

## **Recycling Celebrates 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in New Jersey**

On April 20, 1987, NJ Governor Thomas Kean signed the New Jersey Statewide Mandatory Source Separation and Recycling Act into Law. That was 20 years ago. According to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), over 170 million tons of recyclable materials have been recycled in this twenty year period in New Jersey. If we use our 2004 state-wide tonnage figures, approximately 50% of our garbage was recycled in our State. The New Jersey Legislature has set a new goal of a 60% recycling rate for our state. This percent has risen and fallen over the years, due to a number of reasons like jumps in the recycling markets, lack of education and most of all, lack of interest.

On April 24, 2007, a 20th Anniversary Celebration was held at the War Memorial in Trenton. A host of guest speakers were there including former Governor James Florio, Senator Robert Smith, NJDEP Commissioner Lisa Jackson and many more. Commissioner Jackson stated that New Jersey is setting a new goal of 60%. She stated that we have a need to continue stressing the importance of recycling and its benefits to not only the environment but to every New Jersey resident as well.