



## Environment

Prince George's County, Maryland

### Prince George's County is #1

For Immediate Release: 2/24/2015 12:00 AM

Contact: Linda Lowe, Public Information Officer, Department of the Environment/301-883-5952

Prince George's County is #1

*Innovative Programs Make County Leader in Waste Diversion and Recycling*

**Largo, MD** – When it comes to waste diversion and recycling, Prince George's is Maryland's greenest County. The County now ranks No. 1 in the State for keeping trash out of its landfill and in second place for recycling. This is an all-time high for the County and a significant step towards its ultimate goal of zero waste.

"I want to thank all residents, businesses and nonprofits for stepping up to make Prince George's County clean, green and beautiful," says County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "Everyone has a role in making Prince George's County the best place to live, work and play in the region. Everyday actions like recycling make a difference in putting the County at the top."

"We have introduced new programs to efficiently capture and realize the value of many things that we throw away" says Department of the Environment Director Adam Ortiz. "However, the credit goes to our businesses and residents who have been recycling and composting like never before. We also thank the County Council and local activists for their advocacy and support."

According to official figures just released by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), the County's 2013 waste diversion rate rose to 64.53 percent surpassing its 2012 rate of 54.44 percent. The County also saw an increase in its recycling rate moving to 59.53 percent, up from 54.55 percent in 2012 and slightly behind Washington County.

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.

“We will continue to reach out and educate our residents and businesses to make sure they continue to recycle and compost,” said DoE's Recycling Section Manager Marilyn Rybak. “Our initiatives are some of the boldest and most innovative best practices that are in place, not only in the State, but nationwide.”

Several recycling initiatives that help the County reduce its carbon footprint include its single-stream recycling program that utilizes a 65-gallon wheeled recycling cart, allowing residents and businesses to recycle more items; a food scrap composting pilot program for residential, commercial and educational institutions; the County's inaugural ban on disposable plastic bags in yard waste collection, cutting down on the amount of waste reaching the landfill and “mining” of materials on the landfill.

Other new initiatives that will help boost the rate include a new County law requiring businesses to incorporate waste reduction and recycling programs in their daily practices, a recycling program geared toward multifamily dwellings (apartments and condominium), a new recycling partnership with Prince George's County Public Schools and Joint Base Andrews, and continued public outreach and educational programs for residents and businesses.

To view a full copy of the MDE Report, [click here](#). For more information on the County's Recycling Program, source reduction or other waste management programs, visit <http://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov> or contact County Click 3-1-1.

###