



## Republic Services and Alabama Coastal Foundation Recognized with Top Recycling Award

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### 4.6 Million Oyster Shells Collected in Just One Year, Enough to Create 12 Acres of New Habitat in the Gulf Coast

MOBILE, Ala., Oct. 24, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- Republic Services and the Alabama Coastal Foundation were recognized by the National Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA) with the Organics Recycler of the Year Award. The award is in recognition of an innovative oyster shell recycling program, and was presented today at NWRA's annual Executive Leadership Roundtable and Awards Luncheon in Orlando, Fla.



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"We are committed to creating simple solutions for our customers and community partners," said AJ Rodgers, general manager of Republic Services. "This program enables local seafood restaurants and their patrons to be more environmentally responsible by turning something that was once considered trash into a resource that is helping rehabilitate oyster harvests along the Alabama coast. We're proud to partner with the Alabama Coastal Foundation on this exciting project and share this recognition with everyone involved."

Republic Services of Mobile and the Alabama Coastal Foundation launched the oyster shell recycling program in 2016. The program, currently funded through a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant, is the first-of-its-kind focused on the coastal counties of Mobile and Baldwin. Since the program began, Republic has collected 4.6 million oyster shells in just one year, enough to create 12 acres of new habitat in the Gulf Coast.

The program involves collecting oyster shells from 29 participating restaurants along the Alabama coast three times per week. Once collected, the shells are brought to a secure location where they undergo a six-month curing process. Upon completion of the curing process, shells are deposited back into the water ways along Alabama's coastal counties. Each shell that is returned to the ocean has the capability of becoming a habitat for 10 oyster larvae.

"The Gulf Coast region is a seafood haven, where more than 40 percent of the nation's seafood is derived from," said Mark Berte, director of the Alabama Coastal Foundation. "Efforts to sustain and replenish the habitat for Gulf Coast marine life are vital to Alabama's economy and local environment. We are proud to partner with Republic Services in making this program possible."

"Republic's partnership with the Alabama Coastal Foundation to take resources previously sent to landfills and instead use them to help rebuild a habitat demonstrates Republic's strong commitment to sustainability. We congratulate them and applaud them for creating this innovative organic recycling program," said Darrell Smith, president & CEO of the NWRA.

#### **About National Waste & Recycling Association**

The National Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA) is the leading organization providing leadership, advocacy, research, education and safety expertise for the waste and recycling industries. NWRA advocates at the Federal, State and Local levels on all issues of importance to our member companies as they provide safe, economically sustainable and environmentally sound services to communities in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. For more information about how innovation in the waste and recycling industry is helping solve today's environmental challenges, visit [wasterecycling.org](http://wasterecycling.org).

#### **About Alabama Coastal Foundation**

The Alabama Coastal Foundation's (ACF) mission is to improve and protect Alabama's coastal environment through cooperation, education and participation. The organization pursues practical solutions to conservation challenges in a non-partisan manner. ACF is dedicated to partner with businesses, local government and other non-profits to achieve common ground solutions to our environmental problems. To learn more about our programs, become a member, or volunteer, visit: [www.joinACF.org](http://www.joinACF.org). Connect with us on social media - "Like" ACF on Facebook and follow on Twitter [@AlabamaCoastal](https://twitter.com/AlabamaCoastal).

**About the Alabama Oyster Shell Recycling Program**

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is providing the funding for this project as a part of the Gulf Coast Conservation Grants Program (GCCGP). This project is being led by the Alabama Coastal Foundation in collaboration with Republic Services. To ensure the success of this project, ACF has established an Advisory Committee including restaurant owners and chefs in addition to representatives from the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, The Nature Conservancy, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant, and the Mobile Bay Oyster Gardening Program. The first phase of the project began along the Causeway in October of 2016 and expanded with restaurants in Orange Beach and Gulf Shores in spring of 2017.

**About Republic Services**

Republic Services, Inc. is an industry leader in U.S. recycling and non-hazardous solid waste disposal. Through its subsidiaries, Republic's collection companies, recycling centers, transfer stations and landfills focus on providing effective solutions to make proper waste disposal effortless for its 14 million customers. We'll handle it from here.™, the brand's promise, lets customers know they can count on Republic to provide a superior experience while fostering a sustainable Blue Planet™ for future generations to enjoy a cleaner, safer and healthier world.

For more information, visit the Republic Services website at [RepublicServices.com](http://RepublicServices.com). "Like" Republic on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/RepublicServices](https://www.facebook.com/RepublicServices) and follow on Twitter [@RepublicService](https://twitter.com/RepublicService).

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