

Recycling in Forest Hills...here's how it works

Forest Hills is considered a "mandated municipality" by the PA Department of Environmental Protection. Forest Hills must establish recycling requirements for residents, commercial, institutional, and municipal establishments and community events with an ordinance (no. 935) that outlines the requirements of the borough's recycling program. This ordinance updated the borough's original program in August 2003 and should be consulted for complete information on all aspects of recycling. A summary is provided here.

Residential recycling

The ordinance provides that residents will be given a recycling container by the borough that remains with the property should a resident move. Damaged or lost containers may be replaced at cost.

All residents must separate the following recyclable materials from other municipal waste produced: glass containers, aluminum, bi-metal containers, ferrous containers, newspaper, plastic containers (PET), and plastic containers (HDPE).

All materials for recycling, except newspapers, must be co-mingled and stored for collection in the container issued by the Borough. Storage may be in any convenient and safe place inside of a structure located on the property of the residence or outside on the property of the residence if protected from the elements.

Collection occurs twice a month (i.e., every other week) on the same day of the week as the normal trash collection day for the residence.

Leaf waste and leaves

Everyone must separate leaves from other municipal waste generated at their houses, apartments and other residential establishments for collection unless those persons have otherwise provided for composting of leaves. In the event residents elect to compost leaf waste including leaves it must be done in such a manner so as not to create an odor or nuisance to adjacent properties.

During the months of October, November and December, residents must rake or otherwise accumulate leaves unbagged and unpackaged at curbside adjacent to their properties.

Multi-family housing properties recycling

The ordinance specifies collection methods for multi-family properties, too. The ordinance states:

Any owner, landlord, manager or agent of an owner, landlord or manager of a multi-family housing property with more than four

(4) units, who does not wish the property to be serviced by the borough pursuant to Section 203(1)[of the ordinance], must comply with recycling responsibilities by establishing a recycling and collection program consistent with Act 101 at each such property.

In order to be exempted from §203(1), the owner, landlord, manager or agent of an owner, landlord or manager must submit a written statement to the borough manager by January 15th of each year informing the borough of such election, the identity of the property to be exempted, the identity of the person in charge of the recycling program, and the name, address and telephone number of the collector retained by such owner.

The written statement must provide the details of a recycling and collection program which must include suitable containers for collecting and sorting recyclable materials, container locations which are easily accessible for deposit of recyclables, written instructions to occupants of properties concerning the use and availability of the collection system and it must provide at a minimum for the separation of those recyclable materials identified in the ordinance, plus leaf waste, unless properly composted. Collection must be at least once monthly.

Owners, landlords, managers and agents of owners, landlords or managers who comply with this Part shall not be liable for non-compliance of occupants of their respective buildings.

If recyclable materials are collected by a collector other than the borough or its authorized agent, then the respective owners, landlords or managers must submit an annual report to the borough reporting the tonnage of each recyclable material recycled at their respective properties during the previous year and any other information requested by the borough manager. This reporting requirement may be fulfilled by submission of a letter or statement from the collector which certifies that recyclable materials are being collected from the multi-family housing property and setting forth the tonnage collected from such property during the previous year and any other information requested by the borough manager. The report shall be due on or before January 15th of each.

Commercial, municipal, institutional and community activities recycling

The ordinance states:

Persons must separate high-grade office paper, aluminum, corrugated paper, glass containers, bi-metal containers, ferrous containers, newspaper, plastic containers (PET), plastic containers (HDPE) and leaf waste

generated at said commercial, municipal and institutional establishments and from community activities and safely store the recyclable materials for and until collection by a collector arranged for by each such respective establishment.

In addition, these establishments must initiate an education program for all employees, users, patrons, occupants and residents. The education program shall describe the recycling program's provisions and requirements, and shall include at a minimum an annual program meeting and an orientation to the program upon the arrival of a new employee, occupant or resident. Receptacles for recyclable materials must be marked clearly with the recycling symbol of the type of recyclable material that is to be placed in the receptacle. Signs must be prominently displayed stating the requirements of the program.

Commercial, municipal, institutional and community activities may be exempted from requirements of Section 203(3)(A)-(C), by otherwise providing for the recycling of the materials specified in Section 203(3)(A) consistent with the Section 1501(c)(1)(iii) of Act 101, 53 P.S. § 4000.1501(c)(1)(3), by informing the borough manager that they wish to do so and by providing the borough manager with the identity of the property involved, a description of its alternate program, the identity of the person in charge of the alternate program and the identity of the responsible collector.

Commercial, municipal, institutional and community activities which are exempt from this ordinance, must submit, at a minimum, an annual recycling report to the borough manager. The report must document for each property the amount of municipal waste generated per year, as well as the type of weight of materials that were recycled in the previous calendar year, the name, address and telephone number of the responsible collector and any other information requested by the borough manager. The reporting requirement may be fulfilled by submission of a letter or statement from the collector which certifies the recyclable materials being collected from the property and setting forth the tonnage collected from such property in the previous year and any other information requested by the borough manager. The report shall be due on or before January 15th.

The full ordinance with all requirements can be viewed at the borough office and will be available with other ordinances and codes on the borough's website at www.foresthillspa.org.