



MIDDLESEX COUNTY IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY

101 INTERCHANGE PLAZA • CRANBURY, NEW JERSEY 08512

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MCIA Division of Recycling Talks Trash with Residents

MIDDLESEX COUNTY –The Middlesex County Improvement Authority’s Division of Recycling is appealing to residents to be mindful of debris left in curbside leaf piles.

“I’ve put out a notice to the department of public works crews in our 23 participating municipalities, because they’re the ones who are picking up and transporting the leaves,” said Ed Windas, division recycling manager. “But to get to the source, we really need to pass the word along to residents too.” As of late, workers sorting through fall’s excess foliage at the Quarry Lane composting facility in North Brunswick have made a daily regiment of sidelining and stockpiling garbage from the heaps. “It’s like a museum out there with all of the things they’re pulling from the piles,” Windas quipped. “We’re seeing everything from Styrofoam cups to plastic bottles and discarded tools, like a forgotten rake or a broken shovel.”

Considering the County processed nearly 15,000 tons of leaves in 2012 – a somewhat bloated number due to Hurricane Sandy’s inland impact – one can see how the small increments of trash begin to add up. Beyond their ability to degrade the quality of the end product, these foreign materials can be problematic on several fronts, Windas points out.

“The bigger issue is that some of the metal objects we’ve been finding can destroy the flail on a windrow turner,” he said. “Repairs and part replacements on these monstrous machines can be expensive, an inconvenient fact one of our contractors found out the hard way just last season.” Windrow turners are heavy equipment that are used at the County’s yard waste site to straddle and then mix rows of leaves, which in Quarry Lane’s case, typically span 12-feet wide and 6-feet tall and trail about 250 feet in length.

Quarry Lane operators initiate this monthly process only after each pile reaches a peak temperature of 140 degrees, Windas said.

“On top of the drawbacks for our machinery, the tedious task of sorting out garbage consumes an operator’s time, slowing down material processing,” Windas said.

This compost is made available to municipalities that participate in the leaf recycling program, free-of-charge, and often to County residents by extension of their local officials.

In 2013, area communities were on the receiving end of 1,105 cubic yards of County-provided compost, which acts as a nutrient-rich organic soil additive and presently, bears an average market price of approximately \$20 a cubic yard.

“We would hope all of our municipalities take advantage of this program,” said Middlesex County Freeholder and MCIA liaison Carol Barrett Bellante. “This is just another way we’re helping taxpayers save money, either directly to the municipality or indirectly to the residents. As we’ve all learned from the recent recession, every little bit helps.”

To find out more information on the MCIA’s Division of Recycling, for instance schedules, alerts or updates, log onto www.mciauth.com. Interested parties may also drop into its 55 Edgeboro Road location in East Brunswick or reach a staff member at 1-800-488-MCIA or at mciarecycling@mciauth.com.

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