

What's the Deal with the Abitibi News Paper Recycling Containers?

As you may be aware, a Canadian company, Abitibi Bowater has placed a number of their newspaper collection bins at various schools, churches and other non-profit organizations in the County over the past few years. In many Counties, this type of voluntary recycling would be appreciated for its benefit to the environment and financial assistance to the community. In Medina County, however, this type of operation does not fit into the County's plan for recycling.

In the early 1990's, new laws were enacted in Ohio that required every County to be in a solid waste district and to achieve a 25% recycling rate. At that time, our leaders made a decision to be aggressive about recycling for the benefit of the environment and to comply with the new laws. Based on that decision, the County spent over 8 million dollars to construct our Central Processing Facility in Westfield Township where all trash generated in the County is processed to remove recyclables. The recyclables are then sold and the revenue is used to help defray the Facility's operating costs. Operations, like Abitibi's, that remove recyclables from the waste stream deprive the County of the opportunity to sell those commodities and to generate operating revenue. It is estimated that approximately \$300,000 in revenue was lost last year due to Abitibi's operations. The annual loss of revenue has resulted in the County recently raising the tip fees at the CPF. This was the first increase in the tip fee the County enacted for operational costs since 1995. The increased fees ultimately result in higher refuse disposal costs for all County residents, businesses and industries.

Understanding that litigating the removal of the Abitibi's program will add significant cost to our already stressed solid waste budget, we are asking those entities that house the Abitibi containers on their properties to voluntarily direct Abitibi to remove them. We have asked for and received the public schools cooperation in directing Abitibi to remove their paper collection bins from the school's properties. We are now asking other non-profit organizations, such as yourselves, for your cooperation as well.