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For immediate release

ecomaine to celebrate waste and recycling hauling community during pandemic

Portland-based waste management company will hold Hauler Appreciation Day two months early to recognize waste collection workers' increased efforts during COVID-19 challenges

PORTLAND – (April 27, 2020) Ordinarily, ecomaine would hold its Hauler Appreciation Day in June each year. The municipally-owned recycling, waste-to-energy, and landfill operator in Portland annually provides a day of free bagged lunches and safety resources to drivers who haul recycling and trash from all around Maine, but like much of life in 2020, this event is also different.

Waste collection companies and workers are considered essential services, and are operating as usual, to ensure that Maine residents do not experience backups or delays at their homes or businesses during a public health challenge. And ecomaine, another part of that essential system, concluded that the time would be right to show its gratitude.

ecomaine's CEO and General Manager Kevin Roche said that in addition to the normal benefit these haulers provide during a pandemic, there is even the added challenge of increased trash and recycling. "We've seen an increase in the volume of recycling and waste materials from Maine's residents during the pandemic," said Roche. "Our friends in the collection industry are rising to the challenge of not only maintaining great service, but also keeping up with these increases. We are very appreciative for their work."

In order to keep its own staff healthy and to help protect visiting drivers, ecomaine has taken several steps to stay operational during the COVID-19 pandemic, including tracking and documenting physical distancing; increased cleaning, disinfection, and hand washing; reinforced use of protective equipment; Plexiglas barriers at its scale house; and an extra week of sick leave for employees to remain at home if ill.

"We are glad to be able to acknowledge the continued safe and essential work of Maine's hauling community," added ecomaine's Board Chair Matthew Frank of Harrison. "We know that recycling continues to be an important and necessary piece of the global supply chain, and the collection of recycling – and waste – is a critical link in the process."

Between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 30, all drivers will receive a free bagged lunch, drink, and dessert from ecomaine, as well as safety tips on waste management during the COVID-19 pandemic.

About ecomaine

ecomaine is the Portland-based, municipally owned nonprofit, recycling and waste-to-energy operation that serves a third of the state's population in 65+ member communities.





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