



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF
ADAM J. BELLO
MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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**COUNTY EXECUTIVE BELLO ANNOUNCES 340 POUNDS OF
VAPES AND E-CIGARETTE DEVICES COLLECTED IN FIRST YEAR
OF RESIDENTIAL VAPE DISPOSAL PROGRAM**

Monroe County is first-in-the-state and among first-in-the-nation with a vape and e-cigarette disposal program for residents and schools

Gates, NY — Today, Monroe County Executive Adam Bello announced that more than 5,500 vape and e-cigarette devices have been collected at the Monroe County/WM ecopark since its [launch in August 2022](#). This equates to more than 340 pounds of devices taken to a Clean Harbors facility for safe disposal. Two-thirds of the vapes collected during the past year have come from school districts. One-third of the vapes were dropped off by the community during normal Monroe County/WM ecopark business hours.

“I’m encouraged to see the impact this program has had in removing so many vapes and e-cigarette devices from our schools. These devices are not just harmful to our health but can be detrimental to our environment if disposed of incorrectly. This impressive collection of disposed vapes during the first year of our disposal program means less hazardous materials in our landfills and waterways,” **said County Executive Bello**. “I want to thank our Department of Environmental Services team and our partners at WM and Clean Harbors for all they do to dispose of this hazardous waste safely.”

Vapes and electronic cigarettes contain lithium and lithium-ion batteries which can present fire and explosion hazards. Liquid nicotine in vapes and e-cigarettes is considered an acute hazard waste by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and can become a poison hazard if washed into waterways or plumbing. Liquid THC is considered a pharmaceutical waste and must be disposed of as such.

The Monroe County Health Department and Department of Environmental Services also accepts these devices from school districts, providing a way to properly dispose of any confiscated vape devices in their possession if they enroll in the County’s Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator (CESQG) Program. Multiple districts have utilized the program resulting in more than 3,600 vape pens and e-cigarettes collected.

“Vape products are a hazardous waste, especially those with nicotine or THC cartridges. Devices dropped on the ground can be washed into storm sewers and end up in treatment plants and local water bodies causing major harm to our wildlife and

environment,” said **Monroe County Department of Environmental Services Director Mike Garland**. “Thank you to County Executive Bello and our great partners at WM and Clean Harbors for working together on this innovative partnership to get rid of these toxic materials.”

“Vaping is a major area of concern in schools and truly has become a national epidemic,” said **Greece Central School District Superintendent Kathleen Graupman**. “Nationwide, more than a quarter of high school students report vaping at least once a month. Our district confiscates hundreds of vaping devices each year. We are working to address the issue through specialized vaping intervention programs that are designed for our students. We appreciate the County for prioritizing this issue and creating a safe space for proper disposal of the devices we confiscate.”

“We are elated to mark the one-year anniversary of our Vape Disposal program – an initiative that underscores our unwavering commitment to safeguarding the health of our community, especially our youth,” said **Hannah Weltzer with Smoking and Health Action Coalition of Livingston and Monroe Counties**. “As tobacco control advocates, we applauded the collaborative efforts this measure took and the strides we have accomplished in the community by parents, students, and educators about the potential risks associated with e-cigarette use. Over the last year, the vape disposal program here at the Monroe County/WM ecopark has provided our community and our schools the opportunity to dispose of these devices in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.”

Residents are encouraged to bring their used or unwanted vape pens, electronic cigarettes, and e-liquids to the ecopark for safe disposal. These items should be handled with nitrile or latex gloves and stored and delivered to the ecopark in a leak-proof container. Any leaking products or e-liquid cartridges should be contained in a plastic sealable/Ziploc bag.

There is no appointment needed and no charge to the public to drop off vapes and cartridges at the Monroe County/WM ecopark.

The Monroe County/WM ecopark is open every Wednesday from 1 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 7:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. For more information, go to monroecounty.gov/ecopark.

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