

Newsletter Mission:

The purpose of our newsletter is to keep our residents aware of Secaucus' recycling and sustainability goals, green tips and environmental achievements.

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Secaucus Environmental Department Brings Rocket Composter to High School

In the United States, 30—40% of all food is not eaten. About 95% of that wasted food, 38 million tons in 2014, ends up in landfills or incinerators where it produces methane, a gas that is one of the most potent contributors to climate change.

This past year the Environmental Department received a \$20,000 grant to purchase a state of the art A-500 **Rocket Composter** to be used at the High School this coming Fall.

With the help of students from the High School Environmental Club, the High School



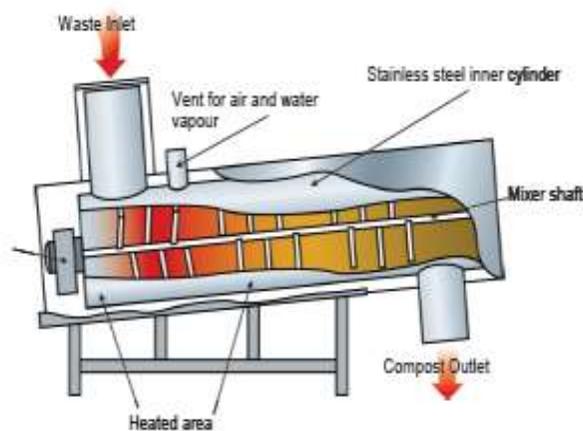
will be on the leading edge of sustainability.

The Rocket Composter is an ideal educational tool which could be incorporated into our Science curriculum and school district to see first-hand how technology can help us become

a more sustainable community.

Turning food waste into compost will save on removal costs when treating food scraps and closing the recycling loop by ultimately using the resulting compost locally on the many Town landscaping projects or at the butterfly and vegetable gardens at the High School.

The goal is to reduce the hundreds of tons of food waste and scraps that we send to landfills every year as well as reducing the CO₂ emissions generating from its transportation.





Have you ever noticed the signs as you enter Secaucus that say “**Silver Certified Community**”? Being certified by Sustainable Jersey® is a prestigious designation for municipal governments in New Jersey. Municipalities that achieve certification are considered by their peers, by state government and by the experts and civic organizations in New Jersey, to be among the leading environmental municipalities in the state. Certification is a rigorous process and once certified, Sustainable Jersey® towns have access to incentives and grants; training and guid-

ance towards the development of a sustainable community; and are promoted on the Sustainable Jersey® website as a town that is doing its part for the environment.

Once a municipality is certified, the certification is good for 3 program years, at which time Secaucus would need to recertify. In 2014, Secaucus met the rigorous requirements to achieve Sustainable Jersey® Silver Certification. Of the 566 registered municipalities in New Jersey, **Secaucus is one of 31 towns out of 445 participating municipalities that have attained Silver Certification.**

The Environmental Department is currently in the process of recertifi-

cation. By becoming a Sustainable Jersey® certified town, Secaucus reinforces our commitment to saving resources, the environment and the planet. At this time, Silver Certification is the highest level of certification awarded by Sustainable Jersey®.

Sustainable Jersey® is a non-profit organization that provides tools, training and financial incentives to support communities as they pursue sustainability programs. By supporting community efforts to reduce waste, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and improve the local environmental, Sustainable Jersey® empowers communities to build a better world for future generations.

New Butterfly Garden On Radio Avenue—Update!

In our last newsletter we reported that a brand new park was in the process of being built along Radio Avenue. Besides being a peaceful location, it also serves as a berm to help with flood control during storms.

As part of our ongoing **Pollinator Program**, the Environmental Department planted a butterfly garden to the right of the gazebo. This garden has flowers and plants which not only attract bees and butterflies but also help to nurture the caterpillars that

turn into butterflies.

Butterflies—as with all our pollinators, including bees and bats— are suffering from severe loss of habitat and this is one way we can help support their numbers.

A successful butterfly garden should include not only the flowers that attract butterflies but also the host plants necessary to support the caterpillars that subsequently hatch. Currently these are the plants we included in the butterfly

garden so far— dwarf butterfly bushes, sedum, coneflowers, pineapple sage, dill, liatris, cosmos, joe pye weed and milkweed.



Radio Avenue Park Butterfly Garden

GO GREEN SPOTLIGHT



Joe D'Angeli—New Jersey Batman—discussing the benefits of bats on July 12th.

- The Secaucus Environmental department has recently completed its **Summer Speaker Series** for the second year. Held every Wednesday night in July in the Meditation Garden behind the Recreation Center, our theme this year was **Pollinators**. Our speakers addressed the benefits that bees, butterflies, bats and birds bring to our environment; the devastating effects that disease and loss of habitat is wreaking on all these creatures; and the various efforts we can do to help them survive.
- The Secaucus Environmental Department sponsored its first town wide **Earth Day Cleanup** on **April 22** at Mill Creek Marsh, in nearby wooded areas and along Paterson Plank Road. The threat of rain couldn't keep away about 60 intrepid individuals who showed up for a few hours

of collecting nearly 50 bags of trash from the edges of the marsh. The Town provided all necessary supplies and Secaucus residents supplied the muscle in a show of tremendous community support.

- Have you noticed the beautiful wildflowers growing along Rt. 3 East, just west of the Shell Station? The Secaucus Environmental Department with some help from the DPW planted a "test" **Wildflower Meadow** to gauge the difficulty, beauty and success of such an endeavor. It ends up it's pretty easy to grow wildflowers and so we plan to expand our efforts to include a second and larger meadow next year along Rt. 3 West. Wildflower meadows benefit bees and butterflies, are pretty to gaze upon and have the added benefit of saving our DPW guys time and energy from mowing the grass.



Wildflowers on Route 3 West

- We continue to work on expanding our **Green Restaurant Certification** program. The main **disqualifier** for the Secaucus' Green Restaurant Certification program is the use of Polystyrene Foam, aka **Styrofoam** - in any kind of packaging or take out container. Styrofoam is not recyclable. It is a non-sustainable and heavily polluting resource. It is not accepted at most recycling facilities; is not biodegradable; lasts in landfills for centuries; and is a polluter of our waterways and oceans. Secaucus issued a ban on Styrofoam in 2012, and we encourage all Secaucus businesses to check out alternatives to Styrofoam. We thank the businesses and restaurants who have signed up for our certification program. If you frequent any of the businesses below, please express your gratitude for their commitment to our environment and planet.

- **Sweet & Flour**
- **Blackjack Mulligan's**
- **Te Amo**
- **Barelli's**
- **Panera Bread**
- **Il Forno**
- **Casa de Los Tacos**
- **Georgie's Yogurt**
- **Gro-Mart**
- **Tokyo Sushi**
- **Bonefish Grill**



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Mayor Michael Gonnelli
and Town Council.*

Secaucus Go Green Mission...

Secaucus is committed to the protection and preservation of the environment and is dedicated to enhancing environmental sustainability within our town and the state of New Jersey.

We understand the responsibility we have towards the planet and have adopted a policy that reflects this mission.

This newsletter is printed on 30% post consumer recycled paper.

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www.secaucusnj.gov

New Trees for Greenway Trail & High School

In 2016 the Town of Secaucus was awarded a **Community Stewardship Incentive Program (CSIP)** grant in the amount of \$30,000 from the New Jersey Forest Service. As a result of this grant and with the help of the Secaucus DPW, **124 trees** were planted along the Greenway Trail and the berm behind the High School. These trees will serve as shade for the area as well as a preventive measure to stop erosion.

The Greenway Trail primarily travels through open areas of marshland which could benefit from the shade in the summer and act as a windbreak in the winter. The shade in turn will attract visitors and residents to utilize the trail and connect with nature.

The trees are all native trees to the area that serve multiple purposes. Additionally most of these trees are new to Secaucus and have not been planted elsewhere.



Secaucus GREEN Committee planning BYOB re-usable shopping bag campaign

The Environmental Committee for the Town of Secaucus is moving forward on an initiative to educate Secaucus consumers and retail businesses and personnel on the harmful effects that plastic shopping bags pose to our environment.

The Environmental Committee has decided to launch a **"BYOB—Bring Your Own Bag Campaign"** to encourage Secaucus residents to bring their own reusable shopping bags when they shop and urge local store management to ask customers if they would like a bag before automatically handing out plastic.

Be on the lookout for various **"Bring Your Own Bag"** promotions planned throughout 2018 including one offering free reusable bags to help consumers make the switch!

The Environmental Committee is made up of Amanda Nesheiwat, Giselle Alfaro, Cyn Constantine, Katrina Alvarez, Gunjan Gogia, Lynn Kramer, Albert Nascimento and Lenny Adis.

