

## **New Additions Enhance Hall County Recycling Center, Landfill**

2/24/2014

It's a busy week for Hall County's Public Works Department as two new state-of-the-art pieces of equipment become operational, providing more efficient ways to handle the County's solid waste.

A new baler began running at the Hall County Recycling Center Monday, processing and packaging twice as many recyclables as the old machine. The new baler, which arrived at the Recycling Center Thursday, costs roughly \$360,000 and was paid for out of the County's Landfill Fund. It replaces a baler that was more than 20 years old and was requiring an extensive amount of maintenance and repair.

"This new machine allows for more tonnage per bale than the older one, which has been desperately needed as recycling has gained popularity," said Hall County Public Works Director Ken Rearden.

Rearden said the baler tightly packs sorted recyclables together and ties them up so that they can be placed on a pallet and sold. He said the Recycling Center's staff will be trained on the new machine Monday.

Meanwhile, the Hall County Landfill also welcomed the arrival of a new piece of equipment last week. A new leachate treatment facility, which cleans liquids that are disposed of in the landfill or are created as rainfall passes through the landfill, is expected to be operational by the end of the week.

Johnnie Vickers, director of Hall County's Solid Waste Department, said the new treatment facility replaces one that was purchased by Hall County in 1999. He said his department was having trouble ordering new parts for the older machine since many of them weren't made any more.

"This new system cleans twice as much water as the old one, which will be a huge benefit to Hall County as our population—and therefore trash—continues to increase," said Vickers.

He said the new system also consists of only one shipping container compared to the previous machine that was housed within three separate containers. The system's smaller size not only shrinks the footprint of the leachate facility but also provides much needed room at the landfill site to accept trash.

Hall County Engineer Kevin McInturff said the new leachate treatment facility will also keep costs low for taxpayers.

"Being able to treat this contaminated liquid on-site means we're not paying someone else to haul it away to another plant and then pay for that plant to process it," he said.

McInturff said they're also able to use all of the clean water on-site for purposes such as dust-control.

Interestingly enough, the new treatment system arrived in Hall County already named by its German manufacturer. The shipping container housing the equipment came brandished with the name "Julia" on the side in honor of Georgia-born superstar Julia Roberts.

"The Germans did some research while they were building it and discovered that the system was heading to Julia Roberts' home state," Vickers said.

And that wasn't the extent of their research. Underneath the "Julia" moniker is a phrase written in German.

"We had someone translate it for us," Rearden said. "We learned that it says something about Gainesville being a place where it's illegal to eat fried chicken with a fork."

The caption is a nod toward a local ordinance that was created when Hall County's poultry production was at an all-time high.

Despite the recent additions at the Recycling Center and landfill, Hall County citizens saw no interruption in services as the new machines were installed.