



News Release

GALLATIN CHALLENGES BUSINESSES TO COMBAT LITTER

*Fast-Food and Convenience Stores Asked to Report Offenders,
Reduce Single Use Containers and Provide Access to Trash Cans*

GALLATIN – Gallatin Mayor Brown is asking local businesses to take action against litter in the community. The focus of the mail and social media campaign is on fast-food restaurants and convenience stores using single-use food containers that are often found along Gallatin’s roadsides.

“For years we’ve been reactive by picking up trash with our staff and volunteers, but it’s not enough,” said Gallatin Mayor Paige Brown. “This year we’re reaching out to businesses to try a new approach to address waste before it ends up on the street.”

The mayor’s message includes several challenges for local businesses and their employees:

- Report illegal dumping to the state’s 24-hour action line at 1-877-8-LITTER
- Bring back trash cans outside of fast food businesses
- Reduce single-use food containers
- Allow employees to participate in litter cleanups

Since the onset of the pandemic in early 2020, inmate crews have not been available to assist the city’s Public Works Department in cleaning roadside litter. Mayor Brown says the reduction in assistance is a challenge, but should not be considered the only response to the issue.

“Even when we had the full support of the county trustees we couldn’t keep up with the litter on our streets, so I don’t believe throwing more money and manpower at litter is the answer. Somehow we have to change the hearts and minds of individuals and their businesses to reduce litter before it happens,” said Brown.

In 2021, the City of Gallatin sought to address litter with volunteer cleanup events. 229 volunteers collected more than 4,900 pounds of trash using free supplies and trash pickup by Gallatin’s Public Works Department. The City also recruited three businesses into the Adopt-a-Street program in 2021. When a volunteer participates in Adopt-a-Street, volunteers agree to adopt a segment of a major street and remove litter a minimum of four times a year for at least one year. In recognition of the volunteers’ litter removal efforts, the City will install a sign recognizing their commitment to the program and community.

While the City of Gallatin’s Streets Department picks up litter along city roads, Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) is responsible for cleaning litter along the state’s highways. In 2020, TDOT removed 21 million pounds of litter from roadways and cleaned up 4,023 illegal roadside dumps. TDOT spends \$19 million annually on litter pickup and prevention education funded by revenue from a tax on soft drink and malt beverages.

If your organization would like to Adopt-A-Street or volunteer at a litter-cleanup event, please contact the Gallatin Public Works Department at 615-451-5909.