



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FAYETTE COUNTY UPDATING RECYCLING PROGRAM

Uniontown, PA – Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania has announced the impending closure of its Recycling Center.

The county has a decades-long memorandum of understanding with Goodwill, which will expire when the facility closes its doors May 29.

Fayette County Recycling Coordinator Sheila Shea said, while the center will no longer process any recyclables, the county's recycling program will continue as usual, with the "potential for much bigger and better things."

"I want to thank Jason Ralph, Robert Stape and the entire team at Goodwill for all their hard work and dedication to working with Fayette County through the years," Shea said. "We're very sorry to see them go, but even more excited to expand."

The Recycling Center's closure is the result of Goodwill's corporate decision to pull out of the recycling industry. The change coincides with the county's ongoing "revamping" of its entire recycling program, Shea added.

"We're working on so many things that will make recycling easier and much more accessible for all residents," Shea said. "We're putting programs in our school districts, increasing our drop-off locations and so much more."

Fayette County Commissioner Chairman Dave Lohr said Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania has been - and will continue to be - a valued part of our community.

"They provide much-needed services for many people," Lohr said. "This change just means that they will be able to focus their energies in other areas."

Located at 105 Romeo Lane in Uniontown, the recycling center opened more than 30 years ago, as facilitated by Fayette County's first recycling coordinator and current commissioner, Vince Vicites.

"I'm sorry to hear about the Goodwill Recycling Center's decision to discontinue processing recyclables. They did a tremendous job making Fayette County's recycling program one of the best in Pennsylvania and helping to preserve our environment," Vicites said. "I want to thank all the employees that worked very hard at the recycling center, processing hundreds of thousands of tons of recycling over three decades. I understand firsthand the amount of work that went into the center, having been recycling coordinator for six years."

Commissioner Scott Dunn said, while Goodwill's exit from the recycling industry is abrupt, the county has been preparing for the eventuality of this transition for several months.

“We want to thank them for their years of service with our recycling program. We’ve been working diligently since February to implement a new program that only enhances Fayette County residents’ abilities to participate,” Dunn said. “Of course, our future is in good hands because of Sheila Shea.”

Lohr also thanked the Recycling Center’s employees for their hard work, dedication and “all that you have done to move recycling forward in Fayette County.”

Shea emphasized the center’s closure only affects the 13 current, county-owned drop-off boxes placed across Fayette. It does not affect individual municipalities’ recycling efforts and other curbside efforts.

“We want to be clear that your recycling is not stopping. If your municipality has its own program, this does not apply to them,” Shea said. “It will only affect how the contents of our county’s current Haul-All bins are processed. The only residents who will notice a difference in the interim are the ones who used to drive their materials directly to the recycling center.”

Lohr said future plans include providing residents with a “centralized, public access location in their communities for recycling drop-off.”

“Our plan is to place recycling bins in any of the 42 municipalities that are willing to participate. Our recycling coordinator is expanding programs in schools, and schools can receive grant funding for participating in these programs,” he said. “We’re really looking to expand recycling here. We’ve come so far, but there’s so much more that we can do, and we’re excited to take recycling to the next level.”

Vicites said he’s excited for the recycling program’s future, as Fayette County has the opportunity to work with a new, state-of-the-art recycling center in South Connellsville, CAP Glass.

“The center is fully automated and can handle all of the recycling generated in Fayette. It’s one of the finest facilities I’ve ever seen,” Vicites said. “With continued planning for residential, school and business participation, working with CAP Glass will allow Fayette County to expand its program and continue being one of the best in Pennsylvania.”

Dunn said there’s even potential for displaced Goodwill Recycling Center employees to transition to CAP Glass and continue working with the county’s recycling program.

“What I’ve learned in all this is that recycling is being redone nationwide. This is not a Fayette County-centric issue,” Dunn said. “Nationally, recycling programs need to be rethought, redesigned and reworked.”

Shea said the first phase of expansion will be funded through a grant from the state Department of Environmental Protection.

Fayette County’s current Haul-All drop-off bins are located at:

- Penn State Fayette: The Eberly Campus
- Luzerne Township Municipal Building
- Benjamin Franklin School
- Springhill Township Municipal Building
- Ohiopyle Borough - Falls Market and the corner of Sheridan and Logan streets
- Ohiopyle Ranger Station
- Jefferson Township Municipal Building
- Smithfield Elementary School

- Kentuck Campground
- Menallen Elementary School
- Fayette City Water Treatment Plant
- Uniontown High School parking lot
- Franklin Township Elementary School

Shea said the county's new and improved recycling program will "amp up" the collection process, with unlimited potential for future growth.

"Bear with us. This transition is happening, but it's a process," Shea said. "Everything we do is focused on reducing Fayette County's carbon footprint and saving the environment. Our updated program will allow us to do that more than ever before."

For more information, call the Fayette County Recycling Hotline at 724-430-4884.

To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.FayetteCountyPA.org.

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