

The City needs to improve recycling effort in food-service area

The Bethlehem Gadfly Climate Action Plan, Environment, Environmental Advisory Council July 19, 2019

(The latest in a series of posts relating to the environment, Bethlehem's Climate Action Plan, and Bethlehem's Environmental Advisory Council)

Peter Crownfield is officially retired but spends most of his time working with students in his role as internship coordinator for the Alliance for Sustainable Communities–Lehigh Valley.

Gadfly:

As Dana points out, quite a few local businesses are taking steps to be more sustainable, and it is definitely worth letting them know you appreciate it. In the case of serveware & packaging, it does increase their costs somewhat. When government does not act, less-responsible businesses may get a competitive edge.

“Biodegradable” take-away containers, utensils, plates, & cups are far better than the styrene and polypropylene they replace, largely because they reduce the horrible environmental health hazards associated with their manufacture. However, since local cities do not provide a way for the [items] to actually be composted, most of them wind up in the landfill anyway—and under those conditions, they can take hundreds of years to break down. The city should provide composting for food waste and compostable food-service products.

While we're on this subject, it's worth pointing out that the city still does not provide on-street recycling in the downtown areas and does not even

require all food-service establishments to provide effective recycling in ways that encourage their customers to recycle.

Peter