



Treasurer's Office Installs License Plate Recycle Drop Box

Through an innovative partnership, the Johnson County Treasurer's Office, the Iowa City Federation of Labor, and the Carpenters' Union Apprenticeship facility in Cedar Rapids are ensuring that thousands of old license plates are being recycled at no cost to taxpayers. Keeping the plates out of the landfill is benefiting both the environment and area charities. A new drop-off box for collecting the plates will make the effort even more convenient for drivers, said **Tom Kriz**, Johnson County treasurer and elected official, who helped organize the effort.

The collection box is now located in the public parking lot at the Johnson County Administration Building, 913 S. Dubuque Street. The secure box, which was made by participants in the union's apprentice program, is available for use 24 hours a day. "We collect the aluminum plates and the Iowa Federation of Labor delivers the plates to a salvage yard, which turns the plates into scrap," Tom said. "Proceeds are donated to charities primarily in or serving Johnson County, including the **Iowa City Crisis Center, United Way, Iowa Shares, and Special Olympics.**"

Since the recycling effort started in the late 1990s, an estimated \$20,000 worth of plates have been recycled. The program was based on a Hawkeye Labor Council, AFL-CIO, program in Linn County.

Tom credits Patrick Hughes, president of the Iowa City Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, for bringing the idea to Johnson County: "Patrick recognized that aluminum has a lot of value, and that we could help both people and places by recycling old plates."



Tom Kriz, Johnson County treasurer, is joined by Royce Peterson (center), organizer for the Chicago Regional Council of Carpenters, and Patrick Hughes, president of the Iowa City Federation of Labor, in the inaugural use of the new drop-off box for old license plates. The box is located in front of the Administration Building.

(Photo: Andy Johnson)