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# Press Release

# NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **PAPER CARTON RECYCLING SHOWS EARLY SUCCESS IN FLORENCE TOWNSHIP**

### **Pilot Program Sets The Stage To Expand BurlCo's Curbside Collection Program**

Burlington County is looking to expand its curbside recycling program to include the “gable top” paper cartons commonly used for milk and orange juice, and Florence Township residents are helping the County “pilot” the program.

The County is gauging the logistics and economic feasibility of collecting the cartons county-wide. Florence Township became the pilot community at the beginning of July, where residents began placing the cartons -- including drink boxes, soup, broth and wine cartons -- in their recycling buckets along with bottles and cans.

“Burlington County has always tried to stay ahead of the curve in recent years when it comes to expanding the recycling program,” said Freeholder Mary Ann C. O’Brien. “Right now the prospects are good that we will succeed in doing that again.”

The County’s recycling contractor, the Occupational Training Center (OTC), collects the mix of bottles, cans and cartons, and delivers them to the County’s recycling center in Westampton. At the center, the containers are fed onto conveyors where workers manually sort out the cartons. Ultimately the cartons are shipped to paper tissue mills.

The Florence study is helping to predict the equipment and labor needed to recycle the paper cartons on a county-wide basis. Preliminary results look good, according to Isaac Manning, Recycling Director for OTC.

“We believe that we can sort the cartons at the recycling center without adding to our workforce and that the carton program will pay for itself,” said Manning. “We will need to install a few new conveyors and chutes to handle cartons county-wide, but no major capital investment is required.”

The Carton Council, a trade group of major paper carton manufacturers, is promoting paper carton recycling and has agreed to pay for the new equipment.

**-more-**

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The idea for the pilot project developed when county recycling staff and the Florence recycling coordinator, Tom Sahol, attended a workshop on new markets for paper cartons.

County Recycling Coordinator, Ann Moore, explained that “in the past, the markets for paper cartons were too sporadic. Most cartons contain about 80% paper and 20% polyethylene (plastic) and some, like drink boxes also contain foil. Paper mills could not find an economic way to remove the plastic and foil during the paper making process.

“At the workshop, a representative from the paper carton industry said that paper mills have solved this problem, and that tissue mills in particular, want the recycled cartons. Tom and I literally pounced on the representative to see how quickly we could get started.”

Said Freeholder O'Brien, “Once the equipment is in place, expansion of the program county-wide later this fall is a definite possibility. Looking ahead, we will explore recycling milk cartons from school cafeterias and accepting cartons from the dairy and juice packaging companies based in the county.”

Residents in other towns can keep tabs on when they will be able to start recycling cartons by periodically checking the County's website for updates at [www.co.burlington.nj.us](http://www.co.burlington.nj.us) or emailing [recycle@co.burlington.nj.us](mailto:recycle@co.burlington.nj.us).

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