

## Creative Partnership Benefits Zion Landfill and Habitat for Humanity

### *Zion Landfill – Zion, Ill.*

As Veolia Zion Landfill prepared for expansion this past spring, the issue arose of how to deal with the five homes and a nursery which sat on the parcel to be expanded. These properties had been purchased by Veolia years before and were set for demolition.

But **Patty Shebesta**, administrative assistant at the site, believed that the homes had a little left to give before they were taken down. "One house in particular was in superb condition. It would have been a shame to tear it down as it was and yet moving the whole house was cost prohibitive. So I came up with an idea for reuse and salvage of materials in the house," said Shebesta.

After getting the green light from **Jim Lewis**, general manager of the Zion Landfill, Shebesta reached out to Tim Ammons, manager for Habitat for Humanity Lake County's ReStore, to see if they could pursue a partnership opportunity that could benefit Ammon's organization as well as

Veolia. ReStore is a 24,000-square-foot retail warehouse in Gurnee that sells new and used building materials, furniture and appliances to the general public. The ReStore is a fundraising arm of the affiliate as proceeds from the sale of donated items go back to help purchase land and pay overhead expenses for Habitat for Humanity Lake County.

On May 9 a ReStore crew started dismantling the first home under the direction of Lewis and Shebesta. The workers were able to take away usable interior and exterior doors, windows, garage doors, a water

heater, toilets, tubs, vanities and sinks. All of these items were hauled to the Gurnee store.

### *"This was a green win-win."*

Upon seeing how successful the initial salvaging effort was, Shebesta and Lewis

arranged for Habitat to return to the property and take away what they could from the remaining properties. When all was said and done, approximately eight tons of saleable goods were diverted from the Zion Landfill and made available for purchase, a donation estimated to be worth \$20,000.

"I was happy with the process as well as surprised at the amount of material they were able to pull out of the homes," said Lewis. "Because the majority of the labor to deconstruct the homes comes from volunteers, they are able to salvage materials that would otherwise not make sense financially."

This was a green win-win. Habitat ended up recovering a significant amount of goods and materials for reuse in the local communities; Veolia reduced its demolition, transportation and disposal cost, and avoided consuming valuable landfill airspace."

Equally pleased with the outcome was Ammons.

"Habitat for Humanity Lake County ReStore is very grateful for the partnership opportunity you gave us in Zion. This will allow every 'donation dollar' we receive to go directly towards building decent, affordable housing for hard-working families in need. Your donation helps us get closer to that goal," he said.



The Habitat for Humanity ReStore crew worked with Veolia Zion Landfill to salvage eight tons of saleable goods from homes slated for destruction. They are (from left to right): Norm Belew, Art Stunard, Mike Benjamin and Mona Nicholas. Not pictured: Bruce Andersen and David Fowler.