

# THE RECYCLER

Newsletter of Recycle Rutherford, Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Summer/Fall 2024

## How Does the Inflation Reduction Act Affect Our Energy?

**Monday, October 28, 2024, 7:00 pm**  
**Heritage Center, 225 W. College St.**

We often hear mention in the news of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), but the magnitude of the measures makes it hard to understand the impact in specific areas. **Our fall speaker, Carynton Howard, climate advocacy coordinator for the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy,** will break this down for us and provide information giving us a better understanding.

The Southern Alliance for Clean Energy (SACE) is a nonprofit organization that promotes responsible and equitable energy choices to ensure clean, safe, and healthy communities throughout the Southeast. As a leading voice for energy policy in the region for over 30 years, SACE has focused on transforming the way we produce and consume energy in the Southeast.

SACE is eager to see residents, businesses, and local governments utilize clean energy and energy efficiency in a transformational way, thanks to unprecedented support from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). **This is an opportunity to learn about the federal energy savings and electrification resources available to us which can help us transform our homes and our community. All are invited to attend.**

As climate advocacy coordinator, Howard's work is focused on advancing clean energy solutions in the Middle Tennessee area. She collaborates with local governments and local power companies to improve clean energy and energy efficiency policies. Her work also extends to various communities where she promotes public awareness and engagement in clean energy programs.

Prior to joining SACE, Howard supported clean energy efforts in Indiana. She gained

valuable energy policy experience while working as a government affairs intern at EDP Renewables. She graduated from Purdue University with a bachelor's degree in political science and a concentration in environmental politics and policy. During her time at Purdue, she worked with environmental advocacy organization Mighty Earth as a climate organizer. In this role, she and her team launched a campaign to decarbonize steel mills in Northwest Indiana.

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## WastAway Offers Solutions Through Innovative Technology

Two individuals from WastAway spoke to Recycle Rutherford at our annual meeting in April. Mark Brown, chief executive officer (seen at left), introduced their company, citing the need, their founding, and the technology they use. Todd Smith, chief communications officer (right), provided more specifics on their operations.



**WastAway is working with Murfreesboro city officials to plan and build a processing plant on 22 acres on Butler Drive that will divert 85 percent of the city's waste from the landfill.**

Brown pointed out that there are more than 1,200 landfills in the United States, and many

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## WastAway Offers Solutions Through Innovative Technology

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are overflowing, leaking, and facing closure. However, finding a site and getting permits to open a new one is almost impossible. Without doubt, communities need to find better solutions, which is the impetus behind WastAway's waste to fuel green technologies.

Based in Morrison, Tenn., WastAway was founded in 2002 as a subsidiary of Bouldin Corporation, which began in 1959 as a manufacturer of agricultural and horticultural machinery for the greenhouse and nursery industries. "We got our start building a better soil," says Brown.

Their technology began through a collaboration with the Army Corps of Engineers and has garnered research and development awards as it progressed. WastAway holds 23 United States and international patents.

It is through this technology that WastAway proposes to build a sustainable, greener future for Murfreesboro and Rutherford County. In addition to the Murfreesboro facility, the company is building a similar plant in Bakersfield, California. Brown projects that each will recycle 400 tons of municipal solid waste into fuel daily. That's the carbon equivalent of removing 96,000 automobiles from the highway.

The first step is removing metals, plastics, glass, and inerts for recycling. The remainder, which is largely a plant-based cellulate (previously referred to as sluff) that has been repeatedly tested for safety, is converted into a variety of fuel products:

- Proven, high BTU coal replacement fuel, which can power cement kilns, power plants, steel mills, and other solid fuel users
- Biofuels
- Renewable natural gas (RNG)

Also, a soil additive and composite building material are produced.

Brown showed a slide with quotes from a letter from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which included the following statements:

- "Accordingly, we would consider this NHSM (non-hazardous secondary material) a non-waste fuel under the 40 Part 241 regulations . . ."
- ". . . we believe that your operations . . . will transform waste into a processed non-waste fuel appropriate for use in units designed to combust coal or wood and biomass."
- "Overall, based on this contaminant comparison, all contaminants in SE3 are comparable to or lower than those contaminants in coal or wood/biomass."

**The process is capable of delivering safe fuel within 30 minutes of the solid waste arriving at the facility. There is no odor or noise as the materials are handled and processed indoors.**

The environmental benefits are many, Smith pointed out. Not only is 85 percent of municipal solid waste diverted from landfills, but the process helps prevent future ecological disasters from the sites. The decrease in harmful emissions helps slow climate change. One hundred percent of food waste is processed

without separate collections. The facility will provide a regional solution for coming generations.

Smith enthusiastically described the "game changer" of adding production of renewable natural gas (RNG) to the process. The cellulate can be used as feed-stock in an anaerobic digester to produce SE3 and RNG at a 30 percent conversion rate. This clean fuel has a ready market and is legislated as a full diversion credit.



***These three images illustrate the WastAway process; the top photo showing waste arriving and the bottom photo showing the high energy, sterile cellulate that is produced by the system. A WastAway engineer was quoted on the slide: "Anyone can grind garbage. We manufacture fuel."***

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## RECYCLING ROUNDUP RESULTS



### Recycle Rutherford Membership Form

I enclose my annual dues to support Recycle Rutherford and receive the newsletter.

\$25.00 supporter       \$15.00 student       \$100.00 patron

I am contributing \$\_\_\_\_\_ in addition to dues.

I prefer the newsletter to be emailed and am providing my email address.

**PLEASE PRINT:**

name \_\_\_\_\_ amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ -

address \_\_\_\_\_

city, state, zip \_\_\_\_\_

telephone: day \_\_\_\_\_; evening \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_; volunteer interest \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make check payable and mail to Recycle Rutherford, P.O. Box 1804, Murfreesboro, TN 37133-1804**

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### Dates to Remember

#### Fall Meeting—Recycle Rutherford:

Monday, October 28, 7:00 p.m., Heritage Center, 225 W. College St., park in bank lot across street  
Speaker: Carynton Howard, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, “How Does the Inflation Reduction Act Affect Our Energy?” See page 1 for details.

#### Drop Off Vision Products for Recycling

Recycle Rutherford is pleased to announce another way to reduce your trash. **Scott Chamberland, OD, Blink of an Eye Optometry**, has agreed to be a collection point for used contact lens blister packs, expired contact lens, and disposable contact lens cases that come enclosed in saline bottles. The materials will be sent to TerraCycle for processing and recycling in collaboration with the Bausch and Lomb ONE by ONE Free Recycling Program.

Dr. Chamberland's office is located at **119 S. Academy Street, near downtown Murfreesboro**. Recycle Rutherford is grateful to him for partnering with us in this effort toward sustainability.

#### MTSU Recycling Roundup Successful

In June, MTSU partnered with the Tennessee Environmental Council to host one of ten recycling events funded by a state grant. **As you can see from the graphic on page 3, the event was an impressive success, with the largest turnout and volume of any of the similar events.** Recycle Rutherford helped with publicizing the event and provided volunteers to assist. Rachel Cornett, board president, shared her experience helping with the paper collection and shredding service offered. She said that security was quite high because confidential documents were being shredded; the process was monitored, and the operator had to be cleared by the FBI. Thanks to all who participated by helping or by bringing items for the collection.

#### 2024-26 Officers and Board

**The officers and board listed below were voted on at our annual meeting on April 22, 2024.**

In general, officers and part of the board are elected in even years for two-year terms, and approximately half of the board is elected in uneven years, providing for staggered terms. Because of COVID interruptions, this schedule is somewhat off.

*The officers are listed below with the board members, who are elected each April and serve staggered terms. The date indicates when the terms end. The board meets monthly via Zoom.*

Rachel Cornett, president  
Bonnie Black, vice president  
Suma Clark, secretary  
Rick Racker, treasurer

#### Board Members:

Cynthia Allen, 2026  
Linda Hardyman, 2026  
Diane Parker 2026  
Beth Spivey, 2026  
Johnny Stewart, 2026

**Reminder: To renew your membership, please see the form on page 3.  
Dues are only \$25 per year.  
We don't want to lose you!**

**For more information, go to  
[www.recyclerutherford.org](http://www.recyclerutherford.org)**

**Like us on Facebook!**



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