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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Catawba County Local Government Wins Award from Carolina Recycling Association**

*Educating the Public with Fun, Memorable Videos to Help Citizens Recycle Right*

RALEIGH, NC – The Carolina Recycling Association honored the Local Government of Catawba, North Carolina with a 2020 Annual Recycling Award!

Each year, the Carolina Recycling Association honors top performers that advance waste reduction and recycling in the Carolinas. The awards are open to individuals, companies, governments, schools, organizations, non-profits, and councils – projects and programs large and small. Nominations are reviewed and winners are selected by a committee of industry peers and scored in a variety of categories including amount of waste reduced, recycled or diverted, level of difficulty, and contribution to the industry as a whole.

Catawba County has a longstanding successful recycling and waste reduction program. Many dedicated citizens, businesses, schools, and municipal partnerships continue to embrace the county's single stream recycling program (implemented in 2014), and they continue to grow and strengthen the program year after year.

As with all single stream programs, contamination (inclusion of non-accepted materials) is a top issue. They set out to educate the public about how to lessen contamination of their own recycling efforts through a social media campaign featuring videos and messaging designed to be not only informative and educational, but also fun, positive and memorable.

They created and disseminated six short educational videos on Facebook putting a fun spin on how to re-use/properly dispose of contaminants in order to keep the recycling stream clean. Each video targeted one of the six top contaminants in Catawba County's recycling stream: bagged recyclables, tangles, plastic film/grocery bags, scrap metal, textiles, and food waste. They reinforced the videos with additional social media messaging about making recycling efforts count.

Overall, these fun, quirky videos caught the attention of their citizens and have proven to be an extremely effective means of education and outreach. They have helped recruit new recyclers and have helped seasoned recyclers do it better. To date, Republic Services reports an increase of 2,125 new recycling carts delivered to residential customers in Catawba County since the videos were published!

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