



America Recycles Day

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November 15

A nationwide initiative by Keep America Beautiful



**IT'S EASY TO  
RECYCLE  
PLASTIC BAGS**



# About America Recycles Day and Keep America Beautiful

**America Recycles Day** is a program of Keep America Beautiful and the only nationally recognized day dedicated to promoting and celebrating recycling in the United States. Every year on or around November 15 (America Recycles Day), millions turn out to thousands of local events held throughout the country to celebrate and learn more about their recycling programs. For more information, visit [americarecyclesday.org](http://americarecyclesday.org)

**Keep America Beautiful®**, Inc. was established in 1953 and is the nation's largest volunteer-based community action and education organization. With a network of more than 1,200 affiliate and participating organizations, Keep America Beautiful forms public-private partnerships and programs that engage individuals to take greater responsibility for improving their community environments. To learn more, visit [kab.org](http://kab.org)



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## Why host a plastic bag recycling collection event?



Keep America Beautiful is bringing you a new way to get your community excited about recycling plastic bags and wraps.

Many communities offer curbside recycling for plastics, but what should you do if your community's program doesn't include recycling for plastic bags and plastic wraps? The answer is easy: take plastic bags and wraps back to a grocer or retailer who recycles them. The good news is that many major grocers and retailers all across the country will take back bags and wraps, so recycling can be as easy as reminding folks to do it.

Many if not most national grocery stores and national retailers all over the country — like Target, Lowe's Home Improvement and Walgreens — recycle bags and wraps. In fact, there are more than 12,000 store locations that collect these items across the United States.

A plastic bag recycling event will help educate people that recycling plastic bags and wraps is as simple as bringing them back to a participating local store. It's also a great time to explain that once recycled, this valuable material can be made into products like low-maintenance fencing, backyard decks, benches and new bags.

Register your event with us and we'll ship you a free kit with a variety of promotional giveaways, including fridge magnets, tip cards and stickers about recycling plastic bags and wraps. These will be sent to you free of charge, while supplies last!

In addition, you'll receive an e-toolkit to help you navigate the ins and outs of event planning. It includes an event checklist, poster and banner templates you can have printed locally, and a sample media release.

We encourage you to partner with local grocers and retailers that recycle plastic bags and wraps. Gift certificates from these businesses can be used as prizes for those who bring bags to recycle at your event!

# Let's Get Started

## 1. Register here

or go to <http://americarecyclesday.org/>  
Fill out the online form and order your free kit with promotional items, while supplies last, to use for publicity and incentives.

## 2. Pick a prime location, date & time

Talk with a local retailer in your community who recycles bags, or even a shopping mall, city hall or high traffic site where you can educate people about recycling plastic bags. See if you can do the event on or around America Recycles Day, November 15, 2011, or any date during the month. Select a time that works for all of you. We have found that a 4-hour block works well.

## 3. Get your volunteers excited

Reach out to your personal networks and event partners to recruit volunteers. Familiarize your volunteers with the recycling information and materials. You'll need volunteers to help promote the event, set it up, be there to participate and finally to clean up.

## 4. Make it fun! Incentivize with a prize

There are lots of ways to give out "freebies" or prizes to participants to add some zest to your event. First, think about having two sets of prizes – one for kids, and one for adults. Kid prizes should be kid-friendly and safe and appropriate for various age ranges (e.g., no choking hazards for those little ones). Communicate clearly about how you're going to give prizes out, and how many there are, so everyone knows what to expect. So, for example, you can give a prize for everyone who brings in a certain number of bags, like 10 or 20; or a bigger prize to folks who bring in more bags, or to every 100th person who participates. And if you have a limited number of prizes available, make sure to say so in your materials. You can also consider hosting a simple contest or drawing for larger prizes; your retail partner may be willing to donate gift certificates or gift cards to the event. It's usually easier to give away "freebies" than more valuable prizes; check with your legal counsel if you a planning a contest, sweepstakes, or raffle, or if you plan to give away a prizes with more than nominal value.

## 5. Engage local partners

Check with other recycling groups in your area who may want to get involved like city governments, schools and clubs, businesses, nonprofits or neighborhood and civic associations. Ask them to help you get the word out on their Facebook pages.

## 6. Promote your event

It's never too early to start promoting your event. Get it on local calendars as early as possible, upload it to your Facebook page, and ask volunteers and partners to put it on their pages too.

Other ideas to get the word out include:

**Email blasts.** Send out the word to your personal and professional networks and local partners. Include a link to your event listing on [americarecyclesday.org](http://americarecyclesday.org)

**Local media.** Issue a press release about your America Recycles Day plastic bag and wrap recycling event, and get listed in local community event calendars on air or in print.

**Social media.** Post a message on your personal and/or organization's Facebook pages and Tweet about where it will be before hand and then again on and throughout the day of the event.

**Leverage other events.** Visit [americarecyclesday.org](http://americarecyclesday.org) to build on other events planned in your community including educational presentations, special collection drives, recycling competitions and more.

**Print advertising.** Customize the ARD public service announcement (PSA) to place in your local newspapers.

**Radio promotions.** Contact your local radio stations about their requirements for local PSAs. Download the America Recycles Day radio PSA script from [americarecyclesday.org/toolkit](http://americarecyclesday.org/toolkit) and customize with your event details.

**Blogs.** See if you can get local bloggers to talk it up.





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## 7. The setup

You'll need:

- Table and chairs for volunteers staffing your event
- Banner or signs you can produce locally
- Handouts and giveaways
- Recycle containers borrowed from a grocer or retailer so that people can deposit their own bags in the recycle bins
- Pledge cards (optional) to encourage people to take the America Recycles Day pledge or set up a laptop with internet access so they can pledge online
- Pens, tape, a black permanent marker and string to set up a banner
- Digital camera to share photos with your volunteers and partners and for your Facebook page

## 8. Success stories

Share your results and photos with KAB.

### Did you know...

Wherever plastic bags are recycled, you can also recycle clean:

Newspaper Bags  
Dry Cleaning Bags  
Bread Bags  
Veggie Bags  
Toilet Paper Wraps  
Napkin Wraps  
Paper Towel Wraps  
Furniture Wrap  
Electronic Wrap  
Plastic Retail Bags  
Grocery Bags  
Food Storage Bags  
Cereal Box Liners  
Tyvek  
Diaper Wrap  
Plastic Shipping Envelopes  
Case Wrap  
Ice Bags  
Bag's labeled #2 or #4



**But, you cannot recycle these at the store: Food or cling wrap, prepackaged food bags like frozen food bags or prewashed salad bags, and wraps with a lot of glue.**