

# WILMINGTON City Government Goes Green

CITY OF WILMINGTON PUBLIC INFORMATION REPORT

Fall 2017

Over the last several years, the City of Wilmington has done several things to be more environmentally friendly and make our facilities more energy efficient. This includes things like converting to energy saving LED lights, installing solar panels, constructing new buildings to be more energy efficient and teaching staff around the city how to be more environmentally friendly in their work.

## City facilities

In 2009, the city opened its first green building by renovating an old, abandoned city garage and turned it into a green facility that now houses street sweepers used for downtown cleaning. Last year, electricity costs for the facility was just \$623, or less than \$52 per month on average.

For much of the year, the facility generated more electricity than it used and electricity not used was fed back into the power grid, which saved the city more than \$875 last year. The building has several energy saving features, including solar power and solar heated water for radiant floor heating. As new city facilities are built, they are designed to include environmentally-friendly features, such as the new LEED-certified fire station on Cinema Drive and the upcoming Public Safety Training Center on Hurst Drive.



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## Energy saving LED lights

### Street Lights

The city is in the process of converting almost 10,000 city-owned and leased streetlights to LED technology. When completed, this is expected to save the city over \$200,000, more than 870,000 kWh of energy consumption and significantly less time for maintenance. So far, the city has converted about half of the street lights and is also converting park lighting, with about one-third done so far.



### Community Centers

This spring, the city installed 49 LED lights at the Davis Center and has already reduced energy use by 17% on average. The city also installed 80 LED lights at the MLK Center, including the gym, and has seen an average 16% reduction in electricity use, saving about \$400 per month.



### Other City Facilities

The city has installed LED lights at several other facilities, including the WPD headquarters and the Operations Center, and plans to install LED lighting in the city's parking decks.



### Solar Panels

Solar panels are located at several city facilities. In fiscal year 2016-17, the systems produced nearly 150,000 kilowatt hours of electricity...that's enough electricity to power 16 homes for one year.





## City vehicles

The city's fleet has more than 500 vehicles and now has GPS installed on almost all of them. More efficient routing for gas-guzzling heavy vehicles like trash trucks has saved thousands of dollars in fuel costs. Since 2014, fuel consumption has been reduced by 15 percent.



## City makes it easier to recycle at city parks

The city has installed 35 new recycling and trash stations at nine city parks/recreation areas, including Empie, Halyburton and Wade parks, Greenfield Lake and the MLK Center.

The recycling and trash stations, which were purchased with state grant funds, help encourage away-from-home recycling by park visitors.

The park containers are another step in the city's efforts to increase the amount of materials residents recycle, including at public gathering spaces. In prior years, the city received grant funds to install 42 blue recycling receptacles in high pedestrian traffic areas downtown, like these on the Riverwalk, pictured to the right.



## Recycling Q & A

Wilmington residents do a great job of recycling – more than 80 percent of our trash customers participate in the city’s voluntary curbside pick-up recycling program! This is much higher than the national average. Recycling is not only environmentally friendly, it saves spaces in the landfill and saves money too – it costs \$48 per ton to put waste in the landfill, but only about \$8 per ton to recycle. A few things to remember:



**Q Can I put my recycling in plastic bags in my blue cart?**

**A** No. Plastic grocery bags should NEVER be placed in your recycling cart. Plastic bags and plastic film can be recycled at your participating local grocery stores or retail locations. Find a location near you at [www.plasticfilmrecycling.org](http://www.plasticfilmrecycling.org).

**Q Can I recycle my used aluminum foil even if it has a little food on it?**

**A** Yes. Aluminum foil is recyclable.

**Q Do I need to rinse my bottles, cans, boxes and cartons?**

**A** No. No need to rinse out the mayonnaise or peanut butter! Leave the caps on your glass bottles and jars and plastic containers. It’s all recyclable.

**Q Can I recycle pizza boxes?**

**A** No. Pizza boxes are usually too greasy to be recycled. If the top of your box is not greasy, however, you can rip it off and recycle that part.

**Q Can I recycle packing materials?**

**A** It depends. Styrofoam cannot be recycled. Bubble wrap and air pillows are plastic and should be dropped off at grocery stores for recycling, like plastic bags. Cardboard can be put in your blue cart.

**Q Can I recycle my old computer or television?**

**A** Yes, but not in your blue cart. The city offers free curbside TV, computer or monitor pickup to city trash customers by appointment. Call (910) 341-7875 for an appointment.

**i More information: Visit [www.wilmingtonnc.gov/recycling](http://www.wilmingtonnc.gov/recycling) or call (910) 341-7875.**

