

Solid Waste Management in Chatham County

Kevin Lindley, Sustainability and Solid Waste Director



Agenda

- Solid Waste Sector Impact on Climate Change
- How Chatham Manages Waste

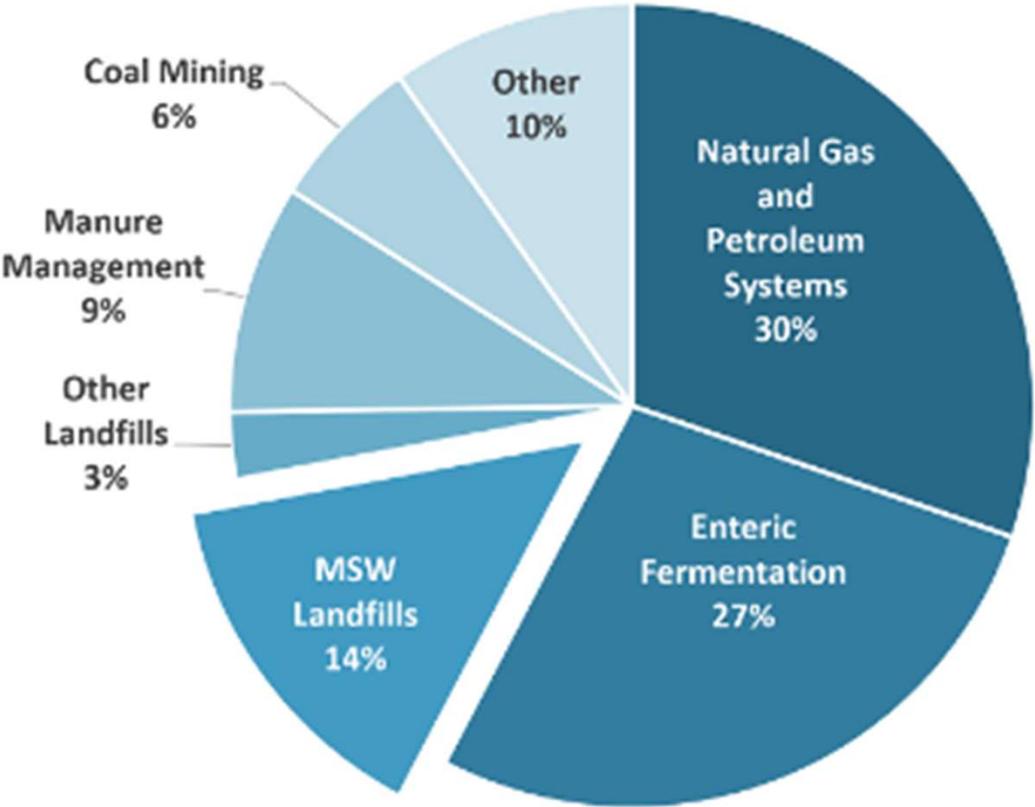


Solid Waste Climate Impact

- Two main impacts
 - Landfill gas
 - Emissions from transportation and management of waste

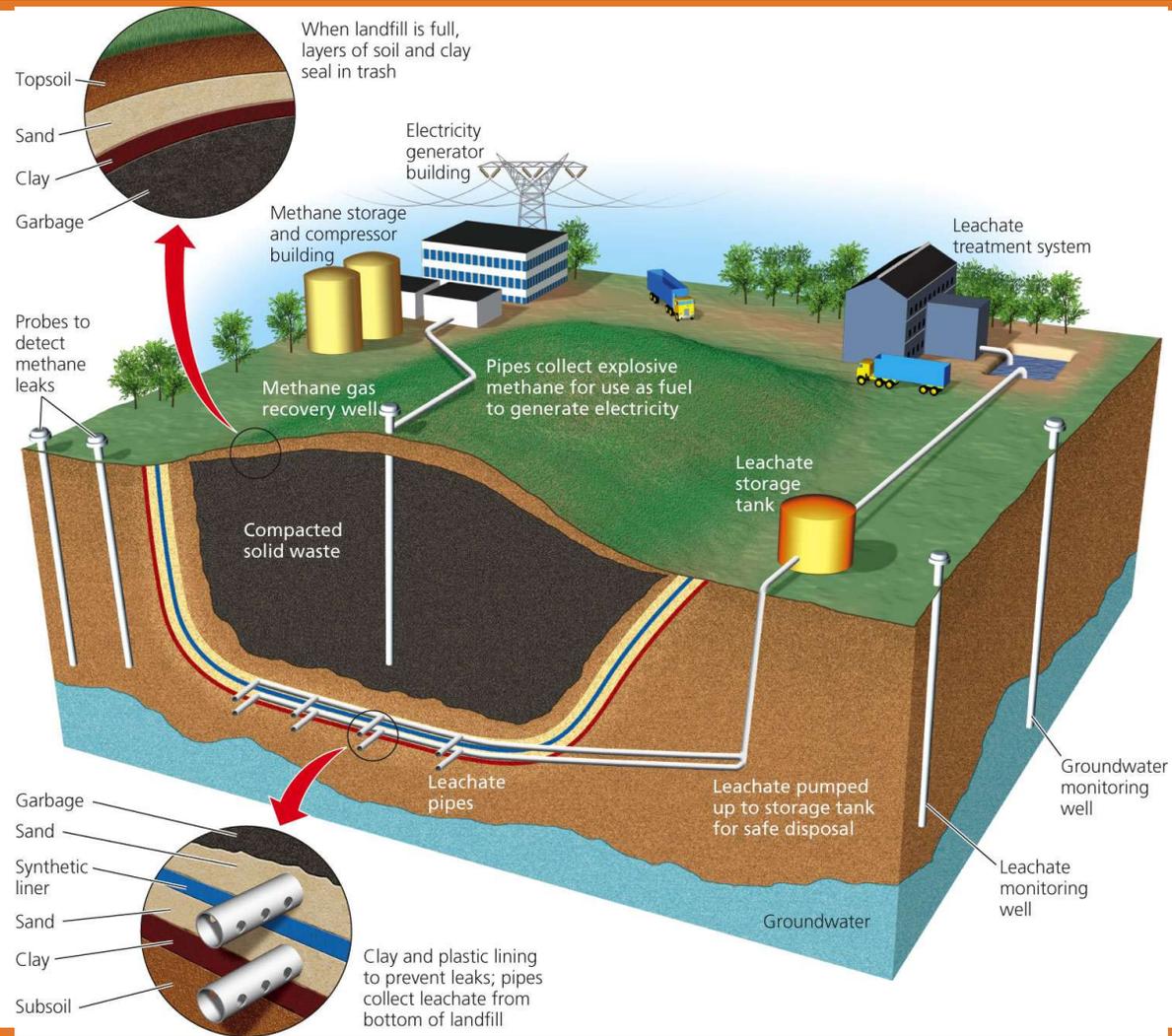


US Methane Emissions, By Source- 2022



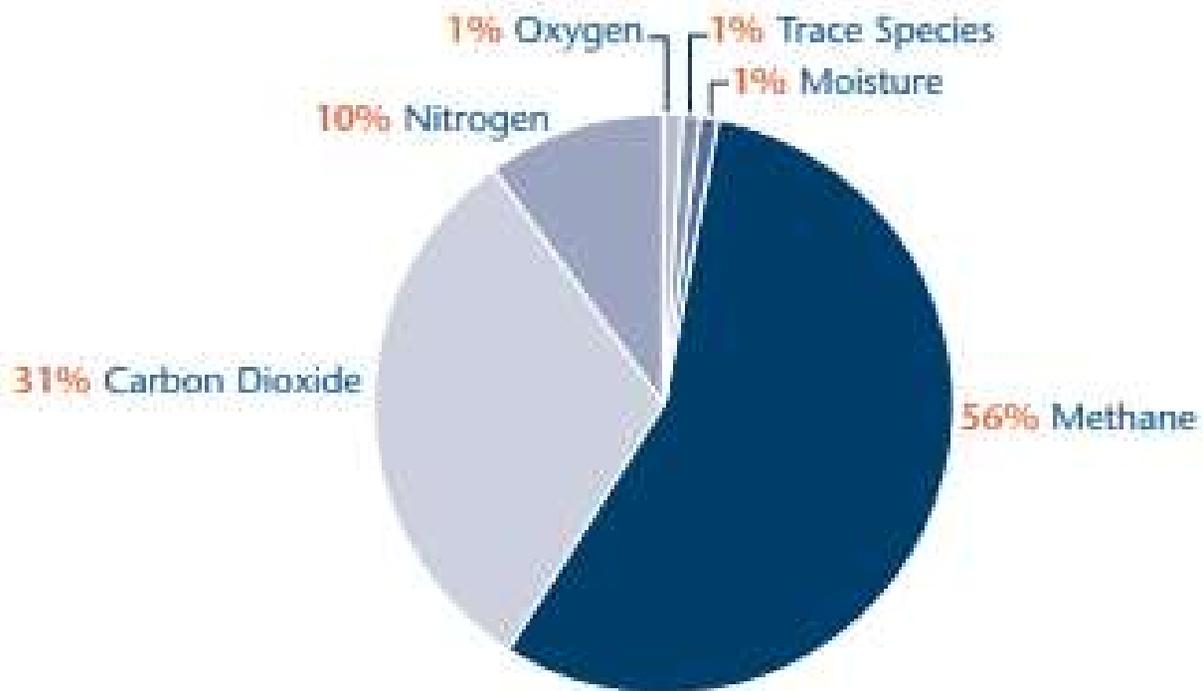
Source: Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990–2022.

Landfill Design



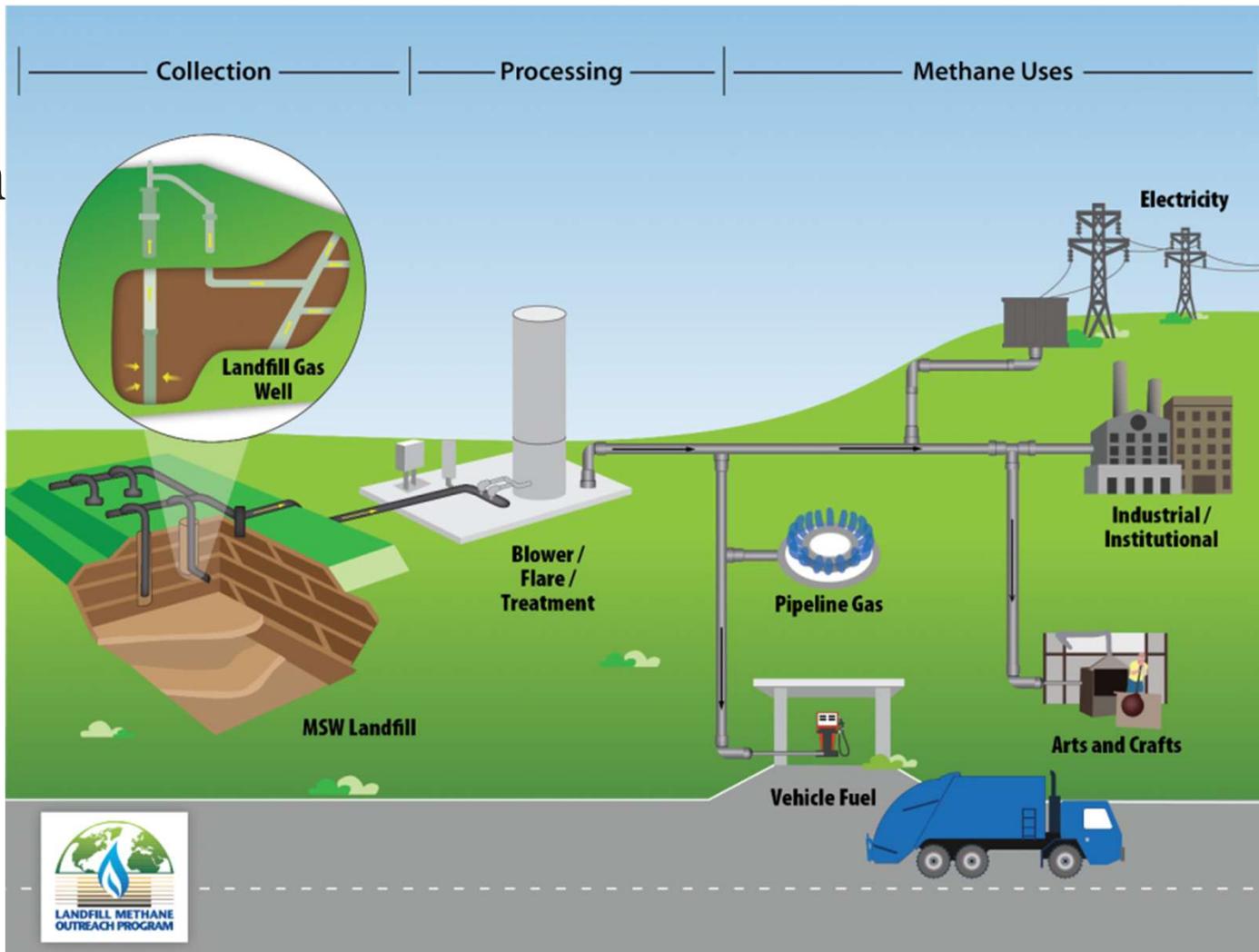
Source: *Living in the Environment: Concepts, Connections, and Solutions. International Student Edition.*

Landfill Gas Composition



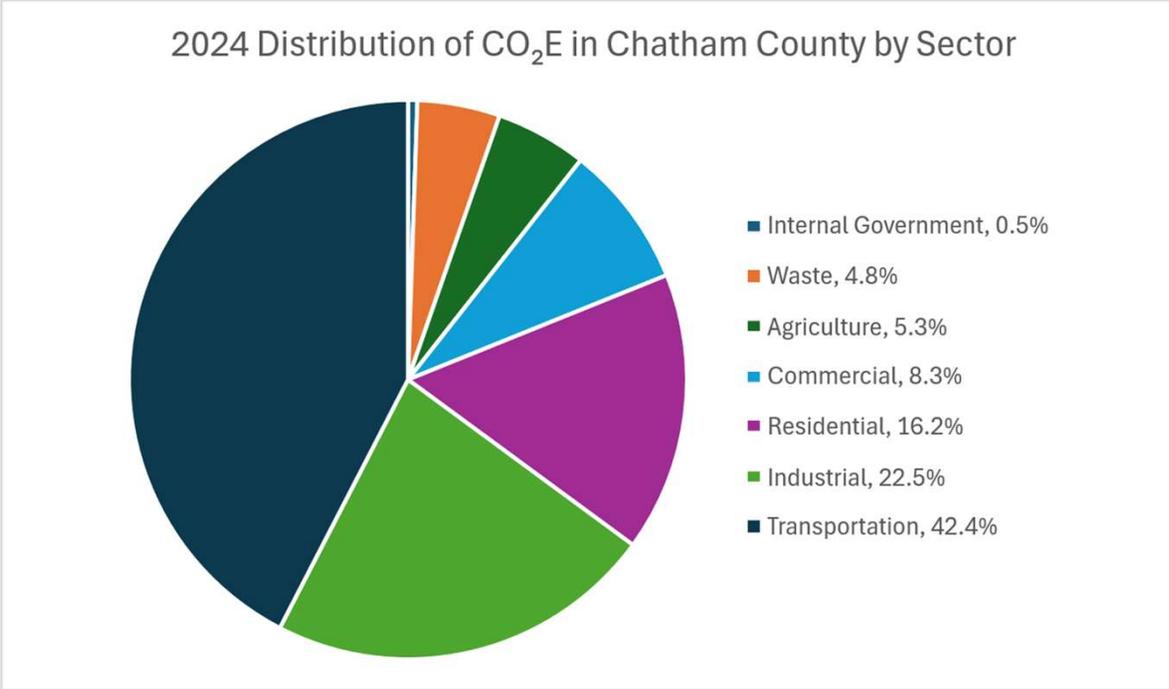
Source: *Guidance on Landfill Gas Flaring*,
Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Landfill Gas Collection



Source: Environmental Protection Agency Basic Information about Landfill Gas

Solid Waste Climate Impact

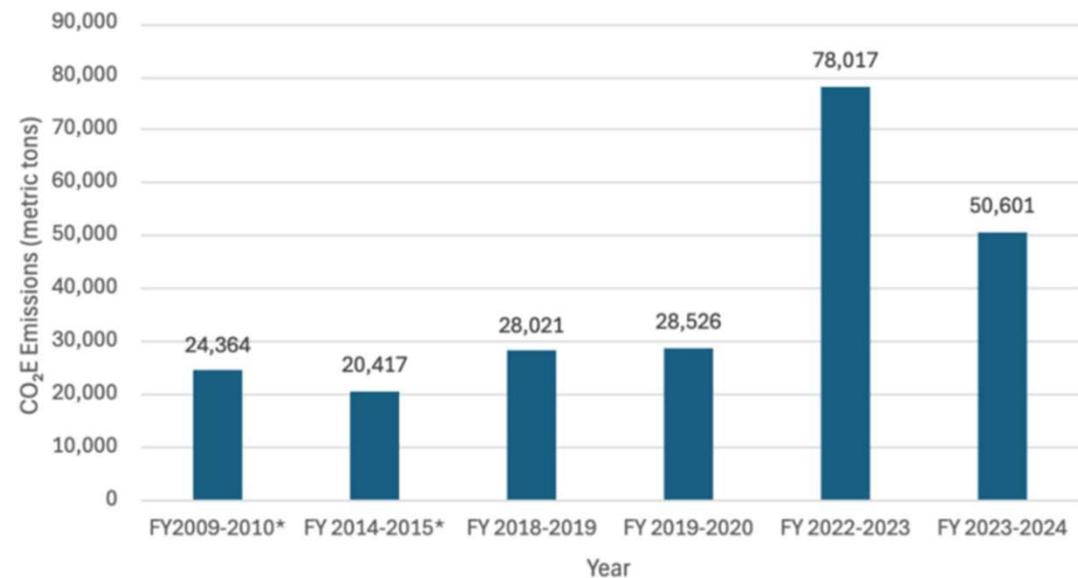


- Landfill Gas is calculated based on tonnage taken to landfills

Source: 2023-2024 Chatham County Greenhouse Gas Inventory

Solid Waste Climate Impact

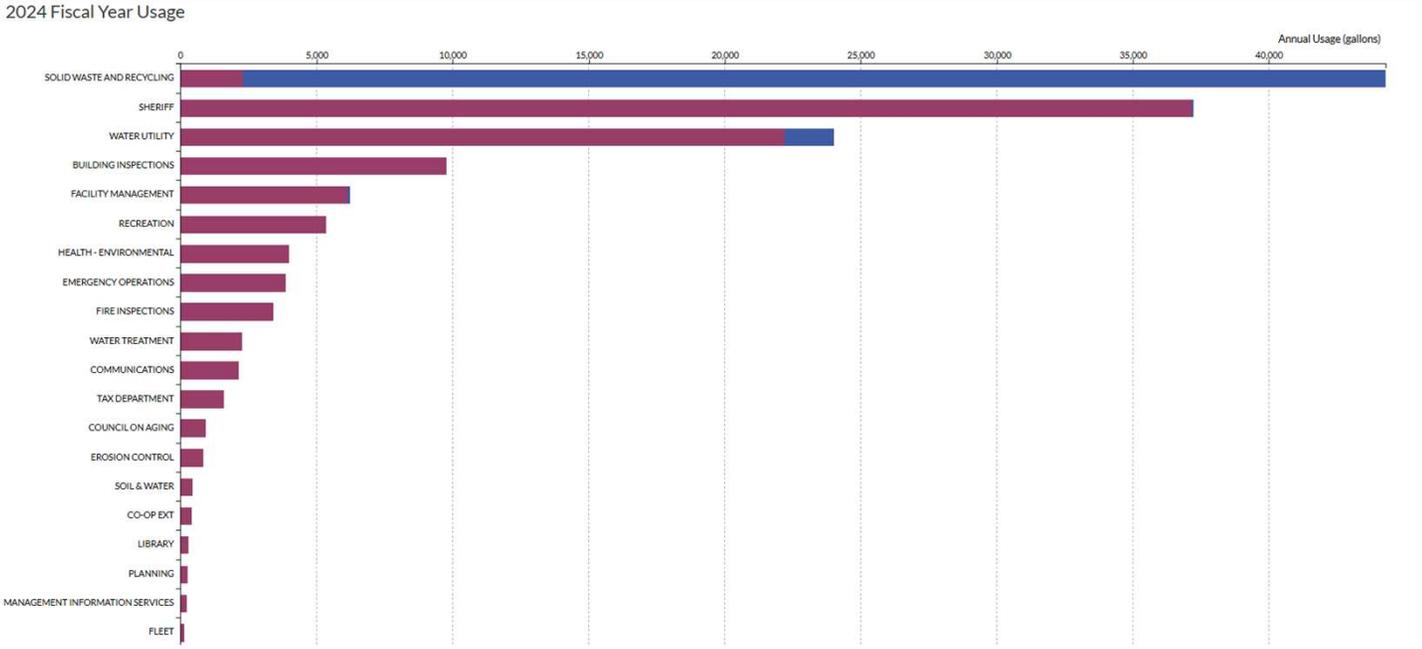
- Total waste taken to landfills from Chatham in FY24 was 126,433 tons
- 11,884 tons came from Chatham County Solid Waste & Recycling (SW&R) Collection Centers
- The waste collected and taken to the landfill was calculated to release 50,601 metric tons CO₂e emissions



Source: 2023-2024 Chatham County Greenhouse Gas Inventory

Vehicle Emissions

- SW&R used more than 44,000 gallons of fuel in FY24
- 95% of the fuel used was diesel for our large trucks and equipment



Source: Enpira Software fuel use dashboard for Chatham County

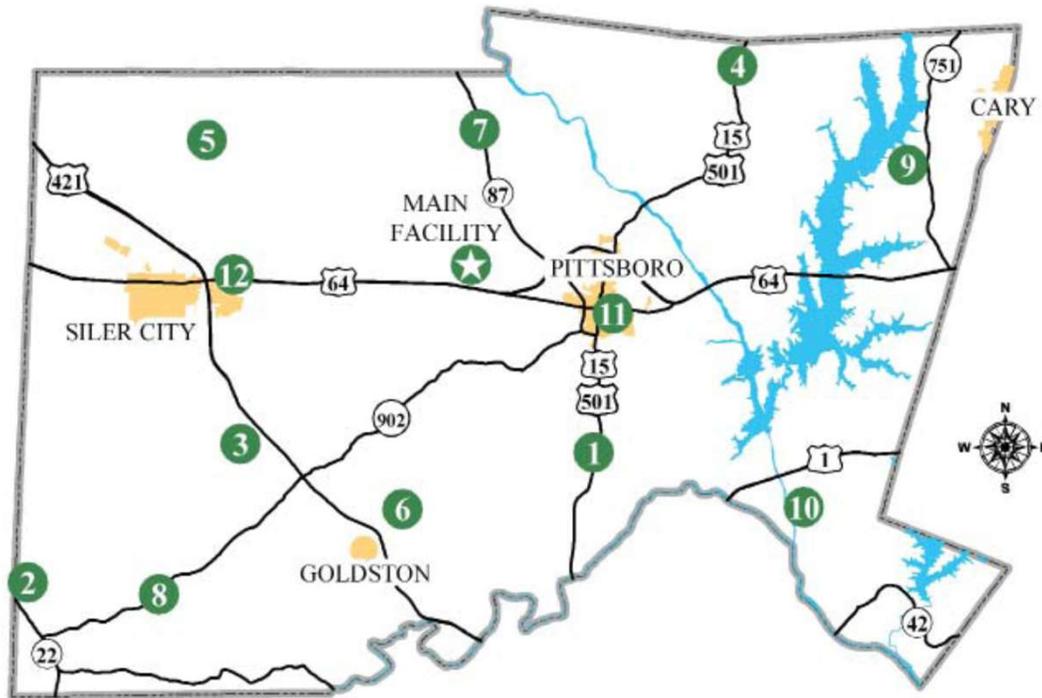
How Chatham County Manages Waste

Solid Waste & Recycling Budget

All data from fiscal year 2026
(July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026)

- Total budget: \$5,579,623
- Enterprise fund
- Funding streams: solid waste fee, state-funded programs, recyclable sales, and grants.
- Solid Waste Fee: \$157 per dwelling
- Total revenue from Solid Waste Fee: \$4,591,622
- Number of households provided decals: ~29,000
- Waste disposal cost: ~\$797,000 (up from last year)
- Recycling revenue: \$120,000 (down from last year)

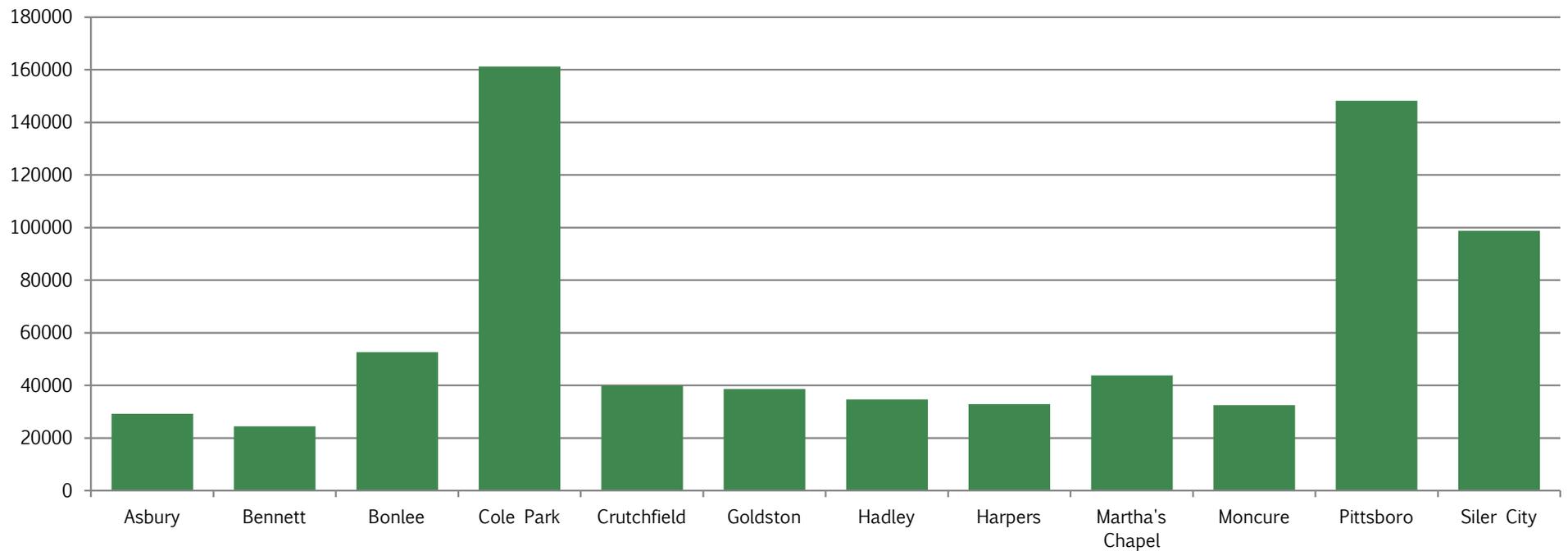
Collection Centers



- 12 Collection Centers
- FY 2025
 - ~737,000 Visitors
 - ~11,700 tons of MSW
 - ~1,200 tons of mixed recycling
 - 404 tons of glass

Visitors by Collection Center- FY 24

FY 24-25 Totals by Center



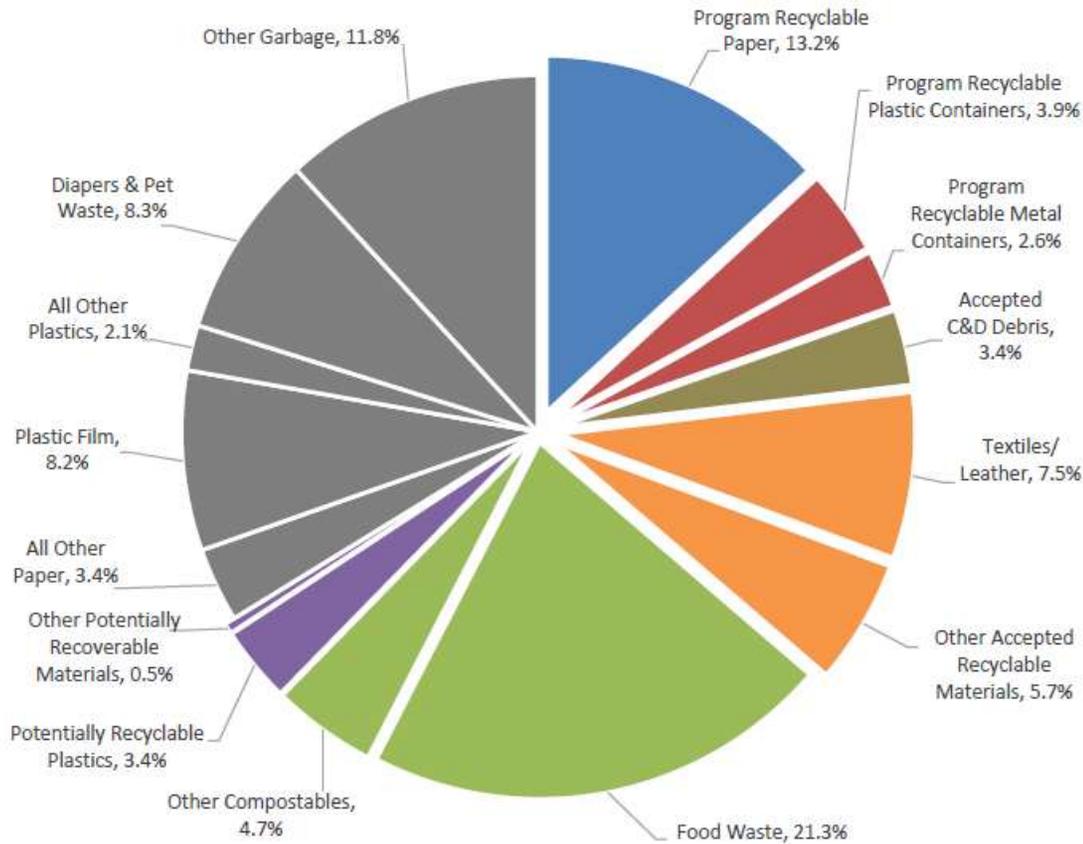
Items Accepted at Collection Centers

- Trash (MSW)
 - Large Items (couch, rug, mattress, etc.)
 - Construction & Demolition (C&D)
 - Scrap Metal
 - Appliances
 - Motor Oil and Oil Filters
 - Batteries
 - Lightbulbs
 - Electronics
 - Cooking Oil
 - Tires
 - Clothing and Shoes
 - Food Waste (pilot project)
- For the Swap Shop:
 - Clothes
 - Shoes
 - Books
 - Small Appliances
 - Small Electronics
 - Decorations
 - Movies, CDs, etc.

Pittsboro Collection Center



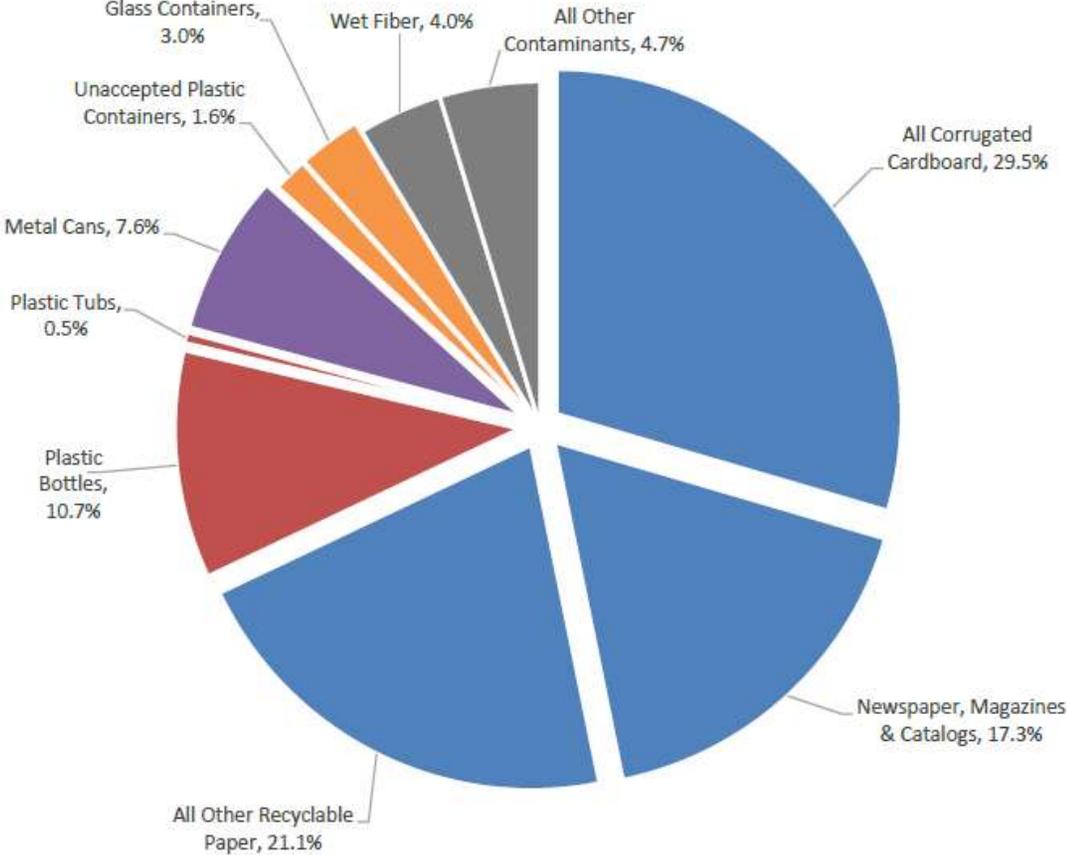
Chatham County Collection Centers Waste Composition Study 2024



**Recyclable
material
disposed of in
the landfill:
36.3%**

Results from municipal solid waste compactors

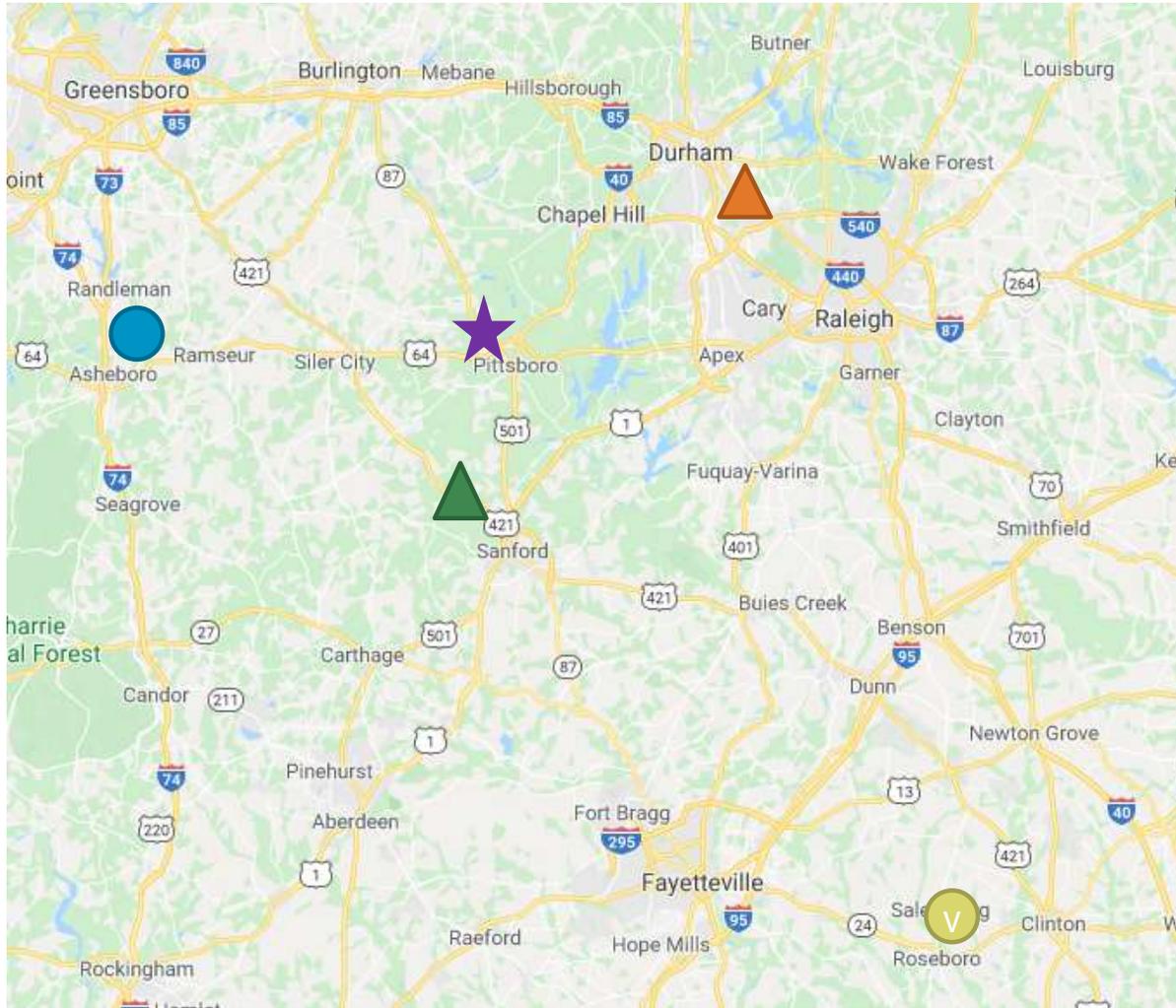
Chatham County Collection Centers Recyclables Characterization Study 2023



Results from all mixed recycling containers



We don't have a landfill



Where does Chatham County's waste go?

Key

- ★ Our location
- ▲ Durham Transfer Station
- ▲ Sanford Transfer Station
- Great Oak Landfill (Randleman)
- Sampson County Landfill

Biodegradable Timeline

3-4 weeks	Banana
1 month	Paper bag
5 months	Cotton rag
1 year	Wool sock
40-50 years	Leather boot
50-80 years	Rubber sole
80-100 years	Tin can
200-500 years	Aluminum can
450 years	Plastic 6-pack ring
1 million years	Plastic jug
Unknown- possibly forever	Styrofoam cup
Unknown- possibly forever	Glass bottle

Items Banned from NC Landfills

- ABC beverage containers
- Appliances
- Antifreeze
- Aluminum cans
- Lead-acid batteries
- Discarded computer equipment
- Discarded televisions
- Oyster shells
- Plastic bottles
- Tires
- Used vehicle oil and filters
- Wooden pallets
- Yard debris



New Ban December 2026-
Lithium-ion batteries

Main Facility

- Batteries
- Cooking Oil
- Electronics
- Fire Extinguishers
- Fluorescent Lightbulbs
- Helium Tanks
- Inert Debris
- Pesticide Containers
- Scrap Metal & Appliances
- Styrofoam
- Tires
- Yard Waste

The Main Facility CANNOT accept trash.

- 28 County Services Road, Pittsboro
- Open Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 4:00 pm
- Mulch sales (and free give-a-ways)
- No decal required to use.

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)

- Leftover household products that can catch fire, react, or explode under certain circumstances, or that are corrosive or toxic.



Chatham County HHW Visitors

	Total Cost	Visitors	Cost per Visitor
FY 18	\$32,465	1014	\$32.02
FY 19	\$35,277	992	\$35.56
FY 20	\$37,174	809	\$45.95
FY 21	\$43,071	1036	\$41.58
FY 22	\$34,273	1035	\$33.11
FY 23	\$56,204	1073	\$52.38
FY 24	\$62,400	1138	\$54.83
FY 25	\$59,089	1167	\$50.63

Compost

A mixture that consists largely of decayed organic matter and is used for fertilizing and conditioning land.



Types of Composting Systems



Learn how to properly dispose of items

Government » Departments & Programs: I-Z » Solid Waste & Recycling »

How Do I Dispose of...?

Font Size:    Share & Bookmark  Feedback  Print

"How do I dispose of..." is an online disposal guide. This information only applies to what can and cannot be disposed of at the Chatham County [Collection Centers](#), [Main Facility](#), and [Household Hazardous Waste](#) events. If you have curbside collection you should contact your private hauler to find out what you can and cannot put in their containers.

How do I dispose of...?



The [recycling](#) rules listed are for the Collection Centers. If you have curbside pickup, that is provided by a private hauler. However, you can follow all of the same rules we have listed, expect you would put your glass bottles and jars in your recycling bin as well. There is no need to separate glass bottles and jars at the curb.

If we cannot accept it and advise you to go to a facility that is not part of Chatham County Solid Waste & Recycling, we cannot guarantee they will accept the item. You should contact them directly for details.

Waste & Recycling Enthusiast Program (WREP) Overview

- Offers a platform to engage with the community, learn about sustainable practices, and make a tangible difference in our environment.
- Six classes 6:00-8:00 pm
 - September 18: How Chatham Manages Waste and Waste Management
 - September 25: Waste Reduction
 - October 2: Recycling, MRFs, How Items Get Recycled
 - October 9: Composting
 - October 16: Environmental Justice
 - October 23: Hazardous Waste and Closing Information
- Adults attend 5 of 6 classes (Youth attend 4 of 6 classes)





Thank you!

