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## Government

### Gloucester Twp. Projects \$100K Savings with New Trash Deal

County and town officials talk trash—specifically, a deal cooperative agreement that will save towns money on what residents throw away.

By [Lauren Burgoon](#) [Email the author](#) 6:00 am

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A new shared services deal throughout Camden County means taxpayers won't be throwing extra money away when they throw out the trash.

Thirty-four of Camden County's 37 towns—including Gloucester Township—joined into a shared services agreement for trash disposal in a deal county officials say will save \$1.3 million over three years. And while disposing of the county's combined 187,600 tons of trash annually isn't the sexiest of topics, the agreement with winning bidder Camden County Energy Recovery Associates means savings for towns forced to keep budgets within a state-mandated 2-percent cap.

"When we work together as 34 municipalities, we can create the economies of scale and get an amazing bid to lower our trash costs for the lowest amount in my memory," Freeholder Jeffrey Nash said at a Wednesday press conference announcing the deal.

Most Camden County towns pay \$65 per ton for trash disposal now, according to the county. Some paid up to \$72 per ton. With the new deal starting Sept. 1, that rate will fall to \$59 for the rest of 2012, \$61 per ton in 2013 and \$63 per ton in 2014.

What seems like a few dollars per ton quickly adds up. Gloucester Township, for example, is on track to save \$70,000 next year and \$30,000 in 2014, Mayor David Mayer said. With a projected 23,000 tons of garbage generated for disposal in 2012, Gloucester Township is the second-largest producer of trash per ton in Camden County, behind Camden City.

"What this shared services arrangement really means is that in the next two years, we'll pay less for our trash disposal than in the previous two years despite the rising costs that are associated with business," Mayer said. "That's terrific, terrific news."

Costs could drop more if residents continue to increase recycling rates as well. Mayer credited single-stream recycling with a projected 5,000-ton decrease in trash disposal from 2011 to this year in Gloucester Township.

"If we all work together to help each other, we can make a difference," Nash said. "By recycling, we reduce the tonnage of trash—that's good for our economies and that's good for our environment."

Three Camden County towns, Pine Valley, Tavistock and Winslow, decided not to join the agreement. Each town has the option to join later, officials said.

Residents likely won't notice any visible change after Sept. 1. The arrangement is for trash disposal to an incinerator in Camden, not for [trash](#)

[collection.](#)

“We look on shared services (as) the future of local government,” said Audubon Mayor John Ward, who called the deal a no-brainer. “You cannot turn your back on any opportunity for shared services. If something presents itself, you owe it to your residents to look into it, to make sure it makes sense for your residents and, hopefully, to act on it.”

Camden County has put an increasing focus on shared services in recent years, and this is one of the largest shared services agreements in the county. Other big projects include shared services for plowing and salting involving most of the county, and animal control and the county animal shelter, which both have about 18 towns involved.

Trash disposal was by far an easier sell than, for example, [a countywide police force](#) backed by some Camden County officials but, [so far, not many towns](#).

“What we are all about is saving money and working smarter,” said Somerdale Mayor Gary Passanante, also the director of Camden County’s Division of Shared Services. “Today we’re talking about trash disposal and solid waste that saves us over a million dollars, tomorrow it will be something else.”

How do you feel about shared services?

- Everything should be on the table to see if it makes sense, including sharing municipal employees, school administrators and police.
- I only support agreements that have a financial impact, but don't involve personnel, such as the trash disposal deal.
- I don't support shared services at all.
- Other (tell us in the comments)

Total votes: **10**

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