



NEW MEXICO RECYCLING COALITION  
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February 16, 2012

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Access to Recycling Nearly Doubles in New Mexico More recycling available in both rural and urban areas**

Santa Fe – New Mexicans have significantly more locations to recycle around the state, especially in rural areas, with an increase of 81% of access to recycling. In the last 4 years, more than 83 drop-off recycling locations have been added by municipalities around the state. The majority of New Mexico communities provide drop-off recycling as the primary means to collect the material. There are currently fourteen curbside programs in the state.

An analysis conducted by the New Mexico Recycling Coalition (NMRC), an independent statewide nonprofit, documented the number of NM recycling locations based on 2004, 2007 and current information. At least 87 incorporated and tribal communities provide recycling opportunities for most of the traditional household recyclables, which includes cardboard, mixed paper, aluminum cans, tin cans, plastic #1 and #2 bottles. Not all communities collected the listed items, but at the minimum collected at least half of the identified household items. The number of communities providing access to recycling has jumped from 37 in 2004, to 58 in 2007 to the current 87 communities.

“This increase in access to recycling means that recycling is here to stay in New Mexico,” explains English Bird, NMRC Executive Director. “For recycling to work it must be convenient for residents. We would like to see recycling opportunities provided in all the same ways trash is collected, so the choice is always available.”

The most recent drop-off recycling locations have all occurred in rural communities in Cibola County, Torrance County, Deming, Elephant Butte, Sierra County and San Miguel County. Several more locations will come online in 2012 in Raton, Otero County and Luna County. Locations lacking access to recycling occur in Union, Quay, Catron, Harding, Mora and Roosevelt counties.

The access to recycling data supports a similar increase pattern in the state’s recycling rate. In just 5 years the state recycling rate has improved 66%, increasing from 9.74% in 2006 to its most recent rate of 16.2% reported for 2010 (New Mexico Environment Department: Solid Waste Bureau).

Several funding sources can be credited with the increase in recycling access at drop-off locations. The New Mexico Environment Department’s Solid Waste Bureau offers an annual Recycling and Illegal Dumping grant fund to support recycling investments. Since 2007, the program has assisted communities by funding 38 new or expanded drop-off locations. Federal stimulus monies brought in from Department of Energy American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds have supported the creation of 32 new drop-off sites with more planned for 2012.

The Access to Recycling chart can be found at [www.recyclenewmexico.com](http://www.recyclenewmexico.com).

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