



Paper or Plastic?

Not just at the grocery store.....

Many residents are puzzled by the question **"When do I use the paper recyclable bags and what can I put in those bags?"** It can be somewhat complicated, so allow us to help explain and then the mystery will be solved!

What materials can I put in the paper recyclable bags?

Depending on the season, paper recyclable bags are for **LEAVES ONLY** or **GRASS CLIPPINGS ONLY**. General yard debris, sticks, plant clippings, brush or any other materials **NEVER** go in the paper bags. Should mixed materials be found in the paper recyclable bags, regardless of the season, the resident will be contacted and informed that the bags will **NOT** be collected until the bags contain **ONLY** the seasonally allowed items.



REMEMBER:
Paper bags are for LEAVES ONLY or GRASS ONLY
depending upon the season.



Paper Recyclable Bags and their use are seasonal

The Township of North Brunswick participates in a recycling program for grass clippings and leaves sponsored by Middlesex County. The County accepts grass clippings in the spring and summer in paper recyclable bags and leaves in autumn in the same bags. The County composts these items seasonally, and the resulting mulch is made available to the residents of participating towns and cities free of charge. When the County facility is at capacity, or the timeframe has ended (whichever comes first), the Township of North Brunswick has no other place to recycle these items. This is why we have such firm parameters, regardless of the weather, for when we collect these materials in the paper recyclable bags.

Plastic bags? When should I use them? Why should I use them?

We know and appreciate how our residents are committed to recycling all things "recyclable". It may seem odd to have our residents use plastic bags for leaves or grass clippings. As we mentioned above, the Township can only recycle leaves and grass clippings during specific periods during the year. As a result, during times **outside those dates**, leaves should be put into plastic bags, along with any other yard debris. Residents should call for bulk pick up of yard debris and leaves in plastic bags. Grass clippings may be placed in plastic bags during times **outside those dates** as discussed above.



Yard debris, grass clippings and leaves collected in plastic bags are taken to the landfill. As much as the Township of North Brunswick and all its residents are committed to recycling, we have no alternative but to dispose of these items in the landfill when the seasonal recycling opportunities are unavailable.

When is "leaf season" and "grass season"?

Generally, "Grass Season" runs from early May until September and "Leaf Season" is from late September until early December. This varies, so please always check this website for specific dates, or call the Department of Public Works at **732-297-1134** if you have questions about the seasonal dates.



How come when I called DPW, they told me to use plastic bags but my neighborhood is full of the paper recyclable bags and those still get picked up?

It's true – the Department of Public Works does tell residents who call us about the correct and seasonal use of the paper recyclable bags. Educating residents about this issue is not always easy – we don't believe there is a truly cost-effective way to get the message out to our residents other than individually on the phone or via this website. This means that some of your friends and neighbors might not be fully aware of the correct use of the paper recyclable bags.

The Department of Public Works does our very best to get the residents informed about this, but we also have a commitment and an obligation to the overall cleanliness and "livability" of our Township. Therefore, DPW does collect the paper recyclable bags, out of season, in the overall interest of our friends and neighbors. We simply will not allow

these bags to biodegrade curbside over the course of time because we all want to be able to enjoy a clean and well kept town. With that said, we do make every effort to educate and inform our residents and ask for as much compliance as possible.

Does this help?

We hope this helps explain the "paper vs. plastic" questions. As always, please call the Department of Public Works with any additional questions you may have about this or any of our other services at **732-297-1134**.

