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CAPCOG grant will help area recycling initiatives

BY RAYMOND WHELAN
Daily Tribune Staff

BURNET — Burnet County and the cities of Burnet, Bertram and Granite Shoals received good news from a state agency earlier this week that will help bolster recycling efforts.

The Capital Area Council of Governments announced the county and the three cities within the county will get grant funds totaling \$58,313 for recycling and cleanup efforts during the next 11

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months.

Burnet County will receive a grant of \$8,403 for new recycling bins in all county buildings where space permits. All county personnel will empty the bins into large containers for transfer to the recycling station managed by Interface Industries at 2421 FM 963. "It will enable us to recycle a lot of paper," County Judge Donna Klaeger said. "We started recycling six months ago, and people are getting used to it. We are encouraging all of our people to participate."

Also from the grant, Interface will install a litter fence around the station to prevent trash and other debris from drifting into nearby pastures. And, the grant will help the county pay for newspaper advertisements and other methods to promote recycling, according to CAPCOG officials.

Also, CAPCOG indicated the city of Burnet will receive \$21,700 for a recycling trailer, Bertram will get \$9,826 for improvements to its recycling facility and Granite Shoals will receive \$18,384 for its annual community cleanup event.

The trailer for the city of Burnet will carry up to 12 bins at the city maintenance facility near City Hall on Texas 29 west of U.S. 281. Aluminum, cardboard, magazines, newspapers, plastic, steel and other materials are to be collected at the trailer for transfer to Interface, CAPCOG officials said.

"We have had quite a bit of interest in recycling," said David Vaughn, Burnet assistant city manager. "We found this opportunity to bring recycling to the community at a very affordable cost."

Depending on how well the trailer operates, recycling activity may expand in Burnet, Vaughn added.

Meanwhile, each month about 1,200 people utilize the Bertram recycling center, including residents from Liberty Hill in Williamson County, according to CAPCOG.

The center is located inside an old water tank at the dead end of West Street on the north side of Bertram, said Ken Odiorne, president of the Bertram Economic Development Corp.

Bertram will apply its grant from CAPCOG to cleaning the city's recycling center and installing new drums, signs, a concrete pad,

manual compactor and a ventilation system within the center. "We have been recycling there since 1993," Odiorne added. "When the sunshine is on that rascal, it heats up. It is hotter than a two-dollar pistol."

Granite Shoals will spend its grant money on the biannual citywide cleanup event that has been held every April and November in the city since 2003.

Volunteers who participated in the cleanup last April filled more than 20 Dumpsters, according to city officials.

Granite Shoals will also spend the grant to clean illegal dump sites and stop illegal dumping near the city, as well as within its extrajurisdictional territory, officials said.

Blanco, Fayette, Travis and Caldwell counties also received solid waste grants, as well as the cities of Austin, Cedar Park, Georgetown, Hutto, Johnson City, La Grange, Martindale and San Marcos.

Altogether, CAPCOG will grant more than \$400,000 to counties and cities over the next 11 months for recycling and other projects, according to Kelly Freeman, the CAPCOG solid waste program coordinator.

Funds for the grants will come from solid-waste disposal fees collected by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Freeman said.

The grant money will be disbursed on a reimbursable basis, meaning the county and cities will pay for recycling and cleanup projects out of their own coffers first, then receive funds from CAPCOG, Freeman added.

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