



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Date: June 21, 2022

Contact: John Vernon
jvernon@burlingtonnc.gov
(o) 336.513.5440

Recycling costs increase nationwide City of Burlington residents will see this increase starting July 1

The City of Burlington will raise recycling fees to continue to provide pick-up services

Burlington, NC – City of Burlington residents will see the recycling fees included on their monthly utility bill triple on July 1 going from \$2.90/month to a new rate of \$6.90/month. With this new rate, the combined total cost for recycling and garbage pickup will be \$13.97/month.

The City is mandated by NC State Law to collect and recycle aluminum cans, newspaper, office paper, and recyclable glass and plastic bottles. Furthermore, due to statewide landfill bans, when there are banned materials such as recyclables in City trash trucks, the City is subject to double tipping fees if cited by the County landfill.

There are many reasons for the fee increase. Some considerations such as the tight labor market and rising fuel costs are certainly factors, but the two primary reasons for the rate jump are changes in the aftermarket for recyclable plastic and the exceptionally favorable contract for recycling services the City of Burlington negotiated in 2012.

Before 2018, 60% of recyclable materials collected in the U.S. were shipped to China to be recycled into new products. Historically, China accepted up to 5% non-recyclable contaminants (garbage or food waste) in bales of recyclable materials. Since 2018, the Chinese government has instituted a new policy which severely restricts the import of recyclable plastics and paper. China now only accepts bales containing less than 1% contamination and will return any shipments that fail to meet that standard. The result to the recycling industry in the US is substantially higher costs to recycle plastic and paper.

As for the previous City of Burlington recycling contract, when the contract was bid out in 2012, GFL Environmental bid significantly less than other providers. The Company honored the contract even as external factors continued to increase operating costs and has provided top notch service to our residents for the past 10 years. Though the bid they submitted for the new contract requires rate hikes, it was also the lowest bid and the City of Burlington is pleased to continue working with GFL. The new contract locks in rates for five years with fee increases tied to the Consumer Price Index.

####

Our Mission:

“The City of Burlington is dedicated to providing high quality municipal services within our diverse community in a friendly, professional and efficient manner in order to promote the safety, health, and quality of life of residents and employees.”

Burlington Municipal Building • 425 South Lexington Avenue, Burlington, NC 27215
www.BurlingtonNC.gov • www.Facebook.com/BurlingtonNC • Twitter [@BurlingtonNC](https://twitter.com/BurlingtonNC)
Instagram [@BurlingtonNC](https://www.instagram.com/BurlingtonNC)