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## Monmouth County Environmental Newsletter: November & December 2019 Edition

Monmouth County, NJ sent this bulletin at 11/22/2019 03:43 PM EST



*Holmdel Park. Source: Amber Mallm*



## Monmouth County Environmental Newsletter: November & December 2019

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**The Problem with Plastics  
Roundtable a Success**

**Upcoming  
Environmental &  
Outdoor Events in  
Monmouth County:**

Some activities require  
registration and/or fees:



*Guests network at the Monmouth County Environmental Council Roundtable: The Problem with Plastics. Source: Linda Brennen.*

On Oct. 29, the community came together to discuss the impacts of plastic pollution at the Monmouth County Environmental Council (MCEC) roundtable event “The Problem with Plastics.” The evening began with an interactive tabling session where municipal representatives and green team members shared their accomplishments in plastic reduction and education (scroll down to learn more about municipal achievements in plastic reduction). Organizations like the Monmouth County Division of Planning, County Department of Solid Waste and Recycling Planning, AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador Program and the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) also offered educational resources.

To kick off the presentations, Freeholder Lillian G. Burry provided a warm welcoming address and noted that Monmouth County has an exceptional litter reduction rate compared to the other counties in New Jersey, according to the [2018 New Jersey Litter Survey](#). MCEC Chairwoman Wilma Morrissey then introduced other Council members and staff present and Environmental Specialist, Amber Mallm introduced the speakers. Meredith DeMarco, Chief Operating Officer of NY/NJ Baykeeper, provided insight into local microplastics research and statistics. Next Jaye Sims, Assistant District Recycling Coordinator, explained the history of recycling and described how the process really works in the County. Using the [Monmouth County Recycling Guide](#), Amber Mallm provided a recap on what can and cannot be recycled, addressing some of the trickiest items like dirty pizza boxes and drink caps. Click [here](#) to view the presentations.

- [Nov. 23, 9 a.m. Roving Naturalist at Perrineville Lake Park, Millstone](#)
- [Nov. 25, 6:30 p.m. Science Mondays: The Impact of Declining Honeybee Populations and the Adventures of an Amateur Beekeeper, Brookdale Community College, Lincroft](#)
- [Nov. 30, 10 a.m -12 p.m., Beach Clean-Up at Sandy Hook, Parking Lot B](#)
- [Dec. 1, 8, and 15, 11 a.m. -1 p.m. Foraged Holiday Wreath DIY, Deep Cut Gardens](#)
- [Dec. 5, 5 p.m. Monmouth County Environmental Council Meeting, Freehold](#)
- [Dec. 5, 7 -8 p.m. Nature Lecture Series: Seals of the Jersey Shore, Bayshore Waterfront Park, Port Monmouth](#)
- [Dec. 7, 10 a.m. -12 p.m. Sandy Hook Bird Walk 10 a.m. -12 p.m., Sandy Hook Visitor Center](#)
- [Dec. 11, 8 -10 p.m. Monmouth County Audubon Society Get to Know Herps: Reptiles and Amphibians Near You, Red Bank](#)

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## Municipal Efforts to Reduce Plastic Consumption &

# Pollution

## **Asbury Park Single-Use Plastic Ban Goes in to Effect January 2020**

Asbury Park adopted a single-use plastic bag ban ordinance in June 2019. The ordinance prohibits any store or street vendor from providing a single-use plastic carryout bag, however they may provide paper or reusable carryout bags. Bag fees were set at 10-25 cents per bag. The ordinance did not place restrictions on fees for selling reusable bags. The store or street vendor retains the bag fees and the City recommended that they use the money to purchase paper and reusable bags, or to educate consumers in an effort to change old habits. Asbury Park's ban will go into effect on January 1, 2020. As a Sustainable Jersey Silver certified municipality, Asbury Park has successful recycling and waste reduction education programs with recycling guidelines and schedules posted on the municipal website and social media platforms, along with reusable bag distributions.

## **Little Silver Promotes Reusable Bags and Practices Single-Use Plastic Ban**

Little Silver adopted a single use plastic ban which went into effect on October 1, 2019. The [ordinance](#) bans stores from providing single-use plastic carry out bags, polystyrene foam containers and plastic straws to customers. At the Roundtable, Little Silver representatives shared reusable bags that, when folded, are compact enough to be stored in a purse. These bags have been handed out to students at Little Silver Schools.

## **Middletown Uses Education & Outreach to Improve Recycling Habits**

Middletown conducted a waste audit using a 200-pound sample that revealed the Township's recycling contamination rate was 14.1%, 70% of that contamination caused by plastic bags. With the goal to improve the contamination rate, Middletown began an educational campaign to improve citizen's recycling habits. Education efforts included issuing post cards and newsletters, media and social media outreach and participating in the [Recycle Coach phone application](#). Middletown also implemented a program where they mark residents' recycling cans with a sticker to indicate if it is compliant or contaminated. If the can contained an item like a plastic bag or dirty pizza box, it was marked with a sticker that reads "OOPS" to inform the resident their recycling can is contaminated. Middletown also recently appointed Amy Sarrinikolaou as the municipal Recycling and Sustainability Coordinator.

## **Wall Township Educates Citizens to Reduce Consumption of Single-Use Plastics**

To educate residents, Wall Township mailed a colorful postcard that clearly identifies what can and cannot be recycled. At the Roundtable, Wall Township Environmental Advisory Board shared copies of its "Facts on Single Use Plastic Bags, Choose Reusable Bags" brochure. The Township also displayed photos highlighting various community clean-ups to reduce plastic pollution.

## **Eatontown Practices Sustainability and Enacts Single-Use Plastic Bans**

Representatives from the Eatontown Environmental Commission and Green Team attended the Roundtable and shared the municipality's accomplishments involving plastic reduction and other sustainable efforts like its community garden. Eatontown passed a single-use plastic bag ban ordinance, as well as a ban on the intentional release of balloons. Edward

Dlugosz, chairman of both committees, also shared facts and statistics explaining the dangers of plastics prepared by the New Jersey Friends of Clearwater, which can be seen [here](#).

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## Two Colts Neck Farms Preserved



*de Groot farm, Colts Neck. Source: Monmouth Conservation Foundation*

In October, Monmouth Conservation Foundation (MCF), with funds contributed by Monmouth County, Colts Neck Township and the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC), purchased two easements in Colts Neck. One farm on Route 537 has been in the possession of the Druesne family since 1958. This fall, brother and sister Barry and Maeve, sold an 18-acre easement to MCF. The parcel is adjacent to another 45-acre preserved farm. With the addition of the Druesne farm, there are now 15,447 acres of preserved farmland in Monmouth County subject to the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) format deeds of easement. The other farm, located on Route 34 in Colts Neck, is the de Groot family farm. A 23-acre portion of this farm has been preserved since 2006. This fall, the family chose to sell the development rights of the remaining 41 acres to MCF for preservation. Read more about the two family farms [here](#).

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## Draft Monmouth County Hazard Mitigation Plan Coming Soon

The Monmouth County Office of Emergency Management is updating its Multi Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. The [current Plan](#) was approved by FEMA in April 2015. The update is required by state and federal agencies for Monmouth County communities to be eligible for state and federal relief, should disasters occur. Hazard mitigation focuses on long-term strategies that reduce risks from hazards like floods, hurricanes or terrorism, and identifies strategies to address disasters after they occur. After several stakeholder meetings, as well as individual meetings with all 53 municipalities, the project team prepared a draft Plan, which is presently under review by the Monmouth County Office of Emergency Management and other County Departments. Once approved, the Plan will be released [here](#).

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## **Executive Order 89 Directs State to Consider Climate Change Impacts in Planning**

On Oct. 27, the seven year anniversary of Super Storm Sandy, Governor Phil Murphy signed Executive Order 89 which directs the state government to integrate the potential impacts of climate change into planning at all levels to improve community resilience. The Order directs the newly named NJ Chief Resilience Officer, in conjunction with a new Climate and Flood Resilience Program, to develop a report within 180 days focused on the anticipated effects of climate change through the year 2050, and to update that report every two years. The Climate and Flood Resilience Program is directed to prepare a Statewide Climate Change Resilience Strategy, with assistance from a new Interagency Council on Climate and Resilience which includes designees from the state departments of Agriculture, Banking and Insurance, Community Affairs, Health, Human Services, Law and Public Safety, State Transportation, Treasury and NJDEP. Membership will also include representatives from the Board of Public Utilities, Economic Development Authority, New Jersey Infrastructure Bank, New Jersey Transit, Turnpike Authority and the Office of Emergency Management. The Chief Resilience Officer will serve as Vice Chair. Once the Governor appoints the Council Chair, the Council is directed to meet within 45 days.

The Statewide Climate Change Resilience Strategy is due by Sept. 1, 2020. The Strategy will include recommendations for actions the State should take to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. NJDEP was directed to complete the Climate Resilience Plan which they began in 2018, to provide a specific long-term strategy for climate change resilience and adaptation along coastal areas in the state. [Read Executive Order 89.](#)

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## **Municipal Land Use Law Amended to Encourage Electric Vehicle Charging Stations**

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) was amended on Nov. 6, 2019 with the passage of Senate Bill S606, to add wording that encourages municipalities to plan for electric vehicle charging stations. First introduced in January 2018 by Senators Bob Smith and Linda Greenstein, the Bill quickly passed in the Senate, initially stalled in the Assembly, but finally passed both houses in June 2019.

Enactment modified the MLUL (NJSA40:55D) to add mapping locations of existing and proposed electric vehicle charging stations in the Land Use and Circulation plans and for the Green Building and Environmental Sustainability Plan Element to “consider, encourage and promote the development of public electric vehicle charging infrastructure in locations appropriate for their development, including but not limited to, commercial districts, areas proximate to public transportation, transit facilities, transportation corridors, and public rest stops.” It calls for reexamination reports to include a review of potential locations for charging stations and existing development regulations to determine if any might require modification to enable the development of charging station infrastructure. Furthermore, it adds that redevelopment plans should consider including charging stations in appropriate locations. The changes were effective immediately.

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## **Student Contest Winners See Stories Turned into Books**

*Below is the new Monmouth County Recycling Mascot "Recycling Rocky" designed by Anthony DeSeno, Monmouth County Graphic Artist.*

Last spring, the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders held a Monmouth County Recycling Essay Contest. Fourth grade students were asked to write a story about the newly designed Monmouth County Recycling Mascot and to give the character a name. In April, the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders announced the mascot would be named Recycling Rocky, and awarded first, second and third place to students with the best stories. The County promised to turn the top-three winning students' stories into fully illustrated storybooks. This fall, Monmouth County Graphic Artist, Anthony DeSeno, completed the project and the Board of Chosen

**RECYCLING  
ROCKY**



Freeholders presented the winners with their very own storybooks. The students' stories follow Rocky as he helps others, recycles single-use plastics into reusable products, saves cities and wildlife from pollution and educates citizens about recycling. Each student was given their storybook to show to their classmates and friends and County workers will distribute copies during educational classroom visits and County events. Learn more about the contest winners [here](#), or access educational videos featuring Rocky and his "Rules for Recycling" by clicking [here](#).

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## **County Leases Closed Landfill as Solar Farm**

What was once a landfill will now be a solar farm. The Howell Landfill, located on Lakewood-Allenwood Road in Howell, was listed on the NJDEP 2014 Landfill List as properly closed. As property owner, the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders awarded a lease agreement to use the site as a solar farm. The County awarded a 19-year, 364 day Ground Lease Agreement to HESP Solar LLC. Under the lease, the company will pay the County \$37,000 per megawatt (MW) constructed for the solar project. It is estimated to generate up to 10 MW, which would equal up to \$375,000 per year. A percentage of the generated funds will be shared with Howell Township.

## **Species on the Edge Art and Essay Contest**

Conserve Wildlife New Jersey is offering resources to teachers who wish to have their 5th grade students participate in the [2020 Species on the Edge Art and Essay Contest](#). To enter, a student must select one threatened or endangered species that lives in New Jersey and act as advocate for that animal through an original persuasive essay and art piece. Educators may access handouts, PowerPoints and lesson plans within the free [contest kit](#). The entry form, artwork and essay must be mailed to Conserve Wildlife Foundation, post marked by Jan.31, 2020. Access examples from past winners [here](#).

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## **Apply for Roots for Rivers Reforestation Grant and Technical Assistance Program**

Once again, the Nature Conservancy is partnering with Sustainable Jersey and the Watershed Institute to administer the Roots for Rivers Reforestation Grant and Technical Assistance Program. Municipalities, school districts, non-profits or conservation organizations may apply to receive support for tree plantings that restore floodplains.



Awardees will receive technical assistance to design their restoration projects and funds to purchase trees/shrubs, tree protection tubes and stakes. Projects costing between \$1,000 and \$20,000 are eligible for consideration.

Applications are due by Friday, Dec. 13 at 11:59 p.m. Awardees will be announced in late January 2020. For more information about this opportunity click [here](#).

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### *About This Newsletter*

*The purpose of the newsletter is to inform Monmouth County citizens on the health of their environment and list environmental outreach events in their community. The newsletter is produced by the Monmouth County Division of Planning Section of Environmental & Sustainability Planning in coordination with the Monmouth County Environmental Council. The County of Monmouth and the Board of Chosen Freeholders do not necessarily share the viewpoints of any environmental group mentioned in this newsletter.*

*If you have questions, comments, or wish to have an event listed in the newsletter, please contact: [Amber.Mallm@co.monmouth.nj.us](mailto:Amber.Mallm@co.monmouth.nj.us)*

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