



Climate Change

CASE STUDIES



Preserving Resources,
Preventing Waste

City of Clifton: Education is Key to Reducing Climate Change

Since joining WasteWise in 1997, the City of Clifton, New Jersey, continually proves to be an active program leader. In addition to receiving the Local Government Program Champion and Endorser Program Champion awards, Clifton significantly reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, earning an EPA WasteWise Climate Change Program Champion award in 2002. Education serves as a key element of Clifton's waste reduction-climate change efforts. Whether educating employees or local students, the city encourages all members of the community to prevent waste and recycle in order to help decrease GHG emissions.

Clifton's education programs include showing EPA's video, "Why 'Waste' a Cool Planet," <www.epa.gov/globalwarming/actions/waste/sf-intro.html> at presentations for civic groups, schools, and businesses. Alfred Du Bois, Clifton's Recycling Coordinator, says, "The EPA video is excellent on how recycling, composting, and source reduction reduces greenhouse gases, and this has been the basis of my [new] presentation to students and adults throughout the last year." Clifton also hosts "WasteWise Environmental Shopping Tours" during which residents receive instruction on making purchasing decisions and learn how they can reduce GHG emissions.

Clifton's nationally recognized recycling program also does its share to reduce GHG levels. In 2001 alone, the city recycled more than 29,914 tons of household materials and nearly 213,616 tons of commercial materials—including paper, plastic,



aluminum cans, wood scraps, textiles, and construction and demolition debris. These efforts decreased Clifton's GHG emissions by 233,357 MTCE, the equivalent to removing more than 175,400 cars from the road for one year!

The city's composting program plays a key role in its educational efforts and serves as a major source of GHG reductions. Clifton promotes backyard composting of food and garden debris, "cut-it and leave-it" grass clipping activities, and educates residents how the 500 trees it plants each year help reduce climate change by absorbing carbon dioxide

For every 7.4 tons of materials the City of Clifton composts, it decreases greenhouse gas emissions by an amount equal to the annual emissions of one car.

(a GHG). By composting food, yard waste, and yard trimmings, the city and its residents not only save valuable landfill space, but also reduce methane (a GHG) emissions when these materials decompose in landfills. For every 7.4 tons of materials the city composts, it decreases greenhouse gas emissions by an amount equal to the annual emissions of one car. Grass and food waste alone reduced GHG emissions by 775 MTCE or 582 cars' emissions for one year.