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Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's Surveillance Cameras Catch Illegal Dumping in Michaux State Forest



(September 28, 2021) Cameras installed through the Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Illegal Dump Free PA surveillance camera loan program recently captured brothers illegally dumping in Michaux State Forest in Franklin County.

Twin brothers, James Leon Wiles and Jesse Lee Wiles (11/15/89) were recently caught and cited for illegal dumping in Michaux State forest in Franklin County. Jesse pled guilty to dumping brush on May 19, 2021 and James pled guilty for tossing trash bags on May 21 and a cathode ray tube (CRT) television on June 2. They were made to pay a total of \$1,041 in fines and court costs.

Photos taken by surveillance cameras loaned to the state forest by Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful through their Illegal Dump Free PA program were used as evidence. State Forest Rangers, Todd Ottinger and Scott Greevy, investigated and issued charges against the Wiles' brothers.

Ranger Greevy said that the cameras used, on loan from Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, were a huge asset in prosecuting the case. During the interviews that were conducted by the Ranger, the perpetrators of the acts lied repeatedly to the Ranger and only relented in their statements when shown photographic evidence of their acts.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's Illegal Dump Free PA program is designed to empower enforcement authorities to capture illegal dumping incidents as they happen.

“The Rangers have been valuable partners in decreasing illegal dumping in Michaux State Forest by holding trash cleanups and investigating those who dump illegally. Through publicizing these prosecutions, we hope to help curb the act of dumping. Dump cleanups bring a financial burden to our communities, state parks and forests and municipalities as they are often saddled with the responsibility and expense of cleaning it up. Cleanups are needed, but our end goal needs to be to stop the dumping in the first place. Our cameras can help do that,” explained Shannon Reiter, President of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful estimates that on average, it costs local communities \$600 per ton or nearly \$3,000 for an average illegal dump cleanup.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful currently has ten sets of cameras at various dumping hot spots and recycling facilities across the state. So far this year, there have been seven convictions, with 12 pending, as a direct result of the surveillance cameras installed as part of the program.

Illegal Dump Free PA also offers an option to report illegal dumping. So far in 2021, over 100 reports of illegal dumpsites, littering, and graffiti have been reported by concerned residents. Once received, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful provides the information to local officials and partners. Reports can be made anonymously.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful’s Illegal Dump Free PA camera loan program is open to municipalities, counties, government agencies, as well as non-profit organizations. The grant includes the loan of a set of three high quality, motion activated, covert security cameras that provide instant wireless transmission of site activity, photo documentation of license plates at speeds of up to 50 MPH, and clear photos of activity day or night, which are key to prosecutions. To learn more, visit keppabeautiful.org and choose Programs or contact Rob Dubas at rdubas@keppabeautiful.org.

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About Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful’s vision is a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Since 1990, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has worked with hundreds of thousands of volunteers across the state to pick up nearly 148 million pounds of trash from Pennsylvania’s roadways, waterways, greenways, vacant lots, forestlands and other community spaces. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful’s core programming focuses on litter and illegal dump prevention, cleanup, community greening, and proper waste handling and sustainable practices. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful works with many partnering organizations on the state and grassroots level to accomplish our goal of a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is the state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, Inc., the nation’s largest volunteer-based community action and education organization. To learn more about Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, visit www.keppabeautiful.org.