

## **Council hears update on single hauler trash program**

**By Anthony Welch**

Approximately 1,226 residences are using Manitou Springs' single hauler trash and recyclables program through Bestway Disposal, City Council learned at its work session on Tuesday.

Phil Kiemel, of Bestway, gave Council an update on the service, which began in August of 2010. Since then, Bestway has conducted three audits in September of 2010 and March and July in 2011 to see how the program is faring.

Kiemel said the program got off to a rocky start and there were some issues. The 1,226 number is just a little short of the 1,300 goal Bestway had for Manitou Springs.

"It's hard to say whether or not we're making any difference," Kiemel said.

There have been a number of residents who have cancelled their service with Bestway. Those are part of the 725 addresses that don't have service, according to Kiemel. However, that number also reflects addresses that never had trash service.

Kiemel said he wasn't sure what folks at those residents were doing with their trash.

"We have had reports of little old ladies dumping their trash at the park," Mayor Marc Snyder added.

Complaints about the service have cooled, Kiemel said, and the only things that have arisen have been weather-related issues.

"You guys have been really responsive and accommodating to people, even above and beyond sometimes," Snyder said. "I haven't heard a whisper in six to eight months."

Kiemel suggested the City should consider taking over billing. City Administrator Jack Benson said the City wasn't in a position to address that quite yet, but it would be taken under consideration.

Councilman-elect Randy Hodges said while he did see all the positives of the single hauler program, he didn't think there was much truck traffic reduction, which was one of the City's main goals with the Bestway program.

Hodges said he lives just a few blocks outside the commercial district, and therefore, sees other companies' trucks which service commercial businesses. He wondered if there were ways to further cut down on the number of trucks coming through town.

"We have reduced truck traffic on residential streets," Kiemel said. "We've gone from four, six, eight trucks a week to two. In that aspect, I think we've done a good job."

Councilman Matt Carpenter added that other trucks are due to the fact that the City was only able to use the single hauler program for residential needs. State mandates don't allow it for commercial.

Councilman-elect Gary Smith questioned why the City wasn't using Bestway. The City of Manitou Springs uses Springs Waste for its trash and recycling service. Smith felt the City should use the program it was asking its residents to use.

Snyder said Council looked long and hard at that, but Springs Waste offered the best deal for the City. It saves \$34,000 using Springs Waste.

Councilwoman Coreen Toll mentioned she'd like to see the program expanded to include composting. She asked if it would be possible for Bestway to include a third bin for residents to put compost in. Kiemel said, while it's something Bestway is interested in, it hasn't worked on that program for residential needs yet.

However, Bestway is working on the creation of a local recycle center, where it'll be able to process recyclables locally. Kiemel said the company has made a big financial commitment to it. "We want to be on the forefront of that," he said.

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