



The Making g'ART'bage Contest at the Essex County Environmental Center is an opportunity to creatively take non-recyclable materials and other waste items and turn them into exciting art. We hope the projects help create discussion and highlight the concerning abundance of these waste items to encourage positive change for the environment.

Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.



**Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr., Essex County Executive
And the Board of County Commissioners
Invite You to Participate in the**

Making g'ART'bage Contest!



A program of the Essex County Environmental Center

Our 2026 Theme is Birds!



Contest participants are challenged to be thoughtful and creative in crafting art made from **garbage that cannot easily be recycled or is commonly littered.**

Team and individual projects are welcome.

Enter in one of four categories:

Grades PreK-2nd; Grades 3rd-5th; Grades 6th-8th & Grades 9th-12th

Winning entrees will be displayed during the week of Earth Day!

Winners will be announced once judging is completed,
and prizes will be awarded at a scheduled ceremony.

Registration Deadline: Wednesday, April 8, 2026

Project Drop-off: Saturday, April 11, 2026, from 10:30am to 1:30pm
at the Essex County Environmental Center, 621B Eagle Rock Avenue, Roseland, NJ

**Pre-register [Online Here](#) or by contacting the Environmental Center
at 973-228-8776 or email tbutler@parks.essexcountynj.org**



COUNTY OF ESSEX
Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs
ESSEX COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
621-B EAGLE ROCK AVENUE, ROSELAND, NEW JERSEY 07068
Phone: 973.228.8776
www.essexcountynj.org



PUTTING ESSEX COUNTY FIRST

Making g‘ART’bage Contest

Rules and Information

1. Art pieces must be made of **garbage that cannot easily be recycled**, and can include adhesives, paint, crayons, clay, markers, and other supplies to assemble the project to transform garbage into fine works of art! The more **non-recyclable** items included the better (e.g., take-out food packaging, wrappers, straws, Styrofoam, K-cups, etc.), upcycling materials that would otherwise enter the waste stream!

2. **Categories are as follows:**

PreK-2nd grades | 3rd-5th grades | 6th-8th grades | 9th-12th grades

Projects may be submitted by an individual or a team with a maximum of five participants.

3. **Judging** will be done by a group of local environmental professionals. Projects will be scored based on the following criteria:

- Maximum use of non-recyclable materials
- Explaining the participants’ learning of what is recyclable and non-recyclable
- Creativity and overall appearance

4. **The purpose of the contest is to raise awareness about waste reduction, litter prevention, and to and remove single-use plastics and other non-recyclable materials from the waste stream and from our environment.**

- **Check your local recycling guidelines.** Visit your local municipality’s website to determine what items are recyclable and non-recyclable and create your masterpiece guided by the information you learn about local recycling rules!
- **Use of household hazardous waste materials and electronics are prohibited!** This includes batteries of any kind, incandescent light bulbs, fluorescent tubes, containers holding hazardous waste materials, etc. Please visit the Essex County Utilities Authority (ECUA) website at www.ecuanj.com to learn more.

5. Projects may be displayed outside on the grounds of the Environmental Center, so please keep the weather in mind when building your creation. The more weather resistant, the longer they will last on display.

6. **Each entry must be submitted with an index card and short description of your creation**, noting the solid waste and recycling research findings leading to the development of the art piece, along with the entrant or group name, age, grade, and school (if applicable).

7. Projects may be held on display and become the property of the Environmental Center.