

To Gloucester Residents

The purpose of this letter is to explain to you why the Town Council has recently been discussing and planning how the Town of Gloucester can achieve the R.I Resource Recovery's mandatory recycling percentage of 35% and how we can stay under the landfill cap of 3070 tons. Last year we were under the cap by just 14 tons. That is the equivalent of one Saturday's dumping at our transfer station. Over the past seven years Resource Recovery has reduced our cap by 900 tons and increased the mandatory recycling rate from 20% to 35%. Gloucester's recycling rate is now about 26%.Over the last 3 years in our attempts to reach the 35% goal we have tried advertising, education, recycling at the schools, and signage (all at a cost) to reach this rate, but we continue to fall short.

We currently pay Resource recovery \$32/ton as long as we are under the cap. If we exceed the cap the cost will go to \$54/ton and increase taxes and /or Resource Recovery may tell us to take our trash elsewhere at a much higher cost of disposal.

A program that has been successful in other communities is one called "Pay as you throw". This program has yielded recycling rates in excess of 40 % and increased revenues from the State's reimbursement programs for recycled material for participating Cities and Towns. This program would allow the Transfer station to remain open 6 days a week providing the current services. The only cost for the taxpayer will be for the trash that goes into the compactor. Everything else will remain the same. We will continue to receive materials such as batteries, tires and white goods at no additional cost to the taxpayer. We are the only Town in the State that allows disposal of these items at no additional cost to the Town residents.

Money expended for the trash bags will be used to directly offset the cost of the transfer operations costs and will be shown as a separate revenue and expense item in the Town Budget at financial meeting time.

Details and instructions for this program will be forthcoming as they are being developed and finalized. Again, the purpose of this letter is to inform you why we must take steps to better manage our solid waste and recyclables and to dispel any misinformation that may be circulating around.

Respectfully,

Gloucester Town Council