741.53	182.45
MITCHELL COUNTY	15,950	1,000.07	125.40
MONTGOMERY COUNTY	27,588	690.38	50.05
MOORE COUNTY	83,932	3,516.79	83.80
NASH COUNTY	92,915	2,604.85	56.07
NEW HANOVER COUNTY	189,922	16,616.63	174.98
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	21,235	83.32	7.85
ONSLow COUNTY	169,302	3,425.54	40.47
ORANGE COUNTY	127,344	19,124.30	300.36
PAMLICO COUNTY	12,947	954.31	147.42
PASQUOTANK COUNTY	40,880	2,773.37	135.68
PENDER COUNTY	50,430	2,293.03	90.94
PERQUIMANS COUNTY	12,722	908.93	142.89
PERSON COUNTY	37,640	489.51	26.01
PITT COUNTY	151,970	42,532.94	559.75
POLK COUNTY	19,040	1,375.50	144.49
RANDOLPH COUNTY	139,422	2,595.48	37.23
RICHMOND COUNTY	46,672	2,128.79	91.22
ROBESON COUNTY	129,425	859.73	13.29
ROCKINGHAM COUNTY	91,646	2,072.71	45.23
ROWAN COUNTY	136,486	3,799.38	55.67
RUTHERFORD COUNTY	62,926	1,890.56	60.09
SAMPSON COUNTY	64,522	935.36	28.99
SCOTLAND COUNTY	36,830	1,455.40	79.03
STANLY COUNTY	59,158	648.63	21.93

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STOKES COUNTY	46,257	845.29	36.55
SURRY COUNTY	73,150	2,899.72	79.28
SWAIN COUNTY	13,889	1,966.63	283.19
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY	30,758	2,459.38	159.92
TYRRELL COUNTY	4,290	141.31	65.88
UNION COUNTY	182,344	9,912.50	108.72
VANCE COUNTY	43,583	808.76	37.11
WAKE COUNTY	832,590	51,036.67	122.60
WARREN COUNTY	19,919	364.35	36.58
WASHINGTON COUNTY	13,214	285.00	43.14
WATAUGA COUNTY	44,696	4,713.89	210.93
WAYNE COUNTY	115,225	4,818.65	83.64
WILKES COUNTY	67,182	1,442.78	42.95
WILSON COUNTY	77,970	2,508.61	64.35
YADKIN COUNTY	37,850	1,465.67	77.45
YANCEY COUNTY	18,550	1,427.23	153.88

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