



Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority
Kean Skylands Clean Communities Coordinators Meeting
September 16, 2026

The Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority (MCMUA) hosted an in-person Clean Communities meeting on September 16, 2026, from 10:00am to 2:00pm. The meeting was held at Kean Skylands Campus, located at 243 Mount Paul Rd, Oak Ridge, NJ 07438. A total of 41 attendees were present, 18 of which were Morris County Clean Communities Coordinators and 2 were out-of-county coordinators. 7 attendees were also seeking Public Health Credits. This meeting was approved for 3 NJCCC Credits, 4 CRP Classroom Credits, 4 CPWM Government Credits (#18150), and 4 Public Health Credits.

Kean Skylands Overview (10:00 – 10:15)

Michelle Chavanne, the Morris County Clean Communities Coordinator, welcomed attendees and introduced Erica Colace, the Director of Operations at Skylands Campus. Colace walked attendees to the Skywalk, where she gave a brief history and overview of the location. Following this, attendees returned to the main meeting room.

Welcome, Program Updates, & Reminders (10:15-10:45)

Chavanne gave an in-depth review of the Clean Communities program and resources for the benefit of new coordinators. She began with a brief historical overview of the program and broke down the program into three main components: litter cleanups, litter education, and litter enforcement. She specified that the role of Clean Communities Coordinators is to oversee and track all fund expenses, as well as complete the annual statistical report.

Following this, Chavanne reviewed allowable expenses in each category, how the MCMUA uses their Clean Communities funding, and a general list of unallowable expenses. In her presentation, she included links to the Adopt-A-Highway page, the MCMUA Clear Stream rental form, MCMUA approved educational vendors, the Rutgers Clean Communities Certification Training, and useful resources. **She highlighted that for the upcoming school cleanup mini-grant program, the MCMUA will direct schools to contact their local coordinators for additional cleanup funding.**

Chavanne then reviewed how coordinators should run their program throughout the year. Coordinators should:

1. Understand how to use their Clean Communities Grant Funds



2. Determine their initial grant funding by visiting the [NJCCC Grant Website](#)
3. Budget, track, and record all cleanup, educational, and enforcement expenses throughout the year
4. Use all Clean Communities Funding by June 30
5. Complete their Statistical Report by July 31

Chavanne reviewed the MCMUA Clean Communities Coordinators webpage and where coordinators can find these resources. Useful links and resources are also provided in the presentation slides.

Chavanne ended her presentation by reviewing 2026 Clean Communities Program Guideline Updates and State Single-Use Legislation updates. **Chavanne noted that towns may now use their Clean Communities funds on reusable bag collection and/or bag cleaning and sanitation programs.** Additionally, the Single-Use Plastic law was enacted in early 2026, which:

- 1) Prohibits food service business from providing single-use utensils and condiments to customers under certain circumstances and
- 2) Requires DEP to establish education campaign on benefits of reducing single-use utensils and condiments.

Clean Communities Coordinators are tasked with educating their local food service businesses on complying with the new single-use plastics law. Chavanne provided the coordinators with MCMUA and NJDEP resources to assist in these efforts.

Building a Successful Illegal Dumping Program (10:45-11:15)

Andrew Clarke, Director of Sales and Marketing from Q-STAR, presented on how municipalities can create a successful illegal dumping program. His presentation began with stating problems municipalities face with litter enforcement and why illegal dumping is a cycle. He highlights the hidden costs of illegal dumping, and that the overall goal should be to change behavior through taking proactive steps for education, elimination, and enforcement measures. His steps to reach this include:

1. Defining the problem by identifying hotspots and why they may be occurring
2. Establish clear ownership for those who oversees what tasks, emphasizing cross-department coordination
3. Support these initiatives through policy, data, education and outreach, and enforcement authority



4. Obtain resources and technology (including Q-STAR technologies) that assist in proactive action
5. Create ordinances that support the program
6. Create deterrence and enforcement measures coupled with education
7. Improve program by taking metrics and making strategic improvements

Clarke spoke on the effectiveness of Q-STAR technology with data from live sites, as well as comparing the cost of cleanup disposal vs installing Q-STAR technology.

GOATOTE (11:15-11:45)

Renee Lundahl, a Co-Founder of GOATOTE, spoke on the behind the scenes of bag reuse programs and how to specifically set one up at the municipal level. Lundahl emphasized the changing policies in New Jersey, which are unique among the United States, and the lack of program systems that accompanied these laws.

Lundahl broke down circular economics in the context of a bag reuse program. The steps include collecting and cleaning the bags, checking the bag quality, redistributing them out to communities, and reporting the information back to municipalities.

Lundahl also explained how municipalities and counties can have one or multiple collection locations, or opt to do a single-day event. Typically, municipal programs begin at \$1,000 over a 3-month period, or about \$4,000 for the year. This cost includes processing and sending the bags to an end market so municipalities don't have to do this themselves. Their overall goal is to create the right infrastructure to make bag reuse programs convenient for residents.

Lundahl finished her presentation emphasizing that New Jersey has already passed the legislation and has programs already in place to reach these goals, municipalities simply need to take the initiative to invest in these.

New Jersey Clean Communities Council (NJCCC) Updates (11:45 – 12:00)

JoAnn Gemenden, the Executive Director of the NJCCC, spoke about program updates and showing attendees an overview of the [Litter Free New Jersey](#) and [New Jersey Clean Communities | NJCCC](#) websites.

Gemenden emphasized the [Reusable Bag Resource Center](#), how coordinators can post their bag collection events on the [Linktree](#), and available [litter PSA](#).



She also highlighted the upcoming [Annual Clean Communities Fall Litter Summit & Awards Ceremony](#), where the Morris County and Morristown Clean Communities Coordinators will be winning two awards for their programs.

Clean Communities Grant Games (12:00-12:15)

Chavanne led the Clean Communities vs Recycling Grant Expenses game. Attendees were broken into four groups, where they were given a list of expenses and had to determine if their Municipal Recycling Grant or Clean Communities Grant was better suited to purchase the item.

Lunch (12:15-1:00)

Chavanne provided a Litter Bingo Eye-Spy game, where attendees were encouraged to walk the Skywalk and spot litter.

Water Pollution (1:00 – 1:30)

Joe Milkulka, a Master Educator with the New Jersey School of Conservation (NJSOC) and previous NJDEP employee, spoke about how coordinators can educate their communities on water pollutants. He began by briefly reviewing the history of water quality policy and watersheds. He emphasized common misconceptions or questions that people have, such as believing that they do not live in a watershed if they don't live by water.

Mikulka then spoke about the different categories of water pollutants with the use of props. He asked the attendees questions that he would ask during his presentations. For example, he held up a container of salt and asked the audience if they believed it was a pollutant. The reactions were split, and Mikulka explained how it depends what body of water it would be in, as a pollutant changes a natural habitat.

This presentation was especially insightful to emphasize how the residue inside different types of litter (i.e. an unclean paint can or motor oil bottle), can lead to further environmental issues.

Sustainability Squad Presentation (1:30-2:00)

Sarah Coykendall, Director of Education and Outreach at the Kean University – Human Rights Institute, ended the meeting with a presentation of the Sustainability Squad at Kean University. She introduced their program with a quick video and explained that the purpose of their Human Rights Institute is to advance human rights awareness and education throughout Kean through a multitude of outreach efforts.

One way Kean University does this is with the Sustainability Squad, which is a group of students that take data and create sustainability initiatives throughout campus through a collaborative



approach. With this initiative, students serve as sustainability advocates in their communities and with their peers, encouraging further change. Both the Human Rights Institute and Sustainability Squad work to incorporate the 17 Sustainable Development Goals into the campus while working towards social justice.

Coykendall then had attendees split into groups to work together to determine what a group of 20 college students could do for their communities if they were engaged. One group spoke about college students working with grade school students to teach the importance of cleanups and helping them organize a cleanup with the goal of highlighting how much change one person can do no matter the age. Another group spoke on the college students creating a guide and activities for being able to engage students.

The meeting concluded at 2:00pm.