

Media Contact: Natha Dempsey, ndempsey@fpi.org, 571-255-4212

WISCONSIN'S OUTAGAMIE COUNTY EXPANDS RECYCLING CAPABILITIES TO ACCEPT FOAM

County awarded \$50,000 Foam Recycling Coalition grant to add foam densifier, increasing recycling at its Resource Recovery Park

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Outagamie County Recycling and Solid Waste (OCRSW) received a \$50,000 grant from the Foodservice Packaging Institute's Foam Recycling Coalition to add a foam densifier to its Resource Recovery Park. The facility operates a 450-acre site in Appleton, Wisconsin, that serves over 247,000 households across 65 municipalities.

In the early 2000s, Brown, Outagamie and Winnebago Counties developed a collaboration to stabilize the administration and operating costs for waste management. That included utilizing each county's landfill capacity, opening a transfer station in 2005, building a new single-stream recycling facility in 2009, and creating the Resource Recovery Park in 2020. This facility features 30 source separated bins collecting materials including clean wood, construction and demolition materials, metal, recycling, rigid plastics, furniture, mattresses and box springs, and trash.

"Our residents wanted a way to recycle polystyrene foam products and with the help from the Foodservice Packaging Institute's Foam Recycling Coalition grant, this new system will divert foam away from the landfill and into new products like picture frames, architectural moldings and packaging materials," said Marissa Michalkiewicz of OCRSW.

OCRSW currently uses multiple digital media platforms to educate and engage residents, including Facebook, Google Business Pages, YouTube, TikTok, a website and a newsletter. It also distributes content to all 32 municipalities in Outagamie County to share via their corresponding digital media platforms. Through this engagement, residents have expressed frustration with the lack of foam polystyrene recycling options, which motivated OCRSW to seek a solution.

"Multi-county collaborations, like we see with Brown, Outagamie and Winnebago, are listening to their residents and continually updating and upgrading services to divert more materials from landfills," said Natha Dempsey, president of the Foodservice Packaging Institute, which oversees the Foam Recycling Coalition. "Working collaboratively, expanding operations and engaging residents is helping to increase foam polystyrene recycling across North America."

The Foam Recycling Coalition funding will assist with the purchase and installation of a foam recycling system, including a foam densifier. The system will be located in the Resource Recovery Park where residents are already familiar with source separating. Resource Recovery Park and transfer station staff will oversee the collection of foam material and will assist in

diverting any applicable polystyrene materials from trash dumpsters located in Resource Recovery Park. The facility will be able to accept foam materials, such as foodservice packaging (e.g., cups, takeout clamshells, egg cartons, meat trays, etc.) and post-consumer foam packaging and padding.

The grant is made possible through contributions to the Foam Recycling Coalition, which focuses exclusively on increased recycling of post-consumer foam polystyrene. Its members include Americas Styrenics; CKF Inc.; Chick-fil-A; Dart Container Corp.; Dolco Packaging, Dyne-A-Pak; Genpak; INEOS Styrolution America LLC; Pactiv Evergreen; Republic Plastics.

Outagamie County Recycling and Solid Waste is the 23rd grant recipient to receive this funding since 2015. Over 6 million additional residents in the U.S. and Canada can recycle foam as a result of Foam Recycling Coalition grants. Visit www.RecycleFoam.org to learn about foam recycling, read about previous recipients or apply for a grant.

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ABOUT FPI: Founded in 1933, the Foodservice Packaging Institute is the trade association for the foodservice packaging industry in North America. FPI promotes the value and benefits of foodservice packaging and serves as the industry's leading authority to educate and influence stakeholders. Members include raw material and machinery suppliers, manufacturers, distributors and purchasers of foodservice packaging. For more information or to follow us on social media, visit www.FPI.org.

ABOUT FRC: The Foam Recycling Coalition was formed under the Foodservice Packaging Institute in 2014 to support increased recycling of foodservice packaging made from foam polystyrene. FRC shares general information on foam recycling, provides technical resources and offers funding assistance to programs ready to start or strengthen post-consumer foam recycling. Members include stakeholders from throughout the foodservice packaging value chain. Learn more at www.RecycleFoam.org.