



2024 Annual Report



Executive Summary

The Red Bank Environmental Commission (RBEC) was established by ordinance in 1990 and is composed of volunteer Red Bank residents appointed by the Mayor and is consistent with NJ state laws creating environmental commissions.

RBEC advises the Mayor, Borough Council, Business Administrator, and municipal department heads on environmental issues that may affect the natural resources and inhabitants of the community including but not limited to, solid waste management and recycling, energy conservation and renewable energy, stormwater management, preservation and use of parks and open spaces, clean water resources, and protection of flora, fauna, soil, and landscape throughout the Borough. Additionally, the commission reviews and comments on the building and development applications for the Planning and Zoning Boards.

All RBEC meetings were opened to the public as we encouraged public participation and action in our discussions, programs and projects.

Membership list as of December 31th, 2024

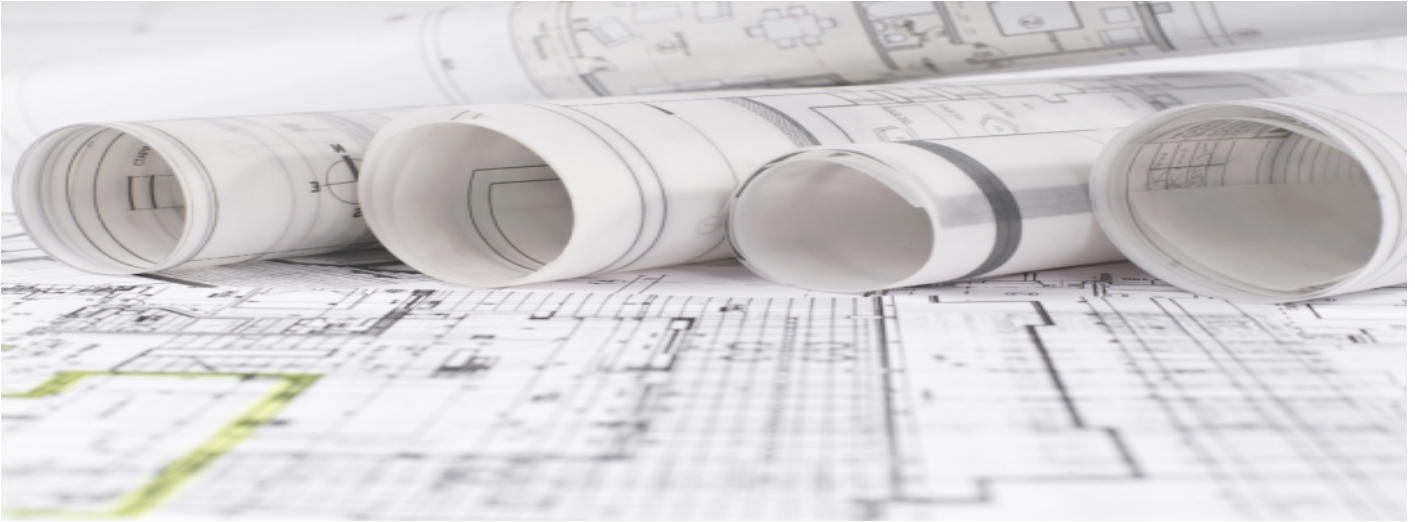
<u>RBEC Member:</u>	<u>Title:</u>
Paulo Rodriguez Heyman	Chair
Denelle Johnson	Vice Chair
Ana Almerini	Secretary
Dave Johnson	
Jenna Leder	
Travers Martin	
Megan Massey	Planning Board Liaison
Alix Schroder	
Scott Carlin	
Nancy Facey-Blackwood	Council Liaison

The RBEC renewed its subcommittee, the Green Team (GT), to collaborate on RBEC projects and events throughout the year, and in keeping with Sustainable Jersey's community partnership and outreach best practices.

Green Team Members*	Creative Team
Helena Blyskun	Jess Alaimo
E. Pamela McArthur	
Luisa Sala	
Eric Wokas	
Sal Trifiro	
Terrence Walton – Dept of Public Utilities	
Oscar Salinas – Parks and Rec	

**All EC members are automatically Green Team members, per ordinance 2021-07.*

Site Plan Reviews



The RBEC/GT reviewed building plans and presented comments to the Municipal Planning and Zoning Boards for best environmental practices. RBEC often suggested increased open space and setbacks, rain gardens, increased use of native trees and plants, use of pervious materials replacing commonly used asphalt, and use of green building practices when possible. Some of the plans reviewed in 2024 include:

- 54 N. Bridge
- Marine Park
- 72 Bridge Ave.
- 103 E. Front St.

Grants



- Maintained a shared spreadsheet where members can add grant ideas. The EC also participated in discussions of grants with the Borough.
- Successful grants with EC participation in 2024 were:
 - Installed a pollinator garden at the west end of West Sunset Ave. Watering was supported by the DPU and RBEC volunteers managed the installation and logistics.
- Closed out prior grants (Green Infrastructure, AARP).
- Applied for Sustainable Jersey \$20K grant for GLB education.

Ordinances and Related Work

- **"Skip the Stuff" Ordinance:** Passed in April; public education and enforcement began on July 1.
 - RBEC Promoted through canvassing, fliers, and a League of Municipalities presentation.



BOROUGH OF RED BANK
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Red Bank Says to
"Skip the Stuff"
When Getting Take-Out



BOROUGH OF RED BANK
Town-wide Ordinance Starting April 22, 2024

- A single-use plastic bag is used on average for 12 minutes before being discarded.
- In landfills depending on conditions, plastics can take 1,000+ years to break down.
- Nearly 50% of the plastic waste generated globally in 2015 was plastic packaging.

Plastic has recently been found making its way to our bloodstream and then into breast milk and the heart. According to the National Institute of Health, manufacturing, transportation, use and decomposition of plastic is harmful to our health. It has been linked to numerous cancers, insulin resistance, decreased sex hormones and other negative consequences for our reproductive system.

The World Economic Forum estimated that in 2019 the production and incineration of plastic was equivalent to 189 coal-fired power plants. By 2050, it will rise to the equivalent of 615 coal plants' worth and will account for 20% of all oil consumption.⁶

Plastic cutlery is too small to be recycled as it can jam recycling machinery. It is also too lightweight and too contaminated by food to be recycled.

Some single-use plastic cutlery will have their end of life in landfills or incinerators, furthering the negative health effects for those who live near the disposal sites. The rest is littered in our streets and waterways.

Reminder the State of New Jersey has already banned single-use plastic carryout bags, single-use paper carryout bags, polystyrene foam food service products, and single-use plastic straws, under (P.L. 2020, c. 117) via <https://dep.nj.gov>



Red Bank Borough Municipal Code Chapter 492: Plastics and Polystyrene Foam (Single Use)
Single use utensils, condiment packets, napkins or extra containers to take out or delivery customers are prohibited, unless requested by the customer. Online ordering and delivery apps must be set to a default of not providing these items unless the customer selects an option to request these items. Delivery and courier services may not provide these items unless such items are requested by the customer.
*NOTE: These restrictions do not apply to self-serve stations inside a food service establishment.




RED BANK
Environmental Commission



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- **Tree Protection Ordinance:** Passed in June and aligns with sustainability and native planting goals.

- **Gas-Powered Leaf Blower (GLB) Reduction:**
 - Developed outreach materials and educational fliers.
 - Gave presentation to Borough Council in October.
 - Explored grant funding to support a transition to electric equipment.
 - Borough included electric leaf blowers in 2025 budget.




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Gas Powered Leaf Blowers
 Reduce the Use Awareness
 Quiet Zone Considerations

Sustainable Alternatives

- Utilize electric or battery blower
- Engage with your landscaper
- Broom or rake yard waste
- Use a mulching mower
- Mower with collecting bin
- Convert to native plants



Health Hazards & Climate Impact

Gas-powered leaf blowers, especially those with two-stroke engines, emit large amounts of air pollution including: fine particulate matter (PM2.5), nitrogen oxides (NOx), and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) These are linked to health problems, asthma attacks, reproductive issues, mental health challenges, cancer, and even premature death.

Gas-powered leaf blowers are a significant source of carbon dioxide, which contributes to global climate change. According to the EPA, using a gas-powered blower for one hour emits as much pollution as driving 1,100 miles in a car.

GPLB Statistics

Emissions from lawn & Garden Equipment, 2020	Tons of Emissions	Equivalent from Number of Cars
Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)	2,913	1,302,837
Carbon Dioxide (CO2)	1,149,423	10,358,520
PM2.5, Primary	965	253,034



Noise Pollution

Gas-powered leaf blowers emit up to 90 decibels of noise. The noise from gas-powered leaf blowers is linked to hearing loss, increased agitation, and cardio vascular issues. Noise, fumes, and dust particles infringe on outdoor activities. Learning and concentration are also affected.



Gas-Powered Leaf Blower Summary

The use of gas-powered leaf blowers comes with high costs for our health, environment, and enjoyment of the benefits of living in Red Bank. Two-stroke engines have been phased out of nearly all industries with the exception of lawn equipment and, unlike cars, their emissions are not regulated. They not only spew toxic chemicals and planet-warming emissions into the air, but their noise causes hearing loss, stress, and disrupts natural habitats.

Help Quiet Red Bank promotes a healthier, more livable community for residents and lawn care workers alike.

RED BANK
 Environmental Commission

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Community Events and Engagement

RBEC and the Green Team participated in several community events. RBEC held several community educational workshops and participated in community events for the residents of Red Bank and neighboring townships. Our workshops and events were developed and executed to improve the health and well-being of our citizens and municipal employees as well as to inform the public of improved environmental and sustainable quality of life issues.

All events were promoted on the RBEC website page, Red Bank Borough events calendar, RBEC Facebook page and in local online and press media. Library events were also promoted by the Red Bank Library online, newsletters and traditional media.



- RBEC tabled at the Borough's Juneteenth celebration at Johnny Jazz Park.



- RBEC participated in a cleanup at Johnny Jazz Park and the Westside on April 20.
- RBEC tabled at the Borough's National Night Out event
- RBEC tabled at the Dog Days event, in collaboration with the Red Bank Animal Welfare Committee, emphasizing gas powered leaf blower reduction.
- RBEC tabled at the Mayor's Wellness Campaign on November 23 at the Red Bank Middle School

Sustainable Jersey Sustainability Summit

- Members of the EC/GT attended sessions on various aspects of sustainability and energy efficiency at the Sustainable NJ Summit held at Bellworks in Spring 2024

AmeriCorps:

- RBEC hosted an AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador at our December 3 meeting, who address stream assessments, community education, and other topics.

Sustainable Jersey Certification

- Red Bank achieved **Silver Certification** with more than 500 points.
- New coordinator (Shawna) appointed.
- Certification plaque displayed at Borough Hall.

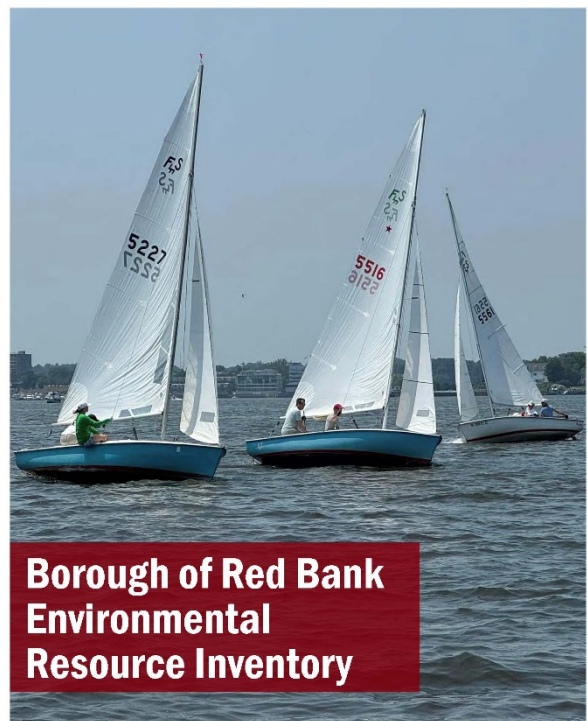


Environmental Resources Inventory (ERI)

- Collaborated with BFJ Planning on ERI update.
- Reviewed drafts and provided feedback from June–December.
- Final draft presented in December.
- Includes updated info on contaminated sites, noise/light pollution, and sustainability mapping.

Food Waste & Composting

- Explored compost education and vendor partnerships (e.g., NJComposting.com, Unwaste).
- Discussed workshops, school composting programs, and grant funding for infrastructure.
- Began promotion of “secondhand September” and sustainable reuse.



Source: Red Bank Environmental Commission

Red Bank 5th Annual Earth Day/Green Fair

- Engaged with the community and the next generation through tabling, education, and outreach at Red Bank Middle School.
- More than 100 people were in attendance.



The poster for the Red Bank Green Fair 2024 features a green and white color scheme. At the top left is the Borough of Red Bank seal. To its right is the text "BOROUGH OF RED BANK" and "WWW.REDBANKNJ.ORG". Below this is a yellow sticky note with event details. To the right of the sticky note is a "HAPPY EARTH DAY" logo with a globe. A green banner across the middle reads "RED BANK GREEN FAIR 2024". Below the banner are three columns of text listing activities, partners, and members. At the bottom are three donation boxes with icons for lunch break, QR code, and VGCA. The footer contains logos for the Borough of Red Bank, Red Bank Public Schools, Red Bank Environmental Commission, Sustainable Jersey, and the Red Bank Green Fair.

BOROUGH OF RED BANK
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Red Bank Green Fair
Monday, April 22, 2024
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm
in partnership with
Red Bank Middle School
- Free Admission -
- Giveaways -

HAPPY EARTH DAY

RED BANK GREEN FAIR 2024

Sustainable Products & Workshops

- Upcycled Sculptures
- Belhaven Terrapin Project
- Learn to Ride (EZ Ride)
- Middle School Trashion Show
- Watershed Ambassadors
- CROP Hunger Walk
- Food Not Bombs

Environmental Partners

- NJ Friends of Clearwater
- Skip the Stuff
- Master Gardeners Assoc.
- NJ Clean Energy Program
- NJ Natural Gas
- COA Seal Team
- Voter Registration

Meet & Chat with Red Bank Members

- Red Bank Environmental Commission
- Red Bank Green Team
- Red Bank Shade Tree Committee
- Red Bank Animal Welfare Committee
- Red Bank Public Schools
- Red Bank Public Library

Please Donate Lunch Break

- Diapers • Wipes
- Toilet Paper

Help for Today
Hope for Tomorrow

QR Scan for Additional Event Details

Please Donate VGCA

- Non-perishable dried foods
- Parmalat • Canned Fruit

Helping Our Central
Jersey Communities

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Collaboration with Other Organizations

Sustainable Jersey Monmouth Hub

- Green Team members actively participate in the bimonthly meetings where county Green Teams come together and discuss topics and share actions in their community.

Environmental Partnership

- EC members actively participated in the monthly meetings hosted by the Navesink River Municipalities Commission (NRMC) where local municipal environmental members meet and discuss topics, issues, and share actions in the Navesink River watershed.

Memberships

- Red Bank is a signatory to the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.
- RBEC is a member of the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC).