

The National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA) is reporting that its separation of plastic containers pilot project has been successful, with over 2,700 pounds of plastic containers collected.

The initiative got underway on May 1 in Havendale, Karachi and Whitfield Town in Kingston where residents are being encouraged to separate plastic containers from their regular household waste.

“Overall, the project is a success. We have an average participation rate of over 52 per cent (and) as at the end of August, a total of 2,735 pounds (1,243 kilograms) of plastic containers have been collected from all three communities,” said Community Relations Manager at the NSWMA, Shauna Guthrie.

The main objectives of the pilot are to assess the willingness of citizens to separate plastic containers and to have sufficient data to implement an effective national programme by the start of the next financial year.

Mrs. Guthrie informed that for persons living outside of the communities currently participating in the programme, the NSWMA is still interested in collecting their plastic.

“For communities that are not involved in the pilot project we work with them because as, I said, the aim is to reduce the number of plastic that goes on our disposal sites. So, although your community is not one of the communities under the pilot project, give us a call and we will make arrangements to make collection,” she stated.

Biodegradable garbage such as paper and plants can break down in a short period of time and does considerably less harm to the environment. Whereas, non-biodegradable waste such as plastic can take hundreds of years to break down and can be harmful to the environment.

“The fact that garbage takes between 400 to 700 years to start breaking down gives us

enough reason to want to reduce the number of plastic that goes onto our disposal sites," Mrs. Guthrie said.

The first phase of the pilot project ends September 30, and the programme will be introduced to other communities across the island, come October.