

2009 County Government Priorities

County Recycling Fee Authorization

Many counties throughout the commonwealth provide supplemental recycling services to their constituents, including household hazardous waste pickup, recycling of electronics and tires and recycling drop-off centers.

In more than half the counties, these services have historically been funded by a county administrative fee levied on each ton of trash generated in the county and disposed of in accordance with approved solid waste management plans. These services are now being reduced or eliminated as the result of a 2005 Commonwealth Court decision that declared the administrative fees illegal, leaving these counties without a revenue source to fund these programs. Counties seek authority from the General Assembly to levy a user fee that will provide revenue strictly for recycling to continue supplemental recycling programs.

Act 101, the Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling and Waste Reduction Act, requires all counties to develop municipal waste management plans. Prior to the court ruling, the administrative fee funded program expenses not covered by Act 101 grant

programs, which partially pay the expenses for a recycling coordinator and household hazardous waste programs.

The Commonwealth Court decision means that many more supplemental recycling programs are in jeopardy, and many counties are evaluating the services they have been able to provide with the administrative fund revenues and are scaling back programs accordingly. This will have a number of detrimental environmental impacts, including more hazardous waste in landfills, and more illegal dumping on public and private lands, and will undermine the public's other environmental investments, including the Growing Greener 2 bond initiative.

The Association supports legislation that would reverse the Court's ruling by amending Act 101 to give counties express authority to levy the administrative fee.

For more information on the county administrative fee and recycling programs that counties administer, contact Kristen Goshorn at (717) 232-7554 x 3113 or kgoshorn@pacounties.org.



Serving Counties Since 1886

17 North Front Street Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17101-1624 (717) 232-7554

www.pacounties.org