

# **“Do A Better Job”: Public Demands Action From Madison County Board On Roadside Litter**

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter  
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EDWARDSVILLE - A few Madison County residents demanded the Madison County Board take action on roadside litter from Roxana landfill trucks during the Public Comment portion of the latest County Board meeting on March 15.

“This is actually historic, because the trash has never been this bad in the history of Madison County - and this board, it sits firmly on your shoulders, so I want to see about getting something done about it,” Russ Wheat said. “And it insults me that I have to come and talk to you people about this, because you drive down the same road, you see everything that I see, yet nothing gets done.

“These trucks, if they are not going to adhere to our wishes and they’re going to violate and pollute our neighborhoods, we need to restrict their permits. Pull those permits, revoke them. You start putting the squeeze on those permits, and they can’t drive the trucks out here - believe me, that’ll stop a lot of the trash and stuff coming into the neighborhood.”

Wheat said he has personally picked up “over 1,500 pounds of trash - about 30 bags,” and that he’d be willing to work with the board on solutions moving forward.

“If you really wanted to do your job and help out this community and get off of being the worst board as far as the trash in Madison County history, reach out to me and I’d be willing to help with whatever I can do,” he said. “There’s a lot of things that could be done, but I don’t feel it’s getting done. Just do a better job.”

Kirk Allen, co-founder of Edgar County Watchdogs, suggested the litter problem might be caused by immigrants and be an issue of cultural differences, citing his experiences while traveling.

“There’s a common denominator, folks - and I know folks aren’t going to want to talk about it, or they’re going to be upset that I’m going to talk about it - but when you bring a society of people from other countries that don’t have the same cultural upbringing ... if you follow where we have a large influx of immigrants, we’re finding this very problem,” Allen said.

“It may be an educational problem for some of those folks. I’m not casting dispersions on it, it’s a culture thing. Some of those people come from countries that don’t know what a trash can is - and I’ve traveled the world, and that is true,” he added. “So before we cast dispersions on truck drivers that may or may not be doing it, let’s identify what the real source is.”

David Mahaney said he told the board about this issue last December, and that despite two closed-door meetings that were held since his comment, he has yet to see any action taken, or any plans for action proposed. He said his comment sparked a grassroots social media movement related to Roxana landfill issues, and that the “outcry” has gotten the attention of “multiple government agencies.”

While he commended Madison County citizens for their help cleaning up roadside litter, he asked the board to find a more long-term solution.

“The community has taken action; citizens have picked up trash along the roadways leading to the landfill. As a whole, their actions have been quite noticeable and their actions are to be commended - however, the efforts of these citizens should not be considered the final solution,” he said. “Hopefully a long-term solution to this issue can be determined.”

The agenda and full audio for the March 15 meeting are available on the [Madison County Clerk website](#).