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Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Local Affiliates Receive Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence

(April 27, 2017) – The Tire War, hosted annually by Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful affiliates Keep Huntingdon County Beautiful, Keep Juniata County Beautiful, PA CleanWays of Mifflin County and Keep Perry County Beautiful, was selected to receive a Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence. The awardees were recognized at an event hosted by the PA Department of Environmental Protection and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council on April 25 at the Harrisburg Hilton.

"The Environmental Excellence Awards show just how many Pennsylvanians, from fourth-grade students to factory owners, care deeply about the air, land, and water in their communities," said Governor Wolf. "We all benefit, as their commitment to tackling important environmental challenges improves our quality of life statewide."

The "Tire War" program began in 2006 when the affiliates decided to turn the otherwise unglamorous tire collections into a friendly competition to see who could collect the most tires from their county's residents. At the end of each event, the county that collected the most tires that year proudly took home the "Gold Rim Award," an actual gold painted tire rim to proudly display, and the bragging rights for the next year. The tires that are collected are shipped to a processor where they are turned into useful products like rubber mulch, play and athletic turf, and even crumb rubber for road surfaces.

The collections have gathered and recycled over 35,000 tires from local County residents since 2006. These tires are prevented from ending up over the hill or in waterways where they would pose serious environmental impacts. Tires do not biodegrade, but decompose and leach toxic chemicals that contaminate soil and water. Tires also provide breeding grounds for mosquitoes, increasing the risk of West Nile Virus and Zika Virus.

"Our local affiliates share our mission of empowering Pennsylvanians to keep our communities clean and beautiful. By coordinating annual tire collections, our affiliates consistently provide their residents with a convenient, low cost option for tire disposal, keeping them off our public lands where they become an environmental hazard and are costly to remove," stated Shannon Reiter, President of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. "Since the Tire War program's inception, affiliates have reported finding less tires during illegal dump cleanups. We congratulate them on this well-deserved recognition."

The Tire Wars are sponsored in part by the Department of Environmental Protection's HHW/Small Business Hazardous Waste Collection Program.



Pictured from left to right: Brent Leach, Keep Juniata County Beautiful; Shannon Reiter, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful; Pam Sechrist and Mindy Williams, PA CleanWays of Mifflin County; Sally Tengeres and Kristie Smith, Keep Perry County Beautiful; Stacia-Fe Gillen, Keep Huntingdon County Beautiful.

About Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's mission is empowering Pennsylvanians to make our communities clean and beautiful. Since 1990, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and its volunteers have removed over 126 million pounds of litter from Pennsylvania's roadways, greenways, parks, forests, and waterways. To learn more about Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, visit www.keeppabeautiful.org.