



Voluntary recycling program no longer offered by company

Waste Management of Carolinas Inc. has notified the City of Reidsville it will no longer provide voluntary curbside recycling to local residents. Local residents contract directly with Waste Management for the service, as does the City of Reidsville for its facilities.

In 2015 Reidsville and Eden were able to benefit from Rockingham County's four-year franchise agreement with Waste Management, which picks up both the County's trash and recycling. In October of 2016, the recycling program began with municipal residents paying \$3.85 per month for the every-other-week service. A \$2.50 charge was added if a customer wanted a second cart.

In March of 2019 as the County and Waste Management took steps to renew their franchise agreement, City officials learned the company was only willing to offer the continued service in Reidsville if at least 525 of the current 618 homes subscribed for the service remained on board. The new cost would be \$11.05 per month. If the numbers dropped below 525, the program would be unsustainable for the company. Another condition was that the two parties would not be operating under an annual contract but instead, either party could end the agreement with a 30-day notice due to the changing state of the recyclables market.

However, the day before Reidsville City Council was to hear a presentation by Public Works Director Chuck Smith on the subject at their May 7th Council meeting, Smith learned that Waste Management would no longer be offering those same conditions. He explained service options are limited with the possibility of contracted dumpster service at the Material Drop-off Center located on Marcellus Street being the most viable, but certainly not the least expensive.

City officials have been told much of the problem with the recyclables market stems from China's decision to start stopping all shipments of recyclables from the United States. The country discontinued much of the recycling stream about two years ago when stringent regulations were put into place for contaminated materials. While Waste Management officials indicate they remain committed to recycling efforts, the company says it cannot control market pricing and the cost for materials sold.

Also, companies that handle recycling products are limiting the type of recyclable material they will accept, such as glass and plastic. Drop-off sites will have to be manned to ensure there isn't cross-contamination of material as these loads will not be accepted by the recycling companies.

Smith informed Council that several cities and counties have discontinued offering recycling services of any kind due to escalating costs and diminishing commodities market for the material. The issue is finding a facility to accept the recyclable material once collected. The Public Works Director explained that he has talked to companies interested in hauling the

recyclable material; however, those companies would rely on the City to find a facility that has the plant capacity to accept and process the material. Only a handful of such facilities exist, including the one belonging to Waste Management.

City officials are continuing to research the issue and attempting to come up with suitable alternatives.

Here is the link to the discussion at the May 7th Reidsville City Council meeting <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOBK9OqxEPs&feature=youtu.be>. Fast forward about 51 minutes into the meeting coverage to get to the recycling discussion.

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