



**SATURDAY RECYCLING** - Robert Ives and his wife (not pictured) are among the several hundred Lansingites who use the drop-off center behind the town garage every week. The center is scheduled to be terminated after March 31.

## Mar. 31 Closure of Rural Recycling Centers Concerns Cnty EMC & Some Local Residents

Minutes just received from the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council (EMC) January 8 meeting indicate several members' unease over the scheduled Mar. 31 closure of rural recycling centers. EMC member Bruce Johnson and others reportedly expressed concern that the closures will discourage recycling.

County Rep. Dooley Kiefer (Cayuga Heights & Village of Lansing) explained the county's reasoning behind eliminating financial support for the rural drop-off centers saying that it was inequitable to provide both curbside pick-up and drop-off centers to some County residents and not to others.

Town of Lansing EMC representative Larry Sharpsteen disagreed with the decision to close the remaining rural recycling centers. First, there are still large numbers of people who prefer to bring their recyclables to the drop-off centers rather than carry them to the roadside. "I base this on the number of people I constantly see at the (Lansing) center," he said.

He also disagreed with the issue of "inequity," saying city residents have both pick-up and an in-city drop-off center available to them. "What's inequitable is asking rural residents to make an 8, 15 or 25 mile round-trip," he stated.

The EMC decided to look into the matter by contacting towns with drop-off centers to see if they feel the centers should continue operation. The matter will be brought up again at the February 12 meeting.

### Citizen Reaction

None of the residents we spoke to at the Lansing Recycling Drop-Off Center last Saturday knew of the impending closure. Ray Ketchum, of Ludlowville said he not only found the center more convenient, but that he's not anxious to spend over \$20

apiece for extra curbside recycling bins. Dan Sheerer, of Fenner Road, also cited convenience and expressed concern that recycled goods left at his roadside would be scattered by passing snowplows. Another resident, who asked not to be identified, said that when the recycling trucks come late on days when wind is blowing off the lake, lots of stuff blows around the road. She prefers the Saturday morning drive.

### T.C. Solid Waste Division

Tom Richardson of the County's Solid Waste Division explained that the decision to close the Lansing, Groton and Caroline recycling drop-off centers after March is a continuation of the county's policy of focusing on curbside pickups. "The Trumansburg, Newfield and Enfield centers were closed in 1995," he said.

The last County budget contained no funds for the drop-off recycling centers on the east side of the lake, he explained, but the centers were kept open until the end of March "as a concession" to some County Board members who wanted to check other options - notably town operation of the centers.

Richardson estimated the annual cost of running each center at approximately \$9,000, which included personnel, container rentals and container servicing.

### A Town Board Matter

At the Dec. 18 Town Board meeting, County Rep. Thomas Todd participated in a discussion of the rationale behind closing the recycling drop-off centers. Minutes record that he felt that keeping the centers open would be a duplication of services since everyone is entitled to curbside pickup. He said that it would be a town decision and operation if it wants the drop-off recycling center to remain open after this date.

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