

THE RECYCLER

Newsletter of Recycle Rutherford, Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Spring 2024

Learn; Celebrate Earth Day; Make a Difference!

Murfreesboro Seeks Trash Solution through WastAway

Monday, April 22, 2024, 7:00 pm
Heritage Center, 225 W. College St.

In response to the solid waste issues facing Rutherford County as Middle Point Landfill reaches capacity, Murfreesboro city council has taken steps to build a waste transfer station that would also turn trash into renewable energy. The \$65 million project is part of a commitment with WastAway, which specializes in converting waste into different forms of biofuel.

Two WastAway representatives will speak at Recycle Rutherford's spring meeting. **This is an opportunity to learn about WastAway's technology and what it brings to the solid waste situation we face as well as to ask questions.**



Mark Brown, chief executive officer, has more than 15 years of experience in design, management, manufacturing, and project development of solid waste conversion technologies. He manages a diverse team of highly skilled individuals in his role as the CEO of both WastAway and parent company BoulderinCorp.

Since 1985, Brown has held executive positions in a variety of construction, automation, and manufacturing companies. He has led seven multi-million-dollar industrial development/construction projects and currently serves on six corporate boards. He graduated *magna cum laude* from Tennessee Technological University with a degree in electrical engineering.

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Bring Your Coffee Bags to Earth Day to Recycle!

Saturday, April 20, 2024, 10 am-2 pm
Murfreesboro Historic Square



If you're one of the many who need that daily caffeine jolt and buy your coffee in bags, you have probably looked at them in frustration because there is no local opportunity to recycle them. **Come to Recycle Rutherford's booth on Earth Day, and we will be happy to take your clean and empty coffee bags.** Pictured above are examples of typical coffee bags made of multiple layers of paper, plastic, and foil that cannot be easily separated for recycling.

TerraCycle is an innovative recycling company based in the US that has become a global leader in recycling hard-to-recycle materials. They offer a range of free programs in partnership with companies, and they offer recycling of almost anything through their zero-waste boxes for which there is a charge. Recycle Rutherford will work through a TerraCycle program to recycle the bags.

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Republic Wants to Be Part of the Solution Says Middle Point Manager

Mike Classen, general manager at Middle Point Landfill, told attendees at last fall's Recycle Rutherford meeting, "This is a complex issue affecting all of us. We want to be part of the solution. I think we have more in common than differences."

Classen went on to explain that Republic Services is an industry leader in providing environmental services, including recycling and dealing with waste. "We are all about sustainability. Republic is much more than a landfill." He showed the audience a chart of Republic's 2030 sustainability goals which include reducing greenhouse gas emissions 35% and increasing beneficial reuse of biogas by 50%.

The speaker explained that Middle Point's operational plan includes commitments to being an economic asset, providing a necessary service, practicing environmental protection, and building a sustainable future for our community.



On average, Middle Point accepts 37,000 tons of waste per day, but not all stays in the county. About 32% of the waste generated in Rutherford County is sent out of the county, per Classen, who stated that about 13% is recycled. He is a strong believer that the waste issue is a regional one and requires a regional solution. He acknowledges that the trash crisis is real and is compounded by the lack of regional disposal facilities and the lack of recycling programs.

"This is an opportunity for us to do something better," he states. For example, costs have to be reduced to increase recycling opportunities; one way to do that is to avoid handling the material repeatedly.

But "doing something better" encompasses much more: a hopeful and positive vision for the future. Classen emphasized that the "Middle Point of the past cannot be the Middle Point of the future. We have to build trust and build new programs that stimulate the local economy—be part of the solution."

Included in this vision of a sustainable campus are (in years 0-4) a material recycling facility, biosolids and green waste conversion facility, renewable natural gas energy generation plant, household hazardous waste and electronics recycling center, and Walter Hill EcoPark. In years 5-10, included are K-12 STEAM

Acceleration Center, Jefferson Pike Beautification, MTSU Ecological Research Center, and 100+ acres of community recreation.

The cash flow impact to Rutherford County is projected to be \$760 million over the next 30 years and includes direct payments to the county, cost avoidance for a county landfill, free disposal, and supplemental program income.

The presentation concluded with support for the idea that our missions are aligned. "Ultimately, our goal is to help local stakeholders meet their recycling and sustainability goals, and from that standpoint, Recycle Rutherford and Republic Services are more alike than we are different.

"We want to help Recycle Rutherford move their mission forward, and we have the resources and expertise to make that happen and drive change. We are ready to get to work right away."

To questions about markets for recyclables, Classen said that Republic's contacts would help open more opportunities. He thinks if Republic builds a recycling facility, people will want to use it.

He stressed that developing and operating a sustainable campus will only work as a partnership with the county and that the county must want to move forward and take a different approach.

Go to <https://middlepointlandfill.com/> for more information about Middle Point.

Bees Are Essential to Food Production

Probably you see information about saving the bees frequently—maybe so frequently that you sort of --glaze over rather than reading it. This is a plea to take it seriously because (*ominous drum roll*), **if bee species keep dwindling and disappearing at the current rate, the ability to grow food—yes, that stuff that keeps people alive—will also disappear.** Already, crop production is lower than previously because of lack of pollination, according to a study published in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*.

So as the world population increases, the ability to produce food is decreasing. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration reports that commercial production of more than 90 crops relies on some 3,600 bee species. Yet both managed and wild bee populations are declining.

With more awareness of the devastating effects of pesticides and herbicides, there is some evidence that bees are thriving in rural and natural areas. But bee populations also must thrive in suburban and urban areas. **WE CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS!**

We can forego spraying our lawns with deadly herbicides and dig up or endure a few weeds. Bees and butterflies like dandelions and clover and they provide food early in the spring.

We can plant a pollinator-friendly garden; the best choices are native species—better for the bees and easier to grow. Local garden centers can help with choices, but yarrow, butterfly bush, bee balm, black-eyed Susan, coreopsis, sunflowers, purple coneflowers, cosmos, marigolds, and oakleaf hydrangeas come to mind. You can do your part to make a difference and enjoy some lovely flowers as you do. No effort is too small to have an effect!

Murfreesboro Seeks Trash Solution Through WastAway

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Todd Smith, chief communications officer, is a veteran branding executive who leads the overall branding, public relations, and marketing for WastAway. He was previously owner, president, and CEO of Deane | Smith agency and has some 35 years of experience in public affairs, government relations, branding, crisis communications, media relations,

marketing, advertising, reputation management, and new business development. A former staff writer for *The Washington Times*, he was a speech writer for the George H.W. Bush Presidential campaign. Smith earned a bachelor's degree in journalism, marketing, and English from Baylor University.

WastAway, based in Morrison, Tenn., is a leading green technology company boasting a multi-patented equipment design and processing system that converts municipal solid waste (MSW) to fuel, achieving 85% landfill diversion. WastAway's technology removes metals (ferrous and non-ferrous), plastics, glass, and ceramics for recycling and converts the remaining waste into sterile carbon-rich sustainable engineered fuel for a variety of uses. Its renewable—negative carbon footprint—products include a soil enrichment additive; a proven, high-BTU coal replacement fuel for cement kilns, power plants, steel mills, pulp mills, and other solid fuel users; biofuels through gasification and pyrolysis; renewable natural gas (RNG) through anaerobic digestion and building materials through extrusion processes.

WastAway was founded in 2002 as a subsidiary of Bouldin Corporation, which began in 1959 as Bouldin & Lawson, a manufacturer of agricultural and horticultural machinery for the greenhouse and nursery industries.

The proposed 22-acre facility, which the city plans to build on Butler Drive, could take in 400 tons of solid

waste per day and convert that into a biofuel mass which could be used in a variety of industries. This fuel could replace the need for coal or wood, used as a supplement in biofuels and as feedstock in the production of RNG.

For more information, visit www.wastaway.com

Bring Your Coffee Bags to Earth Day to Recycle!

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TerraCycle has a complex but effective system based on working with manufacturers to determine their specific needs for raw materials. They currently operate in 21 countries and have more than 35 Material Recovery Facilities (MRFS) worldwide.

Shipments are tracked from the time they arrive at a MRF where a variety of sorting techniques are used so that materials can be sent downstream for proper processing.

Once sorted by category, the different material types are cleaned and sent to third-party partners to process the materials into usable forms.

The resulting recycled materials are sold to manufacturing companies who produce the end product and complete the recycling journey. These end products may include outdoor furniture and decking, plastic shipping pallets, watering cans, storage containers and bins, tubes for construction applications, flooring tiles, playground surface covers, athletic fields, and more! Since the coffee bag mixture is largely plastic, it is likely to be used for outdoor furniture and similar items.

The site states, "We strictly control the movement of materials through each part of the recycling process to maintain a recycling chain of custody. This allows us to track and confirm where materials were sent and why."

We invite you to take part in this global effort to reduce the amount of trash that ends up buried in a landfill for centuries. Bring your coffee bags to our Earth Day booth and make a difference!

Recycle Rutherford Membership Form

I enclose my annual dues to support Recycle Rutherford and receive the newsletter.

\$25.00 supporter \$15.00 student \$100.00 patron

I am contributing \$_____ in addition to dues.

I prefer the newsletter to be emailed and am providing my email address.

PLEASE PRINT:

name _____ amount enclosed _____ -

address _____

city, state, zip _____

telephone: day _____; evening _____

email _____; volunteer interest _____

Please make check payable and mail to Recycle Rutherford, P.O. Box 1804, Murfreesboro, TN 37133-1804

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Dates to Remember



Earth Day—Recycle Rutherford will collect coffee bags for recycling at their booth; see page 1 for details.

Theme: “Think Green: Planet vs Plastics”; included are booths from many organizations, live music, organic and local products, giveaways, and a variety of activities. Presented by MTE.

Spring Meeting—Recycle Rutherford:

Monday, April 22, 7:00 p.m., Heritage Center, 225 W. College St., park in bank lot across street
Speakers: Mark Brown and Todd Smith, WastAway

Interested in Being a Board Member?

If you would like to serve on Recycle Rutherford’s Board, please contact Rachel Cornett at rachelp563@gmail.com

Qualifications include being a dues-paying member, attending most board meetings, and having an interest in promoting recycling and other sustainable practices in our community. The board meets first Mondays, usually via Zoom.

2022-24 Officers and Board

The officers and board listed below will be voted on at our annual meeting on April 22, 2024.

In general, officers and part of the board are elected in even years for two-year terms, and approximately half of the board is elected in uneven years, providing for staggered terms. Because of COVID interruptions, this schedule is somewhat off.

The officers are listed below with the board members, who are elected each April and serve staggered terms. The date indicates when the terms end. The board meets monthly on first Mondays at 6:15 p.m. via Zoom.

Rachel Cornett, president
Bonnie Black, vice president
Suma Clark, secretary
Rick Racker, treasurer

Board Members:

Linda Hardymon, 2024
Diane Parker 2024
Beth Spivey, 2024
Johnny Stewart, 2024

Reminder: To renew your membership, please see the form on page 3. Dues are only \$25 per year. We don’t want to lose you!

For more information, go to www.recyclerutherford.org

Like us on Facebook!



P.O. Box 1804
Murfreesboro, TN 37133-1804