

JUST ONE THING

Title: With Honor and Respect

Company/Organization: Casella Waste Systems, Inc.

Type of Organization: For profit

Number of Employees: >100

Category: Community

Challenge or Opportunity: While performing his daily tasks as Landfill Operations Manager, U.S Army Veteran Bruce Glover noticed an unserviceable flag had made its way to the landfill. He found that every year Casella employees were pulling hundreds of U.S. Flags out of recycling bins, garbage trucks, transfer stations, and even the working face of the landfill. In addition to the flags being improperly disposed of, this effort poses a risk of injury to employees who rescue them.

Approach or Solution: At Casella Waste, about 1 in 20 employees has a background of military service - it did not take much to motivate our people to find a safe and responsible solution. We deployed flag collection bins at 8 of our NH transfer stations so people with worn flags could continue to respect the Nation's colors, even when they could no longer be flown. Unserviceable flags are stored, folded, and burned in a display of respect and dignity in partnership with Littleton based non-profit Veterans2Veterans.

Impact: 2024 marked the program's 3rd and largest year with over 1,200 flags saved from improper disposal. The ceremony was held at Copper Cannon Camp, a nonprofit summer camp for under-served youth. Casella employees, local residents, and Boy Scout Troop 209 were present. The involvement from various local groups, especially youth, is essential to the success of the program which aims not only to treat the problem but to prevent it by teaching the next generation how to respect the Nation's Colors.