



# The Whole Works 2024

Annual Report to the Emmet County Board of Commissioners  
from the Emmet County DPW Board & Staff



Artwork by Betsy Petersen  
Little Juice in Harbor Springs



# Financials

## 2024 REVENUES

### RECYCLING PROGRAMS

Sale of Materials .....	\$728,685.66
Curbside Recycling .....	\$542,550.15
Out-of-County Fees .....	\$620,363.76
Drop-off Center For-Fee Recycling .....	\$216,045.96
Compost, Mulch, & Bin Sales .....	\$23,959.75
From Waste Tip Revenues .....	\$597,866.00
County General Fund .....	\$0.00
Other Income .....	\$30,878.61
Grants .....	\$13,765.00
Write offs/Collections.....	(\$912.44)
Subtotal .....	\$2,557,156.49

### WASTE TRANSFER STATION

Charges for Services.....	\$3,537,256.66
County General Fund .....	\$0.00
Interest Income .....	\$107,099.57
HHW Grants .....	\$15,529.22
Other Income*.....	\$37,784.91
Subtotal .....	\$3,691,670.35

**TOTAL DPW REVENUE.....\$6,248,826.84**

## 2024 EXPENSES

### RECYCLING PROGRAMS

Personnel .....	\$1,343,356.88
Contractual Services .....	\$134,635.55
Operations .....	\$610,006.95
Depreciation .....	\$499,304.21
Subtotal .....	\$2,587,309.59

### WASTE TRANSFER STATION

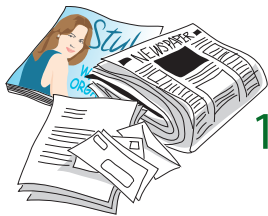
Personnel .....	\$660,963.25
Contractual Services .....	\$397,877.77
Landfill Fees .....	\$1,790,354.71
Operations .....	\$174,731.47
Depreciation .....	\$221,491.39
Subtotal .....	\$3,245,418.59

**TOTAL DPW EXPENSES .....\$5,832,303.59**

### NOTES

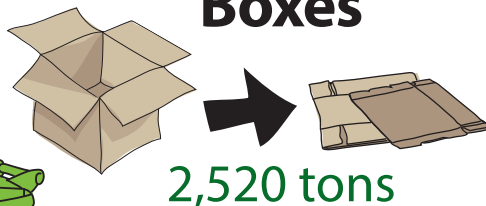
\*Transfer Station "Other Income" includes monies from business and out-of-county users of the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) program and donations to the HCD program.

## Recycled Materials Data



### Paper

1,244 tons



### Boxes

2,520 tons



### Bags

87 tons

### Mixed Containers

1,467 tons



Daily Recyclables	2024	2023	2022
Paper, Boxes, Bags	3,851	4,185	4,380
Mixed Containers	1,467	1,684	1,378
<b>TOTAL TONS</b>	<b>5,318</b>	<b>5,869</b>	<b>5,758</b>

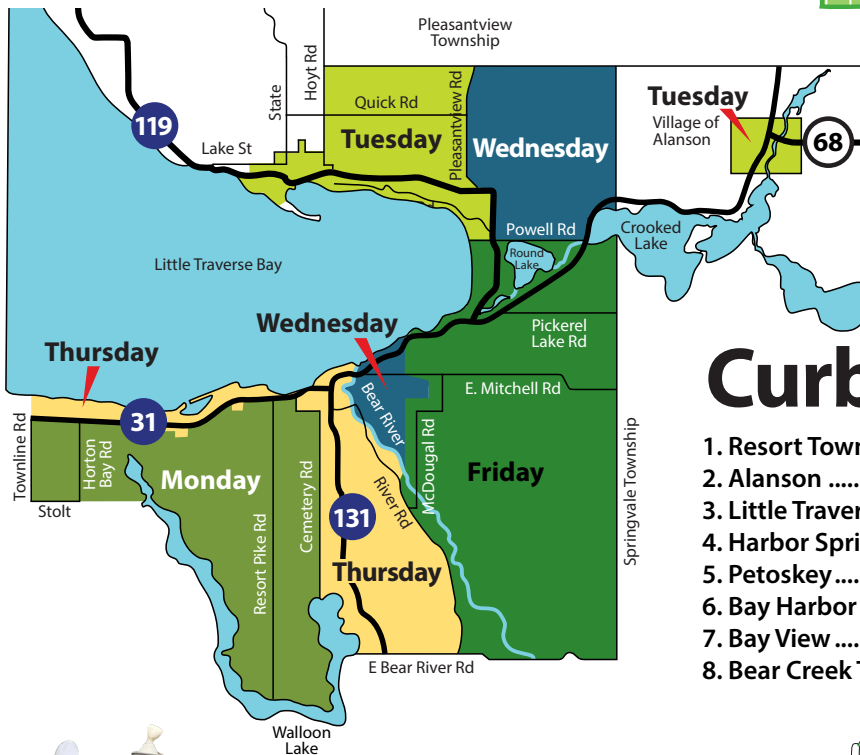
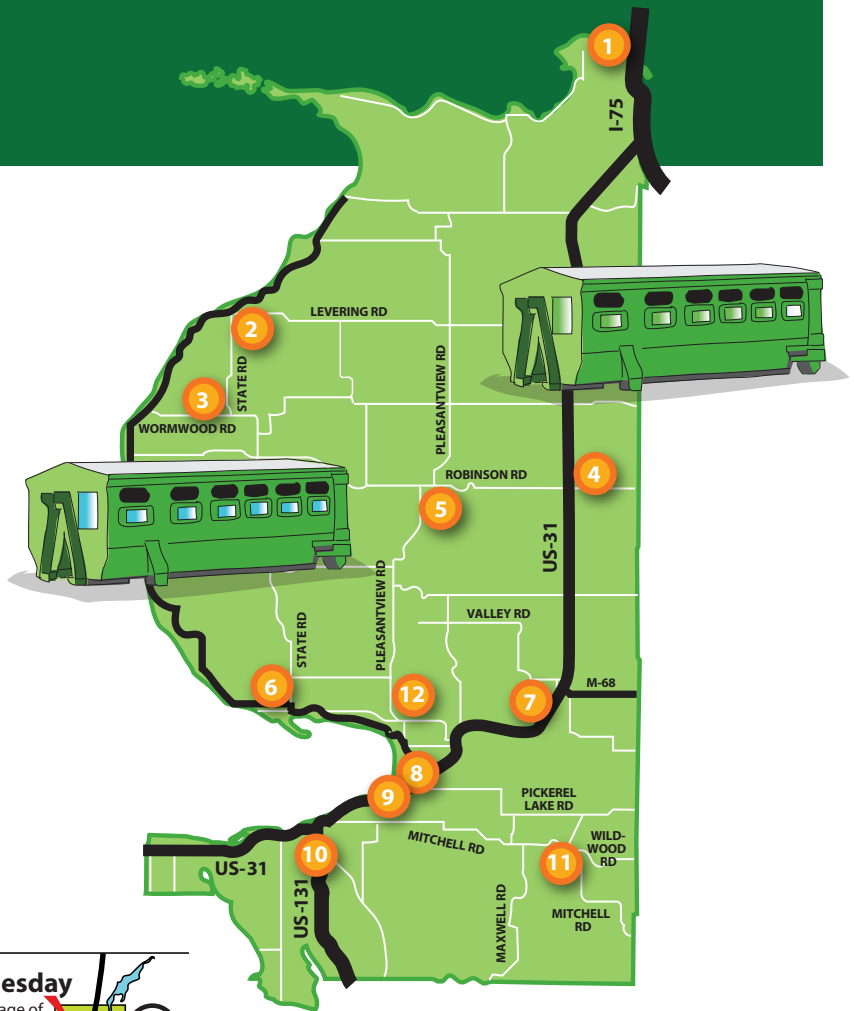
# Stats & Maps

## Dropsite Recycling

1. Mackinaw City .....	5,519 Yds
2. Cross Village .....	2,552 Yds
3. State Road [Readmond Township] .....	1,294 Yds
4. Pellston .....	5,626 Yds
5. Robinson Road .....	5,117 Yds
6. Harbor Springs Area .....	12,291 Yds
7. Alanson .....	7,811 Yds
8. Toski Sands .....	3,030 Yds
9. D&W .....	10,655 Yds
10. Bear Creek Crossings .....	16,936 Yds
11. Springvale Township .....	4,771 Yds
12. Pleasantview Drop Off Center .....	11,772 Yds

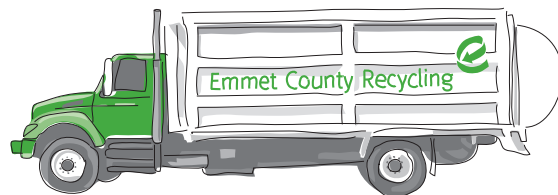
**TOTAL YARDS .....** 87,375 Yds

Up .1% from 2023 (87,287 Yards)



## Curbside Recycling

1. Resort Township .....	31,227
2. Alanson .....	2,411
3. Little Traverse Township .....	21,551
4. Harbor Springs .....	15,388
5. Petoskey .....	52,448
6. Bay Harbor .....	4,184
7. Bay View .....	2,418
8. Bear Creek Township .....	35,893



**158,918**  
Curbside Pick Ups 2024

Down 5% over 2023 (167,016)



How many Emmets  
can you find?

# Newsworthy

## Fire Down Below



In June, a fire occurred in a waste transfer trailer at the facility. Thanks to the swift response of staff and first responders, the situation was managed effectively, resulting in minimal damage.

The incident, covered by the Petoskey News-Review, served as an important reminder to the community about the dangers of disposing of batteries and other flammable materials in the trash. Proper disposal methods for hazardous waste help prevent such incidents and ensure community safety.

## New Baler

In October, we installed a highly anticipated new American Baler, replacing our previous equipment, which had been in use since 2009 after being purchased as a used unit from Outagamie County, Wisconsin.

The aging equipment had reached the end of its useful life and was raising safety concerns. The new baler was designed to fit seamlessly into the existing space, eliminating the need for facility modifications. Once operational, it significantly improved processing efficiency.

In November 2023, we produced 498 bales, and by November 2024, that number had increased to 632—a testament to the impact of this vital upgrade.



## Bale Audit

PETE remains the most significant contaminant in HDPE colored bales, making up 7-10% of each bale, while HDPE colored material accounts for approximately 83-85%.

Additionally, a substantial amount of residual material, primarily consisting of bottle caps and white pill bottles (which are also HDPE colored), was noted.

Looking ahead, we hope that robotic sorting technology will assist in efficiently capturing these bottles, improving material recovery and reducing contamination.





# News Continued

## Materials Management Planning (MMP)

In December 2022, Michigan amended its recycling and waste laws, requiring all counties to update their Solid Waste Management Plans to Materials Management Plans. On September 19, the Board of Commissioners appointed an eleven member Materials Management Planning Committee to assist in the preparation, review and approval of the Materials Management Plan.

The committee consists of the following:

Solid Waste Hauler – Allen Elya, WM

Landfill Operator – Chris Gee, GFL

Recycling Facility Operator – Ashley McMurry, Emmet County

Compost Operator – Kevin Donner, Mshko'Ode Farm

Business Representative – Marie Passino, Petoskey Plastics

Township Elected Official – Denny Keiser, Bear Creek Township

City/Village Elected Official – Lindsey Walker, City of Petoskey

County Elected Official – Don Mapes, Emmet County Commissioner

Environmental Interest Group – Doug Fuller, Audubon Society

Waste Diversion, Reuse or Reduction Facility – Caroline Moellering, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians

Regional Planning Agency – Stephanie Marchbanks, Networks Northwest



Community input opportunities will be announced on the Emmet County Recycling MMP website.

## Updating the Fleet

In 2024, Emmet County Recycling budgeted for three new vehicles to enhance operations: a curbside recycling truck, a hooklift drop-site truck, and a facility pickup truck.

Each vehicle was outfitted with updated decals, ensuring clear identification and maintaining our commitment to efficiency and service excellence.



# New Beginnings Resale Store

At Emmet County Recycling, we understand that true sustainability goes beyond bins and facilities—it thrives when communities embrace the spirit of reduce, reuse, and recycle. This year, we are honored to recognize New Beginnings Resale Store as the Recycler of the Year, a stellar example of environmental stewardship and community care.



*Harbor Springs, MI*

## A Legacy of Service and Sustainability

New Beginnings Resale Store is more than a thrift store; it's a ministry of Holy Childhood of Jesus Parish, a non-profit organization dedicated to uplifting Emmet County and its neighbors. Since its modest start in a Catholic school basement, the shop has grown into a bustling 24,000-square-foot hub of reuse, driven by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers, committed to minimizing waste and reinvesting in the local community. Their mission

is to offer merchandise at low and reduced prices, providing a convenient system for recycling donated items, and reinvesting these monies back into the community. Every donation is carefully processed, with clothing inspected for quality and items sorted by category to ensure little goes to waste.

## Excellence in Reuse

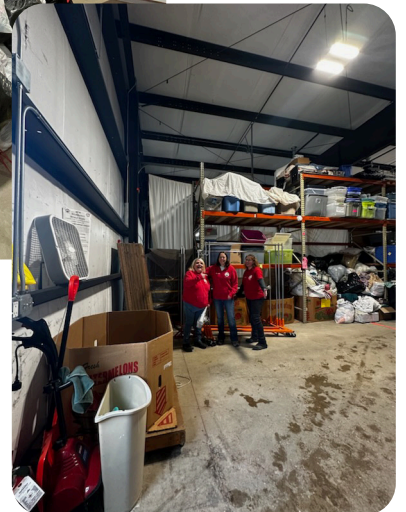
New Beginnings prioritizes sustainability through creative and practical reuse of materials, transforming what might otherwise be considered waste into valuable resources for the community. Highlights of their reuse efforts include:

- **Creative Repurposing:** Unsold cotton clothing becomes \$4 rag bags, while damaged jewelry is repaired or salvaged for parts.
- **Innovative Packaging:** Crayons and markers are re-packaged into grab bags, and jewelry can be thrifted as a mystery jewelry jar (all the rage online!)
- **Giving Comfort:** Unclaimed comforters are donated to animal shelters for use as pet bedding.
- **Sustainable Solutions:** Hangers are utilized in store, grocery bags are reused at check out, and jewelry bags are repurposed as gift packaging or small-item organizers.
- **Eco-Friendly Packaging:** Jewelry boxes are repurposed for displaying and packaging higher-value jewelry, cardboard boxes are reused for shipping items from the eBay store, and sturdy boxes are provided at checkout for customer convenience.

They also maintain an eBay store, where unique items like vintage collectibles and rare finds are sold, maximizing their value to fund programs and outreach.



Above: A literal mountain of donations in November.

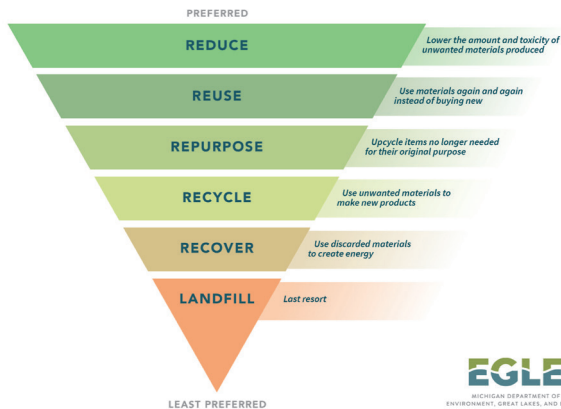


Right: The mountain has disappeared! New Beginnings staff find joy in a clean, organized space.



# Recycler of the Year 2024

## SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS MANAGEMENT



### Recycling With Impact

New Beginnings is a cornerstone of Emmet County's recycling ecosystem. From diverting unusable books and scrap metal to recycling cardboard and plastics, their diligent efforts reduce landfill contributions. Their cardboard recycling efforts alone offset the equivalent of the annual emissions produced by 103 passenger vehicles. Through partnerships with organizations like World Mission Clothing, the shop sends textiles and shoes for reuse, while proceeds fund charitable projects around the world.

### Community Contributions

As a mission-driven organization, New Beginnings gives back in countless ways. They pledge annually to education and provide support to various local charities each month, including Habitat for Humanity, Harbor Springs Food Pantry, Nehemiah House and Harbor Hall. Partnering with St. Vincent de Paul, they offer vouchers for free items to individuals in need and ensure dollars stay within the community.

### A Vision for the Future

New Beginnings continues to grow and innovate. Current renovation plans include expanded parking, improved checkout areas, and enhanced donation facilities. Their vision is clear: to create a seamless and sustainable system that benefits the environment and community alike.

### A Shining Example

New Beginnings is a powerful reminder that thrifting isn't

just a resource for those in need—it's a lifestyle rooted in environmental responsibility and a stand against overconsumption. They've created a thriving ecosystem where every donation, every dollar, and every volunteer hour contributes to reducing waste, creating jobs, and uplifting lives. Unlike many resale stores nationwide—where 80% of donations end up in landfills or are incinerated—New Beginnings Resale offers a meaningful alternative. Supporting this local program is a choice you can truly feel good about.

### How YOU can help

Building a stronger community can take many forms. Consider donating your gently used items to New Beginnings or visiting during your next shopping trip—both are impactful ways to help. Review the list of acceptable items carefully. If you donate items that aren't suitable, you'll be shifting the cost of disposal to New Beginnings, rather than making a contribution to the community. Keep in mind that the most valuable contribution you can offer is your time, as they always welcome volunteers. Ask for Carol or Joli when you call or stop in to inquire about volunteering.



### Recycler of the Year

Emmet County Recycling is proud to honor New Beginnings Resale Shop as Recycler of the Year. They are a beacon of hope and a testament to the power of landfill diversion and environmental sustainability, proving that one organization's dedication can ripple outward to benefit an entire community and beyond.

# Prepaid Bag System

In response to changes in local waste hauler services, many residents began utilizing our facility to dispose of bagged garbage. This increase in traffic led to long wait times and safety concerns, particularly with vehicles extending into Pleasantview Road.

To address these challenges, we have implemented a new budget bag system aimed at improving efficiency and reducing delays:

- **Prepaid Bags:** Residents can purchase specially marked, bright hunter-orange bags in packs of 10 for \$35 at the gatehouse. This cost remains consistent with the current \$3.50 per bag disposal fee.
- **Streamlined Process:** Prepaid bags eliminate the need for daily transactions. When using a prepaid bag, simply notify the attendant, who will record it manually instead of issuing a ticket in the computer system, saving everyone time!
- **Assessment Period:** The system was quietly introduced at the end of the busy season and summer 2025 will serve as a key time period to assess its effectiveness in improving traffic flow.
- We appreciate your cooperation as we test this new system to enhance the efficiency and safety of our facility. Thank you for your continued support in helping us serve the community better.

## Waste Transfer Station

**VOLUME (Yards): 134,983**  **CUSTOMERS: 79,068**  
*.65% increase from 2023* *8% increase from 2023*

## Team Growth & Celebratory Milestones

### Milestone Mavericks



**Grady**



**Josh**



**Nate**



**Jim**



**Drew**



**Matt**

### Gatehouse Attendants

### Recycle Processors

In 2024, we welcomed new team members and celebrated key milestones. Grady marked 20 years as a recycling truck driver, and Josh reached 15 years in March currently serving as the operations manager. We also gained Nate Sherman, Jim Shively (welcome back!), Drew Fennell, and Matt Groover, who have already made a positive impact. Brad Jerichow joined as our first seasonal compost operator, and Theo Marshall returned for his third summer at the Transfer Station with expanded duties.



# Hazardous Waste

## HHW Events

### Event Dates:

Wednesday, June 19

Saturday, September 28

### Community Participation:

June event: 190 vehicles

Sept. event: 205 vehicles

### Total Hazardous Waste Collected:

35,489 lbs + 5,286 lbs oil-based paint \*Latex paint calculated in the daily collection totals (to the right).

These events provide residents with a safe and responsible way to dispose of hazardous materials, preventing environmental harm and ensuring proper waste management.



## Daily Collection

In addition to special collection events, ECR accepts hazardous materials on a daily basis for recycling:



### Electronics

134,040 lbs

Reuse, recover and recycle components  
Dynamic Lifecycle Innovations of Onalaska, WI



### Latex Paint

42,150 lbs

New paint sold in Habitat for Humanity ReStores at ePaint Recycling of Battle Creek, MI



### Batteries

11,360 lbs

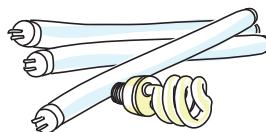
New batteries, stainless steel, supplements, fertilizers  
Cirba Solutions of Wixom, MI



### Motor Oil

22,960 lbs

Re-refined motor oil  
Heritage-Crystal Clean Saginaw, MI



### Lightbulbs

12,516 lbs

New bulbs, thermostats, concrete or ceramic tile  
Cleanlites of Lansing, MI



### Antifreeze

4,500 lbs

New antifreeze  
Heritage-Crystal Clean Saginaw, MI

# Grant Leads To Expanded Event Recycling

## Spring 2024 Grant

ECR received \$8,765 from the Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation to expand event recycling.

Funding enabled the purchase of additional bins, lids, carts, and educational materials, doubling the initial goal.

ECR supported 25 events in 2023, 33 in 2024, and anticipates 40+ in 2025. Blissfest highlighted the impact, increasing recycling and reducing waste.

This project strengthened ECR's capacity for sustainable event waste management.



**Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area**  
community foundation



## Expanded Event Recycling

In 2023, ECR serviced 25 events and in 2024 we provided event recycling services for 33 events!

- 3 weddings
- Project Connect
- 4 Tribal including the summer camps
- Blissfest
- Petoskey Youth Soccer Association
- \$4,632 in returnables

### Taste of Harbor Fun Facts:

- 15 bags of compostables/food scraps
- 6 cases of empty wine bottles
- 1/4 cubic yard of cardboard
- 4 bags of trash
- 2 bags of full of plastic bags (ice bags/film plastic)



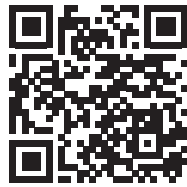
It really was a great event, the volunteers for recycling this year were all rock stars, Suzanne was our zero-waste champion! It feels like the attendees and vendors have all made leaps and bounds in making this a successful zero waste event.



# Grants Drive Organics Efficiencies

## NextCycle FLOWS:

ECR joined the FLOWS track of the NextCycle program, building on a previous MICROS project to develop a sustainable funding model for its organics program.



Goals included budgeting for a compost facility, improving curbside food scrap collection, and exploring new technologies like anaerobic digestion.



Team members Ashley and Andi refined the project through an accelerator academy, presenting their pitch to stakeholders in Ypsilanti. Their efforts earned a \$5,000 Harvest Grant from EGLE, advancing ECR's commitment to sustainable materials management.

## Build2Scale EDA (Pass-Through Grant):

ECR is refining composting operations and food waste collection to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and expand recovery.

Short-term goals focus on optimizing site operations, bulk compost delivery, and water management. A cost analysis will enhance route efficiency and cost recovery.

Long-term plans include site redesign, advanced technologies, capital funding, regulatory evaluations, marketing to support sustainable growth, and greater food waste diversion.

## EGLE Harvest Grant: \$5,000

In pursuit of enhancing our efforts, ECR utilized harvest grant funds to procure additional kitchen caddies for residents, and we aim to establish an educational hub dedicated to food scrap drop-offs, housing the GAFAF carts permanently alongside informative signage and labeling.



## Food Scrap Recycling: Acceptable Materials



Give all food  
a future



Fruits & Vegetables



Beans, Nuts  
& Nut Shells



Egg Shells



Meat, Fish,  
Seafood & Bones



Dairy Products



Fats, oils and greases  
should be tipped in the  
grease bin



Pasta, Bread & Rice



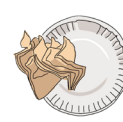
Flowers & Greenery



Greasy Paper Bags  
& Pizza Box Liners



Coffee Grounds,  
Coffee Filters & Tea Bags



Paper Napkins  
& Paper Plates



BPI Compostable  
Products



This project was funded in part by NextCycle Michigan, an initiative of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy





# Give all food **a future**

## Recipe for Success

207 tons of food & floral scraps



3,524 tons of yard waste



1,200 yards  
of screened compost

### Backyard Composting

Ready to start composting at home? We've got everything you need! Pick up a starter guide at our office or download one from our website. Swing by the Pleasantview Drop-Off Center to purchase a compost bin and start turning scraps into a nutrient soil amendment.



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### ECR Organics in the News



'A valuable resource': Traverse City restaurants aim to reduce food waste, greenhouse gases



Digging into composting in Northern Michigan's Emmet County

### Zero Waste in the Schools



The Petoskey varsity football team hosted weekly team dinners this fall during the season, making a conscious effort to divert food scraps from the landfill. By implementing composting and food waste reduction strategies, the team worked to minimize their environmental impact while enjoying their meals together. Leftover food was composted, reinforcing a culture of sustainability and responsibility. Through these efforts, the team not only built camaraderie but also contributed to a greener community.

## An Ode to Andi

### From Intern to Director (10 Years of Service)

Andi's leadership, kindness, and unwavering support left a lasting impact on our team, shaping a workplace filled with collaboration, growth, and camaraderie. She was more than a boss—she was a mentor, a cheerleader, and a steady guide through challenges big and small. While we'll miss her deeply, we are forever grateful for her inspiration and wish her all the best in her next chapter.

