



## **Recycling/Clean Communities Education, Inspections, and Customer Service Support March 2024**

This report details Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority's (MCMUA) Recycling and Clean Communities education programs, inspections, and customer service support efforts for March 2024. This supplements the Recycling Coordinator's Report for the MCMUA's April 2024 Board meeting.

### **Recycling and Clean Communities Projects, Public Outreach, Education, and Inspections**

#### **Parsippany Troy-Hills High School Student Education:**

In February 2024, the MCMUA was invited by the Parsippany Hills High School Green Team to give a presentation on recycling to the school's students for certification with the Sustainable Jersey Program certification. On March 5, 2024, Toomey and Cumberton presented various recycling and waste reduction topics to the school's environmental science classes. Toomey adapted an existing MCMUA PowerPoint presentation to contain information appropriate for the high school level, and she and Cumberton divided up the material to present. This included information on the MCMUA, a review of the basics of the waste stream and recycling, a brief history of solid waste management and recycling in New Jersey, and how recycling works in Morris County, including a video tour of the Republic MRF. The students asked several excellent questions, and the club advisor invited the MCMUA to return in future school years to present again.

#### **Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) Food Matters Monthly Meeting:**

On March 12, 2024, Toomey attended and participated in the NRDC's Monthly Food Matters Network Meeting. The MCMUA participates in this meeting to gather information and make connections to assist in the ongoing food waste prevention project that initiated the recent partnership with the Center for EcoTechnology and their latest report on food waste prevention work opportunities in Morris County. Through this network, Toomey identified survey instruments and models for similar projects from other locations that can be used in the MCMUA project as it moves into phase two. The second phase, to be completed solely by the MCMUA, will cover reducing food insecurities while connecting individuals to solutions to minimize wasted food in the municipal solid waste stream.

#### **MCMUA Schedules Class A Recycling Facility Tours for MRCs:**

##### *Class A Recycling Facility Tour with Republic Services in Mine Hill, NJ:*

During the 2024 calendar year, all municipal recycling coordinators must attend a class A recycling facility tour in conjunction with their duties outlined in their municipal tonnage grant requirements. A Recycling Enhancement Act (REA) County grant requirement, the MCMUA must assist in arranging these tours for the municipalities. As a result, the MCMUA has contacted all five facilities where our municipalities send

their materials, arranged for tours, and requested that all municipalities attend the materials recovery facility (MRF) where their materials go for recycling.

To continue these tours into March, the MCMUA scheduled two tours for our Morris County MRCs at Trinity Recycling on March 13th and Republic Services on March 20<sup>th</sup>. To date, sixteen of our thirty-nine Coordinators have fulfilled this requirement and toured a facility, with another seven more scheduled to take our next tour in mid-April. Additionally, Ricova/ Recycling City in Clifton has scheduled tours in August and September this year, during which several of our eastern municipalities recycle their fiber from their dual-stream programs. At the beginning of June, the remaining MRCs who have yet to take advantage of these tours will be reminded of their obligation to attend and adhere to this requirement.

Lastly, as discussed at the March MUA Board Meeting, the Solid Waste Planning Division will hold a private Class A Materials Recovery Facility Tour with Republic Services in Mine Hill, NJ, on April 25 at 9 AM. Those who wish to attend can meet at the main office in Wharton at 8:30 AM and will travel in an MUA vehicle to the site. Alternatively, those wishing to attend can also meet the Division directly at 103 Iron Mountain Rd, Mine Hill Township, NJ 07803, at 9:00 AM for the tour. Those who wish to attend must wear study clothes and enclosed shoes for the tour, and the MCMUA will provide a safety vest and hard hat for you to wear. The tour will be hosted by Eric Gabrielson, Operations Manager at Republic Services, along with members of our recycling team. After touring Republic Services, those who would like to attend can also visit our permanent household hazardous waste facility and vegetative waste recycling facility in Mount Olive, where Steve Adams, MCMUA Hazardous and Vegetative Waste Manager, will discuss the operations at those two locations. For those looking to attend, please email me by Monday, April 22, to confirm your attendance.

So far, Board Members Ragonese and Szwak have reserved their seats on the tour bus.

### **MCMUA Recycling Education Outreach with our Morris County Municipal Depots:**

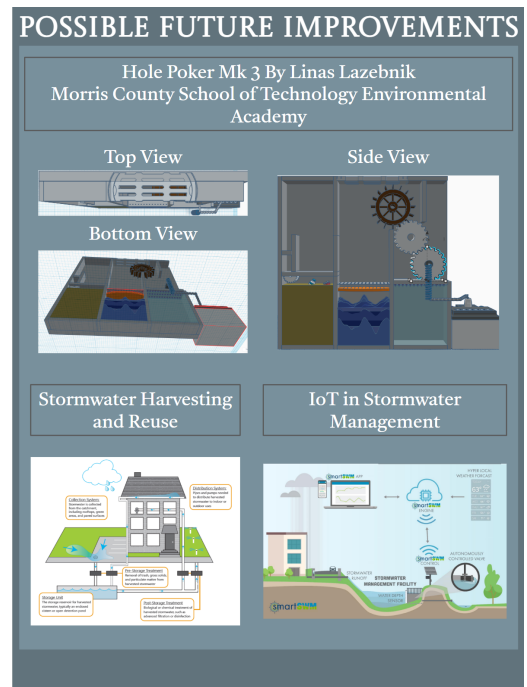
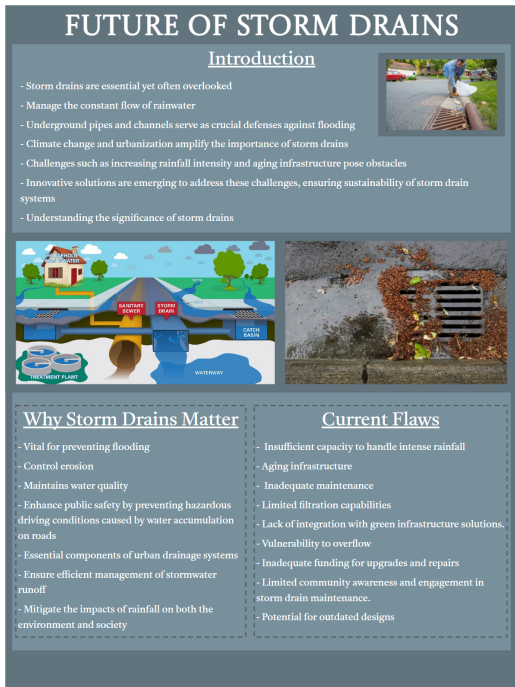
In March 2024, Marrone, Toomey, Birmingham, and Cumberton visited several of our county's municipal recycling centers to drop off our newly created A-frame acceptable and unacceptable recycling signs. These signs feature materials commonly accepted across all program MRFs for uniformity and most common offenders labeled as unacceptable for recycling. In addition to recycling signage, the MCMUA also ordered and received in A-Frame signage for acceptable and unacceptable Styrofoam signage for Long Hill in support of their recycling efforts, as well as acceptable and unacceptable scrap metal and acceptable grass and leaves signage for partner depots. These signs were delivered throughout the month and received celebrated praise from our municipal coordinators.

### **MCMUA Sponsored Internship with Morris County Vocational School District:**

In March of 2024, Linas Lizabnik, an intern from the School District's Environmental Academy, continued his internship with the Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority (MCMUA). Lizabnik continued working on updating the MCMUA Clean Communities webpage, which he had started last month. The updates included educational information on stormwater management best practices, participation information for school cleanups, and how residents can adopt their local storm drains for cleaning and reporting information to the Clean Communities program Coordinators. Additionally, Lizabnik created an

educational marker for storm drain designs that will comply with the NJDEPs Municipal Stormwater Regulation Program Guidelines. The marker will allow onlookers to scan a QR code that links to the newly created educational subpage when unveiled. These educational markers will be included in MCMUA storm drain marker kits for distribution to non-profit organizations and school groups looking to adopt their local storm drain and educate the community on protecting water resources.

Lizabnik also continued work on his final project, which will be to design an educational display at the Morris County Library for display in mid-April. This project will showcase work performed through his internship with the Clean Communities Program by creating an awareness campaign and education to prevent nonpoint source pollution from entering Morris County's waterways.



*Above are Lizabnik's posters for the Morris County Library display, along with his created storm drain marker.*

**MCMUA and MCDPH Joint Recycling Education and Compliance Inspections:**

On March 14, Toomey went with Brianna Rodriguez, Environmental Compliance Investigator from the Morris County Division of Public Health (MCDPH), to conduct recycling inspections at a multi-family complex in Parsippany Troy-Hills. MCDPH is investigating a hauler who services several complexes in the municipality, and it has been reported that the hauler tells its clients that they can mix recyclables and solid waste and aren't required to follow the mandatory source separation rules. Rodriguez and Toomey inspected all the dumpster locations throughout the complex. Upon inspection, they found that the complaint was unfounded. However, the entire complex had only two locations where a solid waste container was paired with a recycling container. All other locations had container pads that could only fit one garbage container, creating a situation where recycling was not encouraged or considered during the planning stages. In addition, the dumpsters on-site were not clearly labeled at the time of inspection, creating confusion about what can be disposed of and where. After the inspection, Rodriguez and Toomey met with the property manager, who explained that the complex was built in the late 1960s and very little

room exists for additional recycling containers. However, the property manager identified one dumpster location that could fit an additional recycling container next to the existing garbage container. She said she could have her mason work in the next few months to expand the concrete pad and allow the additional dumpster to be placed. Overall, the property manager was willing to accept suggestions for improving recycling. Toomey made plans with her to provide additional decals for the existing containers. Rodriguez expressed gratitude for the MCMUA's assistance with inspections and invited Toomey to accompany her on upcoming inspections in April.

**MCMUA and MCOC Collaborations:**

In March 2024, Marrone worked with the Morris County Office of Communications (MCOC) and Digital Media representatives to plan future topics and create a schedule for media releases. One topic provided for inclusion in the MCOC's posts included text on the importance of utilizing our Household Hazardous Waste Programs facility and event days when disposing of unwanted HHW during Spring cleaning efforts. The postings below are examples of educational efforts pushed out by the MCOC in March.



**Donating Food is a Win-Win**

[Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority](#) calls donating to local food banks a win-win. Use this [Food Waste Toolkit](#) to conserve the water, land and energy used to produce food while also saving landfill space. Donating to [local food banks](#) and shelters can help feed the 1 in 10 people in New Jersey who are food insecure.



**E-Scrap Innovators: Win Prizes**

The [Electronics Scrap Recycling Advancement Prize](#) is a competition awarding \$4 million to competitors to substantially increase the production and use of critical materials recovered from electronic scrap/e-scrap. Catch the March 27 webinar by the U.S. Dept. of Energy's [Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Tech Office](#).



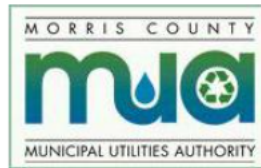
**Interfaith Food Pantry Feeds Morris County's Hungry**

Together Towards Tomorrow spring gala, benefiting the [Interfaith Food Pantry Network](#), promises to be a celebration of IFPN and supporters. Together, they ensure a supply of emergency and supplemental nutritious food to approximately 10,000 Morris County neighbors each month who are facing hunger and food insecurity. The network accommodated a 30% increase in new clients since 2020. Hunger is a major health issue, leading to illness. — [IFPN's inexpensive, nutritious recipes](#).



**Recycle Right for the Holidays**

Recycling contamination happens when the wrong items (such as plastic bags) or the right items prepared the wrong way (such as paper that is shredded) are placed in your curbside recycling bin. Use these [guidelines for the minimum recyclables](#) accepted in most towns' collection programs. Check with your [municipality](#) for specific guidelines. — **CLEAN is the keyword.** Dirty or greasy recyclables turn the whole batch into trash. — Recycle only #1, #2 and #5 plastics. — Throw out plastic caps. — Recycle metal caps and lids. — **When in doubt, throw it out!** — **What if there was no recycling?** — Use the [Recycle Coach](#) app. — [Single Stream Recycling video game](#)



**Recycle Right for the Holidays**

As families get ready for spring-time holidays, use this [handy recycling guide](#) from Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority to sort your celebration's recycling from trash. Use the [Recycle Coach](#) app. — [Single Stream Recycling video game](#) — [N.J. WasteWise Business Network](#) — [Italian town recycles clothing](#) — [Learn more about Repair Cafes](#)