



# Clifton, New Jersey

56% Municipal Solid Waste Reduction

(44% Residential Solid Waste Reduction; 68% Institutional/Commercial Solid Waste Reduction)



## Overview

In 1996, Clifton diverted 56% of its municipal solid waste from disposal (38% through recycling; 18% through composting). Clifton diverted 44% of city-collected material and an impressive 68% of materials generated by businesses and institutions not served by city waste management programs. The city collects eleven categories of recyclables in its curbside program and its drop-off recycling center accepts thirteen categories of material (nine of which are also collected curbside). Residents are required by local ordinance to recycle other categories of materials, such as textiles, but must do so through private recyclers. The city also offers its residents and small businesses curbside collection of yard debris. Private trash haulers and recyclers primarily serve the city's businesses and institutions, which are required to recycle 22 types of materials.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

- POPULATION:** 75,000 (1996)
- HOUSEHOLDS:** 31,000 (1996) 25,500 single-family homes and duplexes, 5,500 in dwellings with 3 or more units
- BUSINESSES:** 3,100 (1999)

## Keys to High Waste Reduction

Clifton's waste diversion success is driven by high waste disposal fees, state and local recycling mandates, strong local markets for recycling, composting yard debris, and an active recycling coordinator. Tip fees in New Jersey have traditionally been among the highest in the nation. Waste diversion offers many New Jersey businesses and communities a less expensive alternative to disposal. Clifton's residential recycling ordinance requires every household served by the city-operated waste management program to source-separate and recycle 18 categories of materials. Another ordinance requires Clifton businesses and institutions to recycle 22 materials. Recycling-based manufacturing is prevalent in New Jersey and Clifton is near many companies that use recyclables as raw

## PROGRAM SUMMARY

	1987	1996
<b>Tons Per Year MSW</b>	<b>110,172</b>	<b>110,925</b>
Tons Per Year RSW	49,310	54,211
Tons Per Year ICW	60,862	56,714
<b>Percent MSW Diverted</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>56%</b>
Percent RSW Diverted	12%	44%
Percent ICW Diverted	18%	68%
<b>Average lbs./HH/day<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>9.83</b>	<b>10.14</b>
<b>Net Program Costs/HH<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>\$153.38</b>	<b>\$177.73</b>
Disposal Services	\$144.98	\$147.64
Diversion Services	\$8.40	\$30.08

Key: MSW = municipal solid waste RSW = residential solid waste  
ICW = institutional and commercial waste  
Notes: 1987 dollars adjusted to 1996 dollars using the GDP deflator.  
Numbers may not add to total due to rounding.  
<sup>1</sup>Figures reflect public sector collection from 26,200 households and 1,300 businesses served in 1987; 28,000 households and 1,300 businesses in 1996.

Source: Institute for Local Self-Reliance, 1999.

materials. Clifton diverts 18% of its total municipal solid waste (28% of its city-collected waste) through composting. Residents and small businesses divert materials through the

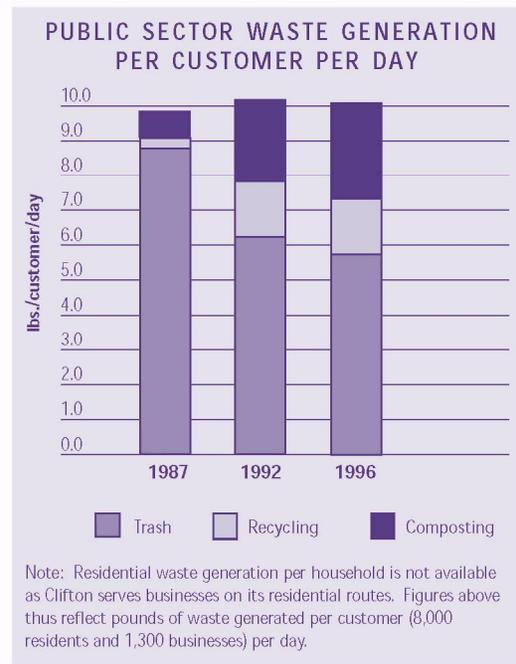


city's seasonal curbside collection programs for leaves and other yard debris and its year-round brush collection program.

Clifton's recycling coordinator has assisted local businesses in locating markets for materials, performed

waste audits, and provided advice on ordinance compliance. The coordinator also gives talks to civic groups and schools on reuse, environmental purchasing, and recycling.

Participants in the city's curbside recycling program must sort glass containers, cans, and paper products into seven streams for collection. Collection of sorted materials allows the city to market materials directly, avoiding the cost of processing and allowing the city to retain all revenue from sales.



Source: Institute for Local Self-Reliance, 1999.

## MATERIALS RECOVERED IN PUBLIC SECTOR PROGRAM

### CURBSIDE:

- newspapers, magazines
- mixed paper (phone books, paperboard, mail, paperback books, hardcover books without covers, office paper)
- glass containers
- cans
- white goods
- scrap metals
- leaves, brush, grass clippings, holiday trees, and other yard and garden debris
- corrugated cardboard (businesses only)

### DROP-OFF:

All materials accepted in curbside program (except white goods and scrap metal) plus:

- corrugated cardboard (from residents)
- aluminum plates and trays
- #1 and #2 plastic bottles
- residents can deliver car batteries for recycling to the City Garage at no cost



Recyclables set out at curbside in Clifton

## Cost-Effectiveness

The city's solid waste management costs increased from \$153 per household in 1987 to \$178 per household in 1996. During this same time period, per ton tip fees for trash more than tripled in constant dollar value from \$36 per ton to \$112 per ton. If the tip fee in 1996 had only been \$36 per ton and all other costs stayed the same, per household costs would have been \$99. Therefore, the increase in per household costs can wholly be accounted for through the increase in trash tip fees.

## Tips for Replication

Collect materials source-separated.

Enforce mandatory programs in order to boost both the quantity and quality of participation.

## Contact

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