

Update on Prince George's Trash/Recycling/Yard Waste Service, Introduced in May 2016, and Disposal of Soft Plastic (Bags, etc.) *(from the October, 2016 Hotline)*

As those of you who came to last spring's WLCA General Meeting heard from our speakers (Councilwoman Mary Lehman and the Director of Prince George's County's Department of the Environment) the county had good reasons for changing to one day a week trash pick-up (for West Laurel it is Tuesdays, along with recycling pick-up, with yard waste pick-up on Mondays). However, residents' comments made clear that there have been issues – evidently largely because the trash haulers were also reassigned and have missed scheduled pick-ups: too often there was a frustrating lack of response when people attempted to report missed pick-ups by calling 3-1-1; the back-door pick-ups needed by our senior/disabled residents were persistently missed; and the promised big trash totes will probably not be delivered to our neighborhood until December. Happily, **Councilwoman Mary Lehman offered that residents whose trash, recycling and/or yard waste pick-up was missed can call her office (301-952-3887) and her staff arrange that the pick-up actually takes place ASAP.** And that seems to be working great – thank you, Mary! Comfortingly, the normal pick-ups by Bates seem to be getting more consistent.

An article in the May 2106 Hotline described what is and is not accepted by the county's trash, recycling, and yard waste facilities and suggested how to dispose of items not accepted there. However, an important category -- plastic bags – was not mentioned in that article. While hard plastic should be disposed by recycling, plastic bags that you get from grocery stores and that newspapers comes in, as well as plastic wrap (like Saran Wrap), should NOT be put into the county's recycling, as they clog up the single-stream sorting machines. Then these bags are a REAL problem to manually pull out. Rather than disposing of these bags as trash and unnecessarily filling the landfill, please instead collect them and take them to the bag recycling bin at any grocery store, and they will get recycled at a dedicated facility. Also, yard waste can not be in plastic bags, as they screw up the composting.