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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Flagler Beach wins NEFRC award for its ‘Big Blue’ recycling machine

January 6, 2023 – Flagler Beach took high honors in the category of Environmental Stewardship at the Northeast Florida Regional Council awards banquet on January 5 for its “Big Blue” – a machine that recycles glass by pulverizing glass collected for recycling into glass sand and glass gravel that can be used for sandbags, decorative mulch, and more.

“We are proud that the City of Flagler Beach runs our own recycling program and that residents’ items are truly recycled,” said Mayor Suzie Johnston. “We have been able to recycle more than 12 tons of glass a week and are thrilled about being recognized for our ability to do so.”

Flagler Beach Sanitation Director Rob Smith spearheaded the project and accepted the award.

“I wanted to initiate this because – according to the Glass Packaging Institute – more than a ton of natural resources are saved for every ton of glass recycled,” Smith said. “It’s wonderful for our city to be part of the solution instead of part of the problem.”

Flagler Beach unveiled Big Blue as part of Earth Day 2022.

“The addition of Big Blue has been a game changer,” said City Manager William Whitson. “It has allowed Flagler Beach to positively impact the environment while also creating a product that people can use and enjoy.”

Representatives from Flagler County, as well as the Bunnell and Palm Coast, attended the luncheon to cheer on the City of Flagler Beach.

“Flagler County is very tight-knit and it’s a joy to share in the success of our municipalities,” said County Administrator Heidi Petito. “We support one another in every way possible.”

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