

Community



S. John Collins / Baker City Herald file photo

David Henry, president of Baker Sanitary Service, said he expects the company will continue to accept its current list of recyclable materials, including aluminum cans, at its recycling center at 12th and Campbell streets in Baker City.

RECYCLING

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Baker County's recycling recovery rate of 20.2% falls short of the 25% goal set by the Oregon Legislature for 2025.

Henry said he'd like to boost the county's recycling rate by giving residents and businesses an opportunity to turn organic waste — food scraps and yard debris, for instance — into compost.

The advantage with organic waste is that it can be processed locally, Henry said.

That's not the case with plastics, paper and other commonly recycled materials, which explains why China's decision to curtail imports from the U.S. had such a widespread effect.

Henry said that although Baker Sanitary is still working on the project, the basic idea is to start testing the concept, possibly next spring, by working with larger producers of organic waste, such as grocery stores, restaurants and potentially Powder River Correctional Facility, to collect the material, truck it to the landfill and there turn it into compost.

The compost could be sold commercially, Henry said.

If the pilot project shows the process is feasible, it could be offered to Baker Sanitary's residential customers at a cost that's "affordable," he said.

The Baker City Council in May of this year approved the first general rate increase for Baker Sanitary in 12 years. The monthly residential rate for weekly pickup of a standard rollcart rose from \$16 to \$19 on July 1.

Customers who chose that option

"Everything we're collecting now seems stable enough that I think we'll be continuing to collect those for the foreseeable future."

— David Henry, president, Baker Sanitary Service

likely would have a separate bin to collect organic waste, Henry said.

Such a program would have multiple benefits, he said — it would reduce the amount of waste going into the landfill, prolonging its lifespan, increase the county's recycling rate and generate a saleable product.

The concept is appealing to Barbara O'Neal of Baker City, a member of the group Baker City Trash Talk, which promotes recycling as well as ways residents can reduce the amount of trash they generate, such as buying products that don't have excessive packaging.

"It's exciting," O'Neal said of Baker Sanitary looking into recycling more organic materials, also known as "green waste."

"Green waste is a big contributor to the landfill," O'Neal said.

In a letter that Baker City Trash Talk wrote to the City Council in May, supporting Baker Sanitary's rate hike request, the group urged the company to pursue a "composting/green waste program for residents and businesses."

The letter cited a study from Waste-Pro, the garbage collector in La Grande, which found that about 3,400 tons of yard waste, and 1,200 tons of food waste, is hauled from that city to Baker Sani-

tary's landfill.

(The company has taken trash from Union County since 2006.)

"By diverting these materials, we can extend the lifespan of our landfill and delay the need for expensive expansion," Trash Talk wrote in its letter to the City Council.

Although China has also reduced its imports of recyclable corrugated cardboard in the past few years, Henry said he doesn't expect the Baker Sanitary to stop accepting any other items at its recycling center.

These include, besides cardboard, plastic milk jugs, newspapers, magazines and catalogs, aluminum, tin and steel cans, and glass bottles and jars. Baker Sanitary also accepts HDPE No. 2 plastic colored bottles Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the recycling center's gated area (other bins are available at all times).

Prices for cardboard have dropped, but it's still a viable product for recycling, Henry said.

"It's still something we are able to ship and not lose money on," he said. "Everything we're collecting now seems stable enough that I think we'll be continuing to collect those for the foreseeable future."

Henry said he has read reports recently about efforts to expand plastic recycling in the U.S. to offset the loss of the Chinese market, although he doesn't expect enough progress over the next two years or so to make it possible for Baker Sanitary to again accept the plastic containers that were dropped in 2017.

LOCAL BRIEFING

Calvary Baptist offers free turkey dinner

Calvary Baptist Church, at Third and Broadway streets in Baker City, will offer a free turkey dinner on Thanksgiving Day at 3 p.m.

Vector District board meets Friday

The board of directors for the Baker Valley Vector Control District will meet Friday, Nov. 22 at noon at the Sunridge Inn, 1 Sunridge Lane. The Vector Control District, which includes most of Baker, Bowen and Keating valleys, is the property tax-funded district responsible for controlling mosquitoes.

Soroptimist Christmas Party Friday

The annual Soroptimist Club of Baker County Christmas Party, with the theme "Life's A Beach," is set for Friday, Nov. 22 at the Baker Elks Lodge, 1896 Second St.

Doors open at 4:30 p.m. with a prime rib dinner starting at 6 p.m. There will be live and silent auctions, along with a raffle of a standup paddleboard. The fundraising event makes possible the club's scholarships, InnovateHER grant and a variety of other projects.

Tickets are \$30 and are available at Gregg Hinrichsen State Farm, 1722 Campbell St., The Grove Team, 845 Campbell St., or from any Soroptimist member.

Beach attire is encouraged.

Baker Rockhounds plan rock swap Dec. 8

Baker Rockhounds, a group of local rock and outdoor enthusiasts, will host a rock swap on Dec. 8 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the main gallery at the Baker Heritage Museum, 2480 Grove St.

There will be rock specimens to buy and swap. Rocks will also be given away to encourage people to take up rock collecting. Everyone is welcome to attend, and there is no entry fee. Please enter through the Museum's main entrance.

The rock swap will be in lieu of the Baker Rockhounds' regular monthly meeting, which takes place the second Sunday of each month at 2 p.m. in the lapidary room at the Museum. The Baker Rockhounds, who started meeting last year, do not have membership fees. From spring through early fall they schedule field trips to prime rock-collecting areas.

The group has a Facebook page.

Turkey shoot Sunday at Virtue Flat

The Powder River Sportsmen's Club's annual turkey shoot is set for Sunday, Nov. 24 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Club's Virtue Flat range, about six miles east of Baker City and about one mile east of the turnoff to the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center off Highway 86.

There are four events, with a \$3 per event entry fee. Winners of each event will win \$10 cash.

The events:

- Lucky .22 shoot at 10 yards (emphasis on luck), one shot at a blank target face with the scoring numbers on the backside.

- Centerfire handgun at 50-yard chicken silhouettes, one shot at each of five targets.

- Starting at 2:30 p.m. shooters will take two shots at a running deer target. Range of 100 yards for iron sights, scoped rifles shoot the same at 200 yards.

- Those confident or adventurous will shoot centerfire rifles at 3-inch by 6-inch turkey head targets at 200 yards, 3 shots

Range safety rules will be in effect, and competitors should keep weapons unloaded until ready to shoot.

Huntington Historical Society Bazaar set

HUNTINGTON — The Huntington Historical Society's annual Christmas bazaar and fundraiser is set for Dec. 6 from noon to 5 p.m. and Dec. 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Huntington School. There will be bingo games, hand-crafted gifts, baked goods and hot drinks. Santa will also make an appearance. The venue is wheelchair-accessible. More information is available by calling Jenny at 208-407-2701.

Baker Middle School announces students on first quarter honor roll

Baker Middle School has announced its first quarter honor roll

Eighth grade

(*4.0 GPA)

Reeve Damschen*, Weston Downing*, Grant Gambleton*, Bruley Garvin*, Wade Hawkins*, Eleanor Lamb*, Ryann Paulsen*, Kincaid Rudi*, Rachel Shaw*, Izabella Thomas*, Evangeline Torres*, Alexandria Zickgraf*, Dashel Bloomer, Airyona Gonzalez, Axel Marvin, Hailey McMurdo, Emma Davis, Amberli Reed, Jaron Long, Meadow Waldrop, Kayla

Crook, Kayden Garvin, Paul Hobson, Kealah Johnson, Chaslyn Wheeler, Evangeline Rexroad, Weston Bryant, Mikayla Hatfield, Susan Shelley, Addison Supan, Montana Williams

Seventh grade

(*4.0 GPA)

Taylor Churchfield*, Joslyn Collins*, Ashlyn Dalton*, Mitchell Gross*, Sofia Hanson*, John Heriza*, Olivia Jacoby*, Sage Joseph*, Brooklyn Rayl*, Alexis Rupel*, Kaydence Thomas*, Jayden Whitford*, Alexander Wise*, Colton

Clark, Elizabeth Standish, Emylia Myer, Ashtyn Carter, Canyon Madill, Daniel Brown, Jillian Poe, Eowyn Smith, Oakley Anderson, Palmer Chandler, Elias Long, Zane Morgan, Lilyanna Wilson, Anastacio Rodriguez, Tessa Feeley, Antonio Washington, Cyllus Sperl, Colton Birmingham, Graysen Bowling, Kathryn Gentry, Amber Conley, Lilly Collins, Maya Richardson, Jose Armenta, Ethan Fletcher, Hannah Lay, Anastasia Johnson, Sadie Stampflee, Callaghan Eckert, Jaxon Logsdon, Jessica Mercado, Tiyana Stevens

Searchers find missing hunter cold but unhurt

The Baker County Sheriff's Search and Rescue team spent several hours searching for a Bremerton, Washington, hunter in the Wallowa Mountains northeast of Baker City Sunday before finding him safe and unhurt at about 11 p.m.

Matthew James Sanford, 38, was hunting with family and friends in the Larkspur/Goose Creek area, which is north of Sparta and Forshey Meadow, Sheriff Travis Ash

stated in a press release. Sanford had been last seen by family and friends at 2 p.m. Sunday, Ash said.

When Sanford failed to return to his vehicle by 4 p.m. as planned, his hunting party started searching for him and alerted the Baker County Dispatch Center.

Ash activated the Search and Rescue Team, and 15 volunteers headed to the area at about 9:10 p.m. Crews began searching on ATVs and by ve-

hicle. An SAR member found Sanford at about 11:05 p.m.

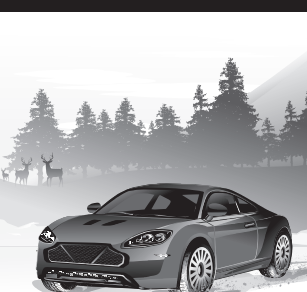
Ash said Sanford was cold, but otherwise in good condition.

The sheriff encouraged hunters and others recreating this time of year to be prepared for adverse weather conditions.

"Always pack additional supplies, including clothing, food and a fire starter, such as a lighter or matches," he advised.

The weather is changing...

Watch for slick areas & drive safe!



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