

EDITORIAL
DUMP YOUR JUNK!
November 5, 2009

There has been recent increase of concern to live greener, preserve our local eco-systems, and contribute to conservation efforts such as recycling, increasing the use of re-usable containers, car pooling to drive less miles, and water-energy conservation. In taking care of the environment, we must not overlook our own back yards. Taking care of our neighborhoods is a collaboration of efforts. Driving through Bexar County, I have seen areas where there is litter on the ground, graffiti on buildings and structures, and sometimes just a mess. When neighborhoods begin to give off a presence of a lack of care and concern, this can sometimes attract vagrants and trouble makers.

One of the most common complaints my office receives is about illegal dumping. The unincorporated areas of Bexar County and Precinct 1 have developed a huge illegal dumping problem. People living within our community simply dump their trash, brush, furniture, electrical appliances, cans of paint, batteries, and rubbish on vacant properties, occupied properties, and even on streets. Illegal dumping is not only an eyesore, it is unhealthy, environmentally unfriendly, and a costly burden to clean up.

In the past few weeks, with the help of County staff outside organizations, and input from the community I was able to host two different trash clean up events in Precinct 1. With the time and effort given from citizens living in the neighborhoods and surrounding areas, we were able to collect more than 25 tons of trash and received more than 75 participants who offered their weekend time and energy to help beautify their neighborhood. An involved and caring community coming together with the same objective helps to get the message across; stop littering in my back yard!



Taking this message from my constituents a step farther, I asked County staff and engineers if there was more I could do for my residents in terms of trash clean up. Not only did County staff develop an idea, there was unanimous support from my fellow Commissioners Court members. I am please to inform my community that Bexar County, in collaboration with the Alamo Area Council of Governments, is set to receive funding to initiate a coupon pilot project called “Dump Your Junk on Bexar County”. The idea behind this program is to encourage residents of Bexar County who reside in the unincorporated areas to take their bulky trash and junk and leave it in one of three local land fills. Through the grant we are set to receive, the County is going to bear the burden of the “tip” fee that is normally collected at the time of trash delivery. The community members will not have to pay a fee. Proper disposal of trash items instead of illegal dumping will help to keep our streets and neighborhoods clean and beautiful.

If there is an area near you in which your neighborhood would like to host a trash pick up or other community event, please let my staff know. A problem can only be addressed if it is identified. I really depend on you, my Precinct 1 community to let me know what you need; I am here for you!