

## **Five Point Plan to Put Inmates Back on Garbage Trucks**

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The County is close to an agreement that will allow Community Work Center (CWC) inmates to once again serve as hoppers on the back of county-owned garbage trucks, Communications Director Ken Flanagan told the George County Board of Supervisors on Monday morning.

The Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) suspended the county using inmates on garbage trucks in early July when Robert Prine, 42, was killed in a three-vehicle collision involving a garbage truck. Prine was working as a hopper behind a properly parked truck. A second vehicle, a pickup truck, was stopped behind the garbage truck when a third vehicle failed to stop and pushed the pickup into the back of the garbage truck, killing Prine.

Since that time, the county has been hiring hoppers from Waste Pro in Jackson County at a cost of \$500.00 per day. Waste Pro has a policy of allowing only one hopper per truck where George County has always used two. The change has slowed up garbage collection.

Flanagan told the supervisors MDOC has sent him a letter requesting compliance with a five-point plan before allowing MDOC inmates back on the trucks. The points included reflective clothing, weekly safety training sessions, a written safety policy, increased hazard lighting on the trucks and cages on the trucks for hoppers to ride in.

Flanagan said the county was already complying with or implementing four of the five points, with only the hopper cages to be resolved.

After some discussion, it was decided to let Magnolia Trailer assist in designing the cages, build and install them on the trucks.

The board then voted to extend its agreement with Waste Pro for two more weeks to give time for the cages to be built and MDOC reauthorize using inmates as hoppers.

Flanagan told the board, county residents have been very understanding about the delayed garbage collection situation. He said most of Monday's trash was picked up on

Monday, but Tuesday's routes carried over into Wednesday. All garbage was being picked up by the end of the day on Thursday, although not necessarily at the normal times.