

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## New trash bins at Fair Park support Green Dallas initiative

Fair Park is doing its part for the Green Dallas initiative with the recent installation of environmentally friendly, solar-powered trash receptacles. As part of a pilot program, standard trash bins were replaced with solar trash compactor receptacles at several locations, marking the first time this system has been used in a North Texas park.

“After one week, we emptied the trash compactor at the Leonhardt Lagoon only once,” said Fair Park Administration Operations Manager **Donny Shubert**. “Normally we have to empty our 55-gallon trash cans about twice a day, so this is a tremendous reduction in staff time.”

Fair Park staff empties about 100 standard trash cans a day, but the new containers only need to be emptied once a week.

“This supports our effort to make the park more environmentally friendly in support of the City’s Green Dallas initiative, and could save more than \$10,000 per year in trash bags alone,” Shubert said.

### **Clean, Green Trash Bins**

The new containers are green for several reasons. First, by not using garbage bags (the trash is compacted into a trash brick) nearly 50,000 garbage bags will be kept out of the landfill each year. Next, these compactors are helping to clean our air: the compactor holds up to 200 gallons; more than five times more than the City’s standard trash cans. Its increased capacity can help cut related fuel use of the trash trucks that would normally be picking up twice a day (reduced to as little as once a week), thus cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent. Finally, the compactor is made of recycled plastic.

## How It Works

These high-tech trash cans resemble oversized mailboxes, only with solar panels on top. The receptacles also work like mailboxes in that people pull a handle down to deposit their trash. Once opened, trash is placed on a platform. When the door is closed, the platform releases the trash into the compactor. Sensors inside the compactor detect when the trash is near capacity and compacts it to maximize space. As more trash is added, the process is repeated until the receptacle is full. When it is full, City workers will extract a neat, 40-pound trash brick. The container uses solar power to charge a 12-volt battery. Enclosed to keep pests out and odors in, it can operate for a day on the equivalent energy it takes to make a piece of toast.

## Moving Forward

The City hopes to expand the number of solar-powered, self-compacting trash receptacles for two reasons: 1) to reduce greenhouse gas and nitrogen oxide (ozone forming) emissions from the transport of trash from the park facility to the transfer station and; 2) to improve the effectiveness of trash collection and processing. The City also has a desire to manage its trash in a more environmentally sustainable way. The City intends to seek further grant funds to purchase additional receptacles for other large city facilities.

