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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**RECYCLING IN GEORGIA CONTINUES TO GROW
THANKS TO EFFORTS OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

ATLANTA, Ga., (May 8, 2009) – Georgia counties are playing an active role in providing recycling services throughout the state. Nearly two-thirds (74%) of the counties either provide or arrange for recycling services in their communities, according to information reported to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Diverting recyclable materials from local landfills not only conserves natural resources, but also fuels Georgia's economy. Georgia has the second largest end-use market in the country for recycled materials, which are used in the production of everything from carpet to corrugated cardboard. The Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) recognizes the role that county government plays in facilitating recycling efforts and "Greening Our Future" during National County Government Week, May 3 – 9, 2009.

"Georgians want to do their part to protect the environment and recycling is an easy way for us to be green," said Randy Hartmann, Environmental Program Manager for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. "Our research shows that people are more likely to participate in recycling programs if they have curbside services available, so we are actively working with local government to consider the benefits of increased recycling as one of their waste management options."

County governments have participated in several grant programs to enhance their recycling efforts. For example:

- **Bulloch County** received one of four grants funded through Georgia's Solid Waste Trust Fund to develop regional recycling collection infrastructure in the state. Bulloch County is in the process of establishing a regional recycling hub for southeast Georgia, which will make recycling in the surrounding counties of **Candler, Evans, Effingham, Jenkins, Screven, Tattnall** and **Bryan** much easier. The hub will be a single stream recycling center, meaning that it will accept recyclable materials mixed together, and then sort and market them for reuse. As part of this initiative, Bulloch County recently purchased recycling containers to provide single stream recycling collection to the residents in the City of Statesboro.
- Counties are also actively involved in the "Away From Home" Recycling Program which was launched in April 2008 to promote recycling at special events. In the first nine months alone, these counties and their municipal counterparts, collected 53,684 pounds of recyclable materials at 308 special events throughout the state. Twenty-nine communities across the state have received one of these grants, including the following counties: Albany-**Dougherty**, Athens-**Clarke, Bartow, Bulloch, Columbia**, Dalton-**Whitfield, Decatur, DeKalb, Forsyth, Glynn, Hall, Liberty, Newton** and the North Georgia Resource Management Authority (**Banks, Lumpkin, Towns** and **Union**). This

program is administered through the Department of Community of Affairs and funded through Georgia's Solid Waste Trust Fund.

Other counties are taking similar steps to increase recycling efforts in their communities.

Dawson County implemented a single stream recycling program in February in partnership with Community Waste Services to make recycling more convenient for their county residents.

"We just kicked off our new recycling program earlier this year, and it is a great addition for our county," said Dawson County Chairman Mike Berg. "We are making recycling easier by not requiring recyclable materials to be sorted, which we hope will result in more participation.

According to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Georgians throw away millions of tons of recyclable materials each year, including paper (1.9 million tons), plastic (1 million tons), metal (360,000 tons) and glass (240,000 tons). Recycling these materials can help offset energy use. For example, recycling one glass bottle could light a 100-watt light bulb for four hours or recycling an aluminum can could run a computer for up to three hours.

"Developing recycling programs is just another way that county governments are promoting responsible environmental management," said ACCG Deputy Director Ross King. "We are proud to partner with DCA and the Keep Georgia Beautiful affiliates to help encourage recycling efforts throughout the state."

First celebrated in 1991, National County Government Week (NCGW) was created by the National Association of Counties (NACo) to raise public awareness and understanding about the roles and responsibilities of the nation's 3,068 counties.

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Editor's Note: Attached you will find a spreadsheet provided by the Department of Community Affairs that highlights county recycling efforts as well as a list of all of the communities that have received Away From Home recycling grants.

About ACCG: It is the mission of the Association County Commissioners of Georgia to enhance the role, stature and responsiveness of county government in Georgia. Since counties are the level of government closest to the people and serve all the people of the state, ACCG will promote the ability of Georgia counties to provide public services responsibly, efficiently, and cost effectively through cooperative legislative action, education of public officials, provision of quality member services and technical assistance, and increasing public awareness of critical local government issues. For more information, go to www.accg.org.