

## Morris County MUA Issues New Guidelines for the Proper Preparation of Plastics

The Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority (MCMUA) has updated the guidelines for the proper preparation of plastics for those municipalities that participate in the MCMUA's "all-in-one" single-stream curbside recycling collection program.

The guidelines, which apply to Boonton, Boonton Township, Chatham Borough, Chatham Township, Chester Borough, Denville, East Hanover, Florham Park, Hanover, Mine Hill, Morris Plains, Netcong, Pequannock Township, Rockaway Borough, Wharton, and the recycling depots located in Harding, Mt. Arlington, Randolph, and Rockaway Township, are designed to make the recycling process more efficient.

Starting in 2019, plastic containers (bottles and non-bottles) coded 1, 2, and 5 are acceptable in the residential curbside recycling program. "Look for the recycling symbol on the bottom of the plastic container", said Liz Sweedy, Morris County's recycling coordinator. She continued, "Some of the containers that are coded # 1 (PET, Poly-Ethylene Terephthalate) are water and soda bottles, salad dressing bottles, microwavable food trays, and peanut butter containers, for example. Containers coded # 2 (HDPE, High Density Polyethylene) are milk jugs, shampoo bottles, butter and yogurt tubs. Plastic containers coded # 5 (PP, Polypropylene) are ketchup bottles, syrup bottles, and some yogurt containers."

Due to restrictions imposed by China on imported recyclable commodities, the MCMUA's recycling market has been negatively impacted and some plastic containers are no longer acceptable in the curbside program. Unacceptable plastics have no plastic container code on them or are coded # 3 (V, PVC Vinyl) used in cooking oil bottles, clear food packaging, PVC piping, and mouthwash bottles; # 4 (LDPE, Low Density Polyethylene) used in plastic shopping bags and trash bags; # 6 (PS Polystyrene) used in disposable cups, plates, egg cartons, and clamshell take-out containers; and # 7 (Other) used in 3- to 5-gallon water jugs and some food containers. Sweedy noted that "Plastic containers that show the numbers 3, 4, 6, and 7 in small recycling symbols on their bottoms are not mandated recyclable materials in the Morris County

Solid Waste Management Plan. Morris County’s mandated recyclable materials are plastic bottles coded 1 and 2, aluminum cans, glass bottles and jars, steel (tin) cans, newspaper, corrugated cardboard, mixed paper, and organics that include leaves, grass clippings, brush, logs, stumps, branches, and tree parts.”

The MCMUA requests that residents make sure that their recyclables are empty, clean and dry before putting them at the curb in a reuseable container. Shredded paper is acceptable in a translucent plastic bag, but nothing else should be. When grocery bags and other flexible plastic films get to the recycling facilities, they get caught in the machinery and cause delays and increased processing costs.

For additional information about acceptable and unacceptable material in the MCMUA’s “all-in-one” single-stream curbside recycling program, visit [WWW.MCMUA.COM](http://WWW.MCMUA.COM), or go to your town’s website.