

## ***Fairfield Echo***

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# **Recycle to Win challenge awards up to \$100k prize**

## **Butler County commissioners fund green contest**

The duel between Fairfield and Oxford leaders to see who can be No. 1 in area recycling has spurred the Butler County Department of Environmental Services to award cold, hard cash prizes for recycling.

Anne Fiehrer Flaig, solid waste district coordinator, said the two cities' challenge inspired her to create Recycling to Win, which will award various prizes, the top award being \$100,000 for recycling efforts.

Flaig said as communities increase recycling rates, the potential to increase the financial reward increases.

The funding comes from the Butler County commissioners.

"I think we have some communities that could easily up their rates if they got the community involved at the local level," Flaig said.

Between Fairfield and Oxford, a side bet dictates that the council of the winning side will be treated to a meal by the losing council.

In 2007, Oxford bested Fairfield in the percentage of waste recycled by about 5 percent, which is how incentives will be paid in 2008, Flaig said. Instead of the 2007 flat rate - \$7 per ton of recycled material - communities will be paid based on the percent of recycled material, she said. Last year, Fairfield beat Oxford in real tonnage of waste recycled - 1,838.13 to 974.74 tons.

Last year, Fairfield earned \$12,627.86 and Oxford earned \$6,823.18.

Based on this year's program criteria, last year the cities would have earned \$31,000 and \$21,000, respectively.

The reason for changing the program's incentives was to "incentive-ize the incentive," Flaig said.

Meyers said the "fun-filled challenge" is a creative way to engage the entire city.

"This stuff can get real stale, real quick," Meyers said about recycling talk. "You have to put a little bit of fun around it."