

Friday, July 20
6 - 9 p.m.

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Just the Facts

Thursday, July 19, 2018

Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication!

P.O. Box 441, Hoopeston IL 60942 www.justthefacts.net

Global changes affecting city recycling program: Galloway

Recycling programs were started as a way to save resources and conserve landfill space. But changes on a global level will - out of necessity - affect local recycling efforts.

Rich Galloway, operations manager for Republic Services, provider of Hoopeston's recycling program, was at Tuesday evening's Hoopeston City Council meeting to discuss those changes. "From our perspective, recycling is broken," he said.

China used to be a major importer of recycled items and the U.S. represented 40 percent of the inbound stream. Last year, China, in an effort to clean up the country, significantly reduced the acceptable contamination levels

from three percent to a half percent in paper and plastic grades of recycling.

In recycling, contaminants are anything other than the recycled item. For example, a plastic food tray with food still stuck on it is considered contaminated.

Additionally, China banned all mixed paper - newspapers, junk mail, flyers, etc. - which had been 20 percent of the U.S. stream.

Those changes took effect in March 2018 and are causing most recycling facilities in the country to meet new standards.

One immediate change was the drop in price for some recyclables. Recycled paper, for example, went from nearly \$100 per ton last year to \$5 per ton in March, Galloway said.

Along with receiving less money for recycled goods, companies are having to pay more in freight charges, including return freight from China for unaccepted items and in finding other facilities that will accept recycled materials that, like paper, have little return.

Another added cost is that of labor as more people are used to sort recycled items to make sure they will be acceptable to larger recycling facilities.

Galloway explained how Hoopeston recycling goes to the Danville facility. From there, recycling from many Republic Services communities is taken to its Urbana site. It then goes to Indianapolis, where it is gone through



GALLOWAY

See RECYCLING on other side

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Recycling continued from other side

again, then sent to other facilities or out of the country. "Sometimes it's shipped three or four times before it reaches its final destination," he said.

Some things, like glass, are recyclable but actually costs local recyclers money to be rid of it. "It's a negative to recycling," Galloway said. "It always has been."

Other unwanted items include polystyrene drink cups from fast food restaurants, lids and straws, along with plastic bags.

Changes in product packaging have also impacted recycling, Galloway said. Plastic laundry detergent bottles were welcome recyclables; the thick plastic bags that detergent pods come in, not so much.

The net result of change is that running the regular trash route costs companies less than the recycling route. The city garbage route runs about \$50 per ton, while recycling - which is provided free to Hoopeston residents - is about \$75 per ton.

Changes around the globe and in recycling markets means changes for recycling companies and a need to educate recyclers.

There is still a strong market for post-consumer goods, like beverage bottles and food containers. The motto for goods is Empty-Dry-Clean: make sure the containers are

empty, including that last little sip of soda. Make sure they're dry inside and out (and in the case of bottles, lids off is now preferred). And make sure they're clean. All remaining food should be removed. When it comes to peanut butter jars, "I'll let you decide if it's worth the fight," Galloway said, drawing a laugh from the council.

Galloway also covered some trash questions, predominantly about bulk items, like furniture. He said Republic still runs trucks capable of accepting such large items. Crews pick up bulk items on Tuesdays and Thursdays, so residents are asked to put those items at the curb on Monday or Wednesday evenings.

A couch put at curbside Thursday will be there until the Tuesday pickup and may result in the resident being ticketed.

While residents had previously been asked to call ahead and arrange pickup for large items, Galloway said the automated phone system has made that more difficult and that employees cover the towns on Tuesdays and Thursdays to pick up bulk items.

In other business, the council:

- Approved votes on the appropriations ordinance and hiring Russ Leigh & Associates for the 2018 audit at a cost not to exceed \$6,600. Both votes were 5-0, with aldermen Bill Goodwine, Ryan Anderson and Chad Yaden absent.
- Approved 5-1 a request to allow street corner collecting for Wreaths Across America from 8 a.m.-noon August 4. Ald. Alex Houmes voted no.
- Heard from Ald. Lourdine Florek, who praised the quick response of everyone during the recent boil order. She also praised Steve Baker, water superintendent, for his ability to diagnose a problem with the city's splash pad and fix it, along with cleaning the splash pad equipment.
- Heard from Mayor Bill Crusinberry that a new electric contract for city owned properties was approved and that he is invited to attend Thursday's Hoopeston Area School Board meeting as that board will hear a presentation about options for Honeywell School.
- Crusinberry also reminded residents that anyone who drives a golf cart must be a licensed driver, saying he recently saw drivers that "I'm 100 percent sure they're not old enough to drive."

Weather

Mostly sunny today. High 82. Tonight, chance of thunderstorms. Low 67. Tomorrow, chance of storms. High 84, low 67.

Tune in at 5 p.m. tonight-

Hoopeston Happenings

Seth Wilson

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Classifieds

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