

Morris County MUA Guidelines for Plastics Recycling

Only Plastic Containers Coded 1,2, and 5 to be Accepted

In 2019, the Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority announced an important change in its plastic container recycling rules for its single stream curbside recycling program.

Only plastic containers (bottles and non-bottle) coded 1,2, and 5 are acceptable in residential curbside recycling.



Look for the recycling symbol on the bottom of the plastic container, advised **Morris County's Recycling Coordinator Liz Sweedy**.

The MCMUA's guidelines apply to the following 20 municipalities, which have MUA curbside pickup: Boonton, Boonton Township, Chatham Borough, Chatham Township, Chester Borough, Denville, East Hanover, Florham Park, Hanover, Mine Hill, Morris Plains, Netcong, Pequannock, Rockaway Borough, Wharton, and the recycling depots in Harding, Mt. Arlington, Randolph, Rockaway Township, and Washington Township. ***

Acceptable plastic bottle/containers include the following:

- Containers that are coded #1 (PET, Poly-EthyleneTerephthalate) include water, soda and salad dressing bottles, microwavable food trays, and peanut butter container.
- Containers coded #2 (HDPE, High Density Polyethylene) include milk jugs, shampoo bottles, and butter and yogurt tubs.
- Containers coded #5 (PP, Polypropylene) include ketchup and syrup bottles, and some yogurt containers.

Due to restrictions imposed by China on imported recycling commodities, the MCMUA's market has been negatively impacted, and some plastic containers are no longer accepted in the curbside program.

Unacceptable plastic bottles/containers include the following:

- Plastics with no container code (no number in a recycling symbol);
- Plastics coded #3 (V, PVC Vinyl), which include cooking oil and mouthwash bottles, clear food packaging, and PVC piping;
- Plastics coded #4 (LDPE, Low Density Polyethylene) used in plastic shopping bags and trash bags;
- Plastics coded #6 (PS Polystyrene) used in disposable cups, plates, egg cartons, and clamshell take-out containers;
- Plastics coded #7 (Other) used in three-to-five gallon water jugs and some food containers.

Plastic bottles and containers that are coded with the numbers 3,4,6,and 7 are not mandated recyclable materials in the Morris County Solid Waste Management Plan and are not acceptable in the MCMUA's single-stream recycling program," said Sweedy.

Morris County's mandated recycling materials are plastic bottles and containers coded 1 and 2 (and containers coded #5 are being accepted), plus 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 also requests that residents make sure their recyclable items are empty, clean and dry before putting them at the curb in reusable containers (loose, and not in plastic bags).

When **plastic grocery bags** and other flexible plastic film gets to the recycling center, they can be caught in the machinery and cause delays and increased processing costs. Clean, dry plastic bags can be recycled at local stores that have designated drop-off bins for plastic bags.

For additional information about acceptable and unacceptable materials in the MCMUA's all-in-one" single-stream curbside recycling program, visit www.mcmua.com or visit your municipal website.

**** Residents in the county's other 19 towns, which do not employ the MCMUA for single-stream pickups, should check their municipal website for recycling guidelines.*

