

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Trash bag dumper fined in the City of Reading

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Camera Loan Program Assisted with Capturing Evidence

(December 20, 2018) – Wilfredo Soto Torres (age 56) was cited by City of Reading Police Officer Devin Hasenauer for illegally dumping a large number of black plastic bags on 9/24/18. Soto Torres was found guilty by Magisterial District Judge Kyley L Scott of depositing waste on a roadway in the City of Reading and paid a fine of \$300 plus costs for a total penalty of \$416.50.

“I am glad to be working with Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful on this program,” says Kevin Lugo, Sustainability & Solid Waste Manager for the City of Reading. “Illegal dumping puts litter in our neighborhoods, can be a health hazard, and costs the city thousands of dollars to clean up. Dumping is an eyesore in our community and directly affects residents and businesses who find garbage piled on their property. Our community does not tolerate illegal dumping. If you witness illegal dumping or find a dump site, please let the City know by reporting it through iRequest or calling 877-727-3234.”

“The camera program is working just as intended. We want to thank our municipal, enforcement, and organizational partners who used the evidence to identify and hold accountable the individual who chose to dump trash illegally. Through publicizing these prosecutions, we hope to help curb the act of dumping. Dump cleanups bring a financial burden to our communities and municipalities as they are often saddled with the responsibility of cleaning it up. Cleanups are needed, but our end goal needs to be to stop the dumping in the first place,” explained Shannon Reiter, President of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. In a recent study, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful found that on average, it costs local communities \$600/ton or nearly \$3,000 for an average illegal dump cleanup.

Evidence photos from surveillance cameras helped lead to the successful prosecution. The cameras are part of a loan program from Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful with funding from the PA Department of Environmental Protection. DEP funds for this program are from fines that the state agency receives for environmental infractions. These cameras are able to capture high quality, prosecution-worthy photos, even of license plates at night.

Municipalities and other agencies can find out more about the program at IllegalDumpFreePA.org, or contact Rob Dubas at rdubas@keepbeautiful.org or 724-836-4121 ext 107.

About Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful’s mission is empowering Pennsylvanians to make our communities clean and beautiful. Since 1990, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and its volunteers have removed over 133 million pounds of litter from Pennsylvania’s roadways, greenways, parks, forests, and waterways. To learn more about Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, visit www.keepbeautiful.org.

