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Solid Waste Disposal Authority and Baldwin County Commission Honored with 2025 National Association of Counties Achievement Award

Baldwin County, Ala. – The Solid Waste Disposal Authority of Baldwin County, in partnership with the Baldwin County Commission, has earned a 2025 National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Award. NACo Achievement Awards recognize outstanding county government programs and services. One of only four Alabama counties recognized in 2025, this award recognizes the Baldwin County Commission for its achievement in the category of Community and Economic Development for its recycling and waste-reduction initiatives.

Center stage in the award is Baldwin County's new \$25 million, 62,000-square-foot Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). Designed to process up to 40,000 tons of recyclables each year, the MRF keeps valuable materials out of landfills, supplies clean feedstock to regional manufacturers, and positions Baldwin County as a sustainability and economic development leader.

"This recognition underscores the vision and hard work our team—and our partners at the County—have invested over the past several years," said Terri Graham, chief executive officer of SWDA. "The MRF is more than a building; it's a catalyst for a true circular economy on the Gulf Coast—where materials are reused, jobs are created and our communities benefit long term."

Planned five years ago to modernize Baldwin County's recycling, the new MRF is already delivering environmental and economic benefits—creating partnerships and collaboration opportunities from companies like Novelis—and includes the Waste & Recycling Adventure Center, where interactive exhibits teach visitors how recycling works and why conserving resources matters.

"This award highlights what collaboration can do for our residents and our future," said Commissioner Billie Jo Underwood. "By working alongside SWDA, we're reducing landfill dependence, protecting our natural resources and attracting companies that value sustainable operations."

While the MRF anchors the initiative, SWDA and the County are also expanding options for materials that don't belong in curbside carts. The development of CHaRM (Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials) sites will provide safe drop-off points for electronics, batteries, paint and other household items that require special handling, further broadening access to responsible disposal.

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Baldwin County leaders say the work isn't finished. SWDA and the Commission will continue coordinating infrastructure, education and outreach to balance growth, safeguard natural assets and create new opportunities for residents.

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About the Solid Waste Disposal Authority of Baldwin County (SWDA)

The Solid Waste Disposal Authority (SWDA) of Baldwin County is a public utility dedicated to advancing sustainable waste management solutions that protect the environment and improve quality of life for residents across Baldwin County. SWDA oversees a range of services including municipal waste disposal, recycling programs, and the development of innovative facilities such as the new Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and CHaRM (Center for Hard to Recycle Materials) sites. With a focus on education, accessibility, and long-term impact, SWDA works in partnership with local municipalities to offer practical, responsible solutions that keep recyclable materials out of landfills and support a cleaner, greener future for Baldwin County. Learn more at www.baldwincountyswda.org.