

# My Prince George's County: Environment



## Environment

Prince George's County, Maryland



### We're #1...Again!

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*County leads State in waste diversion and recycling efforts*

**Largo, MD** – For the second consecutive year, the Prince George's County Department of the Environment is pleased to announce the County's continued leadership in the State for waste diversion and recycling. Through innovative programs and outstanding efforts by County residents and business, Prince George's County remains #1 in keeping waste out of the landfill (waste diversion) and ranks #2 in the State for recycling.

Special thanks are given to the residents of Prince George's County for their ongoing support and dedication to fundamental practices of reducing, reusing and recycling waste. Their adoption of small behavior changes in the disposal of trash and debris, results in a positive impact that not only affects this County, but creates a sustainable ripple effect nationwide.

"Over the past five years, Prince George's has celebrated incredible progress in public safety, education and health outcomes while achieving unprecedented economic development growth. Yet, many are unaware of the environmental improvements we have made that have transformed us from an average jurisdiction to a model in environmental management and stewardship statewide and nationally," said Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "I want to congratulate our Department of Environment for their innovative leadership and thank all of the residents and businesses of Prince George's County for creating a cleaner, greener, healthier and safer County for future Prince Georgians. To keep the momentum going, I encourage everyone to ask a relative, neighbor or friend to make a commitment to recycling. It will significantly reduce trash, which is great for the environment."

"As a County, we continue to make impressive advancements towards reaching our goal of zero waste," says Department of the Environment Director Adam Ortiz. "The responsible act of recycling is a win for the County and a great demonstration of our diligence to find alternatives to throwing trash away and giving it a new life."

The official data recently released by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) note the County's 2014 waste diversion remains strong at 64.03 percent, the highest in the State of Maryland. The County's recycling rate for 2014 is an impressive 59.03 percent, slightly less than Washington County's 2014 recycling rate of 60.59 percent.

MDE calculates the rate by adding the disposed trash tonnage and the recycling tonnage to provide a total waste number. The recycling tonnage is then divided by the total waste number (tonnage) to obtain the recycling rate. Because of the efforts residents and businesses have made in eliminating waste before it starts, the County received the maximum Source Reduction Credit of 5 percent from MDE. Examples of source reduction practices include leaving grass trimmings on your lawn to add nutrients back into the soil, using reusable shopping bags and water bottles and selecting products that contain the least amount of packaging.

"This accomplishment is a major success for the County. We're working hard get these rates higher by establishing recycling programs in every County business and multi-family property," said DoE's Recycling Section Manager Marilyn Rybak. "Setting up a program is easy and the County's Recycling Division is here to assist commercial, industrial, institutional and residential communities implement successful recycling and waste diversion programs, which may help save money on their disposal fees."

Recycling initiatives helping the County reduce its carbon footprint include a single-stream recycling program that utilizes a 65-gallon wheeled recycling cart, a food scrap composting pilot program for residential, commercial and educational institutions; and, the County's ban on disposable plastic bags in yard waste collection, reducing the amount of waste reaching the landfill and "mining" of materials on the landfill.

The County also passed a law requiring owners of businesses, apartments and condominiums to establish recycling programs within their offices and complexes; continues to foster a recycling partnership with Prince George's County Public Schools; and, conducts public outreach and educational programs for residents and businesses.

[View a full copy of the MDE Report.](#)

[View and download photos from the Prince George's County Materials Recycling Facility \(MRF\).](#)

For more information on the County's Recycling Program, source reduction or other waste management programs, visit [www.princegeorgescountymd.gov](http://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov) or contact CountyClick at 3-1-1.

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