



Cumberland County Board of Commissioners

Kelly Neiderer, Chairman . Jean Foschi, Vice Chairman . Gary Eichelberger, Secretary

Press Release

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Cumberland County Ends Yard Waste Program for Municipalities June 30

Carlisle, PA – The Cumberland County Board of Commissioners announced that the county's Yard Waste Processing Equipment Sharing Program officially ends on June 30, 2024. The program provided county-owned yard waste recycling equipment to 12 municipal partners to grind limbs, brush, leaves, and other natural waste into mulch and compost for the past 30 years.

The program came under heightened scrutiny in January when one of the program's horizontal grinders caught fire, resulting in an insurance claim. Because of this, the county's liability insurance for the program was not renewed by its carrier due to risks associated with the use of the yard waste recycling equipment when it is outside the care and control of the county. The county solicited quotes from other insurance carriers but was unable to find a carrier that would insure the county for this type of program.

"The county recognizes the value of this program to our municipal partners and residents. Eliminating this program is not a cost saving measure, but a liability issue," said Cumberland County Commissioner Kelly Neiderer. "We are discontinuing the program because the county can no longer own and share yard waste equipment effective July 1, 2024, due to county's inability to attain proper liability insurance coverage."

The county's Recycling & Waste Department, which runs the program, has received proposals from four municipalities that want to work together and is looking to receive additional proposals. The Board of Commissioners will make a final decision on equipment disposition by the end of 2024.

"The county has offered to assist in researching alternatives with municipalities such as municipal ownership and sharing arrangements, private sector programs, or working with private entities to rent equipment," said Planning Director Kirk Stoner.

Yard Waste Processing Equipment Sharing Program

The Yard Waste Processing Equipment Sharing Program, the only one in the state, was created in response to Act 101 of 1988 that requires municipalities of a certain population level to adopt residential and commercial recycling programs, including the recycling of leaf waste.

Cumberland County initiated the program in 1994 to assist municipalities to cost-effectively comply with the act. Eleven municipalities in Cumberland County, and one municipality in York County participated in the program and shared six different pieces of yard waste recycling equipment. The equipment was purchased by the county through a state grant. The equipment managed by the county was shared with participating municipalities. Municipal staff were trained by the county to use the equipment for yard waste recycling.

The program realized economies of scale as equipment capital, operational, and maintenance costs were spread over all program participants. The county estimates that the program annually recycled over 30,000 tons of yard waste, saving its participants hundreds of thousands of dollars over the life of the program.

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