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Cutline

Give a hoot: Recycling made easy in Chesterfield with CVWMA and TFC Recycling!

It started, of course, with the recycling queen. That would be Mike Garland's now 16-year-old daughter, Tori, who started insisting that her father keep the plastic bottles and cardboard boxes out of the trash can a few years ago. Of course it helps the environment, and creates jobs, and generally makes the recycler feel better about themselves.

But that's really not what struck Garland. He discovered that recycling in Chesterfield County was remarkably easy. No sorting, no worries about pickup, which was the norm in other localities where he's lived. Just toss all of the recyclables in a cardboard box, or any rigid container that can easily be labeled as recycling. That's it!

"It was easy," said Garland, a manager at Swedish Match North America who moved with his family to Chesterfield six years ago. "It reduces the trash pickup a lot, and the [recycled] trash is able to fit in one container. And it just makes you feel good."

Each year, a little over 13,000 tons of recyclable materials are collected at the curb in Chesterfield County through the county's program with Central Virginia Waste Management Authority (CVWMA) and TFC Recycling. Chesterfield residents pay less than a dollar a week for the curbside collection service, which costs just \$25 a year. Everything from cardboard, newspapers, magazines, junk mail, cereal boxes, paper bags, steel and aluminum cans, glass bottles and jars, and narrow neck plastic bottles and jars are accepted. (For a detailed list of what is and isn't recyclable, visit www.cvwma.com or call the Recycling Hotline at (804)340-0900). You can purchase a designated recycling bin – \$16 for a 24-gallon recycling bin or \$65 for 95-gallon recycling cart – or simply order recycling stickers (also available at www.cvwma.com) and slap them on your own container.

What happens to the recyclables? Each week, what's collected is brought to TFC Recycling's Material Recovery Facility (or MRF) located on Old Stage Road in Chesterfield County, where the recyclables are sorted and then sold to brokers who send the aluminum and steel, paper, plastics and glass to companies that convert what was once trash into reusable raw materials.

In the end, everybody wins, said Pam Cooper, the anti-litter program manager for Chesterfield County. But most important, Cooper explained, all the recycling keeps unnecessary trash out of a landfill. The county has just one such privately owned landfill, after all.

"Nobody wants a landfill in their backyard," she said. "It's very costly."

Recycling reduces county residents' dependence on trash pickup, which also saves money. And did we mention it helps the environment?

For more information, on how to get started, contact the Central Virginia Waste Management Authority (CVWMA) at (804)340-0900 or visit www.cvwma.com.



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