



## Secaucus Passes Plastic Bag Ban!

### Newsletter Mission:

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

### Individual Highlights:

Plastic Bag Ban	1
Community Gardens	2
Go Green Spotlight	3
Plastic Bag Ban	4

### Mayor

Michael J Gonnelli  
& Town Council  
John Gerbasio  
Robert Costantino  
James Clancy  
Mark Dehnert  
Bill McKeever  
Orietta Tringali

### On August 27, 2019, The Mayor and Town Council passed Ordinance 2019-31

Plastic bags are everywhere! Most single-use plastic bags are discarded within 15 minutes of use. Some end up in landfills, where it can take hundreds of years to break down. Many litter our streets, tangled up in our trees or end up being washed down our storm drains to their inevitable destination, the ocean.

Once there, it is estimated that 100,000 sea mammals and birds are killed every year due to plastic pollution. As the plastic breaks down to even tinier bits of microplastic.

Micro plastics have been found in the deepest parts of the oceans and at the poles of our planet. In the oceans it finally enters the food chain as it's being eaten by fish and shellfish, and we in turn eat the fish.

Secaucus has joined over 30 municipalities in the State of New Jersey in the ban of single-use plastic bags in their efforts to curb plastic pollution.

### What you need to know about Secaucus' Plastic Bag Ordinance 2019-31.

#### The purpose of imposing this ordinance.

The intent of the ban is to enforce environmental and wildlife protection while reducing plastic waste and eliminating hazards for land and sea animals.

#### When does the ban come into effect?

The ban is set to be in effect in or around February 1st, 2020.

After this time, a fine will be imposed on businesses that are non-compliant with the ordinance.

Businesses will have a few

months to phase out existing stock. A 10¢ fee will apply on paper bags that are used in substitution of single-use plastic bags. All paper bags must be at least 40% post-consumer recycled.

### Reusable bags

Reusable bags are made from cloth or other machine washable fabric,



polyester, polypropylene, cotton, other long-lasting material or plastic fiber that is at least 10 mil. thick.

Reusable bags can be made available for customers to purchase from your retail establishment.

*(continued on page 4)*

## Community Garden Update!

The goal of any community garden is to help create local, healthy and sustainable food resources for Secaucus residents which in turn will help combat obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes and diet-related issues.

But one of the most important aspects is to help connect people with each other, reducing isolation and improving quality of life, health and happiness.

To that end, Mayor Michael Gonnelli has been expanding and adding community gardens all over Secaucus.

Secaucus now has **four** vibrant community gardens; all are free and open to all Secaucus

residents. The **Fountain Park Community Garden** is located at the corner of Humboldt Street and Raydol Avenue. It was expanded in 2018 and refurbished in 2019. The garden has 24, 4'x8' raised beds, five compost bins, a shed, a butterfly garden and two rain barrels.

In 2019, our second community garden, located next to the **Secaucus Xchange**, in Laurel Hill County Park was expanded to 51, 4'x8' raised beds and two compost bins.

Our third community garden, which debuted this past Spring, is located on **Maple Street**, right next to the crossover walkway. It has nine, 4'x8' raised beds and two, 4'x12' raised beds.



*Photo by Charlene Hallam*

And finally— just completed is our newest community garden, the **Mill Ridge Community Garden**, located behind and next to the Mill Ridge School, with 14, 4'x8' plots.

All community gardens are exclusively organic, using no pesticides or sprinkler systems. Residents plant vegetables, herbs and flowers in their gardens. To apply for a plot, **reserve early**, as generally, all plots are taken by early April.

Secaucus residents can apply for a plot by going to our website, [www.secaucusnj.gov](http://www.secaucusnj.gov), go to the Environmental Dept, click on the Community Gardens tab, select the garden, read the guidelines and fill out application and submit the application.

Please direct any questions regarding our community gardens to [lkramer@secaucus.net](mailto:lkramer@secaucus.net).



**Fountain Park Community Garden**

*Published by the Environmental Department.*

*Sponsored by the Town of Secaucus, Mayor Michael Gonnelli*

# GO GREEN SPOTLIGHT

## Recycle—There's an App for That!

Recycling confusion has been an impediment in our national efforts to increasing our recycling. What is recyclable, as well as where and how certain items are recycled, is a constant question we all have. This year, Secaucus is directing residents to download an app called **Recycle Coach** to give residents information about



**recycle  
coach**

what is and is not recyclable. Residents can simply search for an item, and the app will

provide disposal instructions customized for Secaucus residents.

## Recycle Batteries and Small Electronics

We started recycling batteries and small electronics in 2015 with our Big Green Boxes. Based on a recent report we received, we've been able to prevent over 1000 pounds of e-waste and batteries from entering landfills. Please see the locations below to participate in this successful program!

### **Big Green Box Locations:**

- Town Hall—Lobby
- 20 Centre Ave—2nd Floor
- Recreation Center
- Secaucus Public Library
- DPW office—370 Secaucus Rd
- Harmon Cove 1 Clubhouse
- High School—Denise Edmunds
- Middle School—Ron Mroz
- Harmon Cove Towers—Management Office
- The Xchange—5000 Building
- Teen/Tot Center—145 Front St
- The Harper



## Plastic Bag / Film Recycling

We started our plastic bag recycling program in 2019 and the program caught on very quickly! Even though the Town of Secaucus has just passed a ban on single use plastic bags doesn't mean there isn't a lot more that still can be recycled in our plastic bag / film bins.

Residents are encouraged to drop off their **CLEAN** plastic wrap including: produce bags, newspaper sleeves, dry cleaning bags, case overwrap, zip lock bags, ice bags, bubble wrap and any other flexible thin plastic to one of the several locations where we have a plastic bag drop-off box. Currently there are four locations:

- 1) **Town Hall Lobby**
- 2) **Recreation Center**
- 3) **Library**
- 4) **Senior Center**

We have a partnership with **Trex and Whole Foods** and the plastic film is returned, recycled and made into Earth-friendly composite decking and railings.



## Helping the School District

This year we partnered with Clarendon and Huber Street school to start a new and approved recycling program. We used our recycling tonnage grant to purchase more than 200 recycling bins to placed in hallways and classrooms to capture more recyclables.

The students at Huber Street school asked what more they can do to recycle and help avoid plastics in our oceans and asked us to help them purchase recycling bins, which we were happy to provide.

## 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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Visit us on the Web!  
[www.secaucusnj.gov](http://www.secaucusnj.gov)

# Secaucus Passes Plastic Bag Ban!

*(Continued from page 1)*

### Which bags are banned?

The plastic bag ban applies to all petroleum and plant based single-use plastic carry out bags of any size.

Single-use plastic bags are defined as any carry out bag less than 10 mil thick and that is not either a single-use paper bag or an exempt bag.

### Where is the money from the paper bag fee going?

Since paper bags may cost more than single-use plastic bags, the fee from paper bags will go directly to the businesses to recover the cost.

### Which bags are exempt?

- Newspaper sleeves
- Bags used to wrap produce
- Bags provided by a pharmacy to protect privacy
- Laundry / Dry cleaner bags
- Trash bags
- Animal and yard waste bags

The Secaucus Environmental Department will provide a limited number of reusable shopping bags to Secaucus residents. Please come to Town Hall, 2nd Floor, or the Town Hall Annex at 20 Centre Avenue, 2nd Floor for your FREE reusable bag.

## Starting February 1st, 2020



Retail and food establishments will no longer provide single-use plastic bags to customers.

- No more plastic bags
- Pay 10¢ for a paper bag
- Bring your own reusable bag

Mayor Michael Gonnelli, Town Council & Secaucus Environmental Department