

Public Space Recycling Toolkit

Presented by Keep America Beautiful & The Coca-Cola Foundation



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Public Space Recycling Guide

Planning for Success

1. Recycling must be simple and convenient
 - a. Most people will recycle when presented the opportunity. The key is to remove the two primary barriers that stop them: lack of convenience and confusion over what and how to recycle.
2. Know your waste stream
 - a. Before selecting bins or locations, learn what materials are discarded in the target area. Waste audits or even visual surveys of trash bins help inform what the lid message should say, where to place bins and even what size they should be.
3. Identify recyclables to collect
 - a. The type and how recyclables are collected is different in each community. Before launching your public space recycling program find out from your local recycling hauler/provider what materials they collect and how they need to be prepared, e.g. mixed or separated; glass, metal, or plastic containers, single service plastic containers, etc.
4. Place recycling bins directly next to the trash bins
 - a. Bins located by themselves attract both trash and recycling regardless of the label. Recycling and trash bins must be placed immediately next to each other to capture recyclables without excessive contamination.
5. Use restrictive lids and clear, simple labels and signage
 - a. Small openings reduce contamination. Restrictive lids just large enough for common recyclables (round for containers, narrow slot for paper) force people to slow down and read what the label says.
 - b. Get the essential information across to users in simple terms. Use key words like “Cans & Bottles” or easy to recognize images. Avoid cluttering the label with too much detail.
6. Choose the right bin
 - a. Select the bin and accessories that are best adapted to the setting. Capacity, ergonomic design for servicing, resistance to wear and abuse are just some of the factors to consider. Make the recycling bin visually distinct from trash bins. Blue is the most common color used for recycling.
7. Be consistent
 - a. Pick a uniform bin style, color scheme and label message and stick to it. Coordinate with nearby residential recycling programs and other public settings to standardize bin colors, design and messaging. Familiarity reduces confusion as people move from home to work or just being out and about.
8. Keep bins clean, well maintained, and serviced
 - a. Dirty and dilapidated recycling bins turn people off. The same is true for overflowing or badly contaminated recycling bins. Keep bins in good working order with fresh labels, regular cleaning, and frequent collection.
9. Educational outreach
 - a. Include special signage with the bins. Face-to-face interaction with frequent visitors trains them for the long term. Recruit people who interact with users to be recycling

ambassadors, such as team coaches at athletic fields or attendants at community centers.

10. Be prepared and ready to improve

- a. Pilot your program to learn what works best before investing in the full infrastructure. Monitor the bins and be prepared to make adjustments. Track the quantity and composition of collected material to benchmark and improve the program over time.

BMP Guide on Selecting the Right Bin and Bin Placement

Selecting the Right Bin

There are compelling aesthetic reasons to have recycling and trash bins match each other, but it is also critically important to make sure people can tell them apart with a casual glance. You can strike that balance by choosing bins with common architectural features while using color, additional signage or other modifications to distinguish them.

Use a different color

Whether it is the entire bin or just the lid, make sure the recycling bin is a different color than the trash bin. While there is not a uniform standard in the United States, blue is the most commonly used color used to indicate recycling. Unless there is already a strong identifiable standard already established in your community, blue should be considered the default bin color to reinforce recycling behavior. Ideally, the entire recycling bin will be a different color from the trash bin but just changing the color of the lid has also been shown to work even where the bin colors are identical.

Openings

There is no clear consensus on whether an opening on the side works better to encourage correct usage than an opening on the top that faces up. Convenient access to the bin opening increases the likelihood the bin will be used correctly. Considerations such as the height of the bin, ability to access it from multiple directions, etc., will likely influence their use as much as the placement of the opening. You should be conscious to match the same pattern for both trash and recycling. If the recycling bin has openings on all sides, or on the top, and trash only has it on the front, you risk contamination from people approaching from behind or the side.

Use a special lid or signage

Some bin manufacturers offer special accessories such as dome lids or a cap to block rain and snow from entering top-facing openings, and special sign boards on the backside of the bin with space to add additional messaging. Aside from the direct utility of these accessories, they can also help to distinguish recycling from trash. Other features such as a special band with messaging around the middle of recycling bins can similarly help set them apart from trash.

Clear bins can reduce contamination

Seeing cans and bottles already inside the bin communicates that it is meant for recyclables. Clear bins are especially effective for special event settings. In some cases, an empty bin or one that initially collects contaminants could inadvertently signal it as a trash bin regardless of how

it is labeled. Where possible, consider “seeding” bins with clean recyclables when setting them out and if contaminated with non-recyclables, immediately remove the nonrecyclable items and consider relocating the bin to another location at the event.

Bin Shape

To select the right bin, you must evaluate required capacity, usage, and aesthetic concerns. A square receptacle typically can hold more waste than a round one. Square receptacles also have the advantage of creating recycling stations since the bins fit snugly and easily side-by-side. An advantage to the round shape is their ease of servicing since round bins don't have corners that may snag on garbage bags when being changed.

Bin Placement

Trash and recycling bins are first and foremost “waste bins” in people's minds. If there is only one bin in front of them, they are likely to use it regardless of what they're discarding or whether it is labeled “Trash” or “Recycling.” The distinction only applies for most people when both options are presented side by side. With that in mind “twin the bin” by following the guidelines below:

Pair bins together in all locations

Placing recycling bins next to trash bins at every location addresses the convenience factor and helps reinforce the message that recycling is a full-time activity. There are common sense exceptions but for locations that warrant recycling at all, it is best to provide both a trash and recycling bin side-by-side throughout the area.

Place bins directly next to each other

There are exceptions, but in most circumstances, it is important to have recycling and trash immediately next to each other. Most people will use the first bin they come across regardless of how it is labeled, even if it is separated by only a couple feet or placed on opposite ends of a park bench. The further apart they are, the greater the risk of cross-contamination you're likely to experience. Where bins must be separated, it can help reduce contamination by increasing the visual contrast between bins – bigger signage, make the entire bin blue instead of just the lid, etc., so that the distinction is obvious from a far distance as people approach the bins.

Communications

Grantee Model Press Releases

Announcement



[Your Logo]

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Your Organization] Receives Keep America Beautiful/Coca-Cola Public Spaces Recycling Bin Grant

More than 30 Organizations Receive Grants through The Coca-Cola Foundation to Improve Foundation for Public Space Recycling Collection Infrastructure

[CITY, State (Date, 2019)] – National nonprofit Keep America Beautiful® and The Coca-Cola Foundation today announced [your organization] is a recipient of their 2018-2019 Coca-Cola Public Spaces Recycling Bin Grant Program in a combined effort to improve recycling collection in public space locations throughout [your town/city/county].

[Details of your organization's grant program, including how many bins you'll place, where you'll place them, etc.]

["Quote," said local organization representative.]

The 2018-2019 program is distributing public space recycling bins to 31 organizations, including Keep America Beautiful community-based affiliates as well as government agencies, colleges and universities, and Native American tribal locations in 19 states.

For the past 13 years, The Coca-Cola Foundation has supported the program, which has donated recycling bins to more than 1,000 communities in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Over the history of the program, more than 37,000 public space recycling bins have

been awarded, providing opportunities for recycling on the go to more than 2 million people daily.

“This grant program has greatly expanded recycling opportunities in public spaces thanks to the significant commitment of The Coca-Cola Company to maximize public access to bins,” said Randy Hartmann, senior director of affiliate operations for Keep America Beautiful. “With over a third of all beverage containers consumed in the U.S. consumed on the go, we know the barriers to capture more containers in public spaces is relatively easy if we provide greater accessibility and convenience.”

Grant recipients were chosen by Keep America Beautiful based on their potential to collect the most cans and bottles as well other considerations such as creating new or expanding access to recycling in a community; providing greater numbers of people with exposure or access to collection bins; providing access in environmentally sensitive areas, e.g. along waterways; and the long-term potential of the public space recycling efforts to increase recycling participation in a community. A full list of the 2018-2019 Coca-Cola Public Space Recycling Bin Grant recipients is available at bingrant.org.

OLD QUOTE/COPY FOR COCA-COLA TO UPDATE

“Community recycling is one of the key ways The Coca-Cola Foundation is helping communities address litter and support the environment. In partnership with Keep America Beautiful, we can help communities reduce litter by offering grants for recycling bins in parks, recreation areas, campuses and city streets,” said Helen Smith Price, President of The Coca-Cola Foundation.

In addition to the Foundation’s support, earlier this year, The Coca-Cola Company announced a global goal to collect and recycle the equivalent of 100 percent of the bottles and cans it places in the market by 2030. To accomplish this goal, Coca-Cola and its bottling partners, are working to make better bottles with more recycled and renewable content, collaborating with industry peers, community organizations and customers to help ensure that communities have access to curbside and public space recycling, and supporting waterway clean ups to ensure that its packaging does not end up where it does not belong.

About The Coca-Cola Company

The Coca-Cola Company (NYSE: KO) is the world’s largest total beverage company, offering over 500 brands to people in more than 200 countries. Of our 21 billion-dollar brands, 19 are available in lower- and no-sugar options to help people everywhere more easily control added sugar. In addition to our namesake Coca-Cola drinks, some of our household names around the world include: AdeS soy-based beverages, Ayataka green tea, Dasani waters, Del Valle juices and nectars, Fanta, Georgia coffee, Gold Peak teas and coffees, Honest Tea, Minute Maid juices, Powerade sports drinks, Simply juices, smartwater, Sprite, vitaminwater and Zico coconut water. At Coca-Cola, we’re serious about making positive contributions to our world. That starts with reducing sugar in our drinks and bringing new and different drinks to people everywhere. It also means continuously working to reduce our environmental impact, creating rewarding careers for our associates, and bringing economic opportunity wherever we operate. In fact, together with our bottling partners, we employ more than 700,000 people around the world. For more information, visit our digital magazine Coca-Cola Journey at www.coca-

colacompany.com and follow The Coca-Cola Company on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About [your organization]

[Your organization's boilerplate.]

About Keep America Beautiful

Keep America Beautiful, the nation's leading community improvement nonprofit organization, inspires and educates people to take action every day to improve and beautify their community environment. Established in 1953, Keep America Beautiful strives to End Littering, Improve Recycling and Beautify America's Communities. We believe everyone has a right to live in a clean, green and beautiful community, and shares a responsibility to contribute to that vision.

Behavior change – steeped in education, research and behavioral science – is the cornerstone of Keep America Beautiful. We empower generations of community and environmental stewards with volunteer programs, hands-on experiences, educational curricula, practical advice and other resources. The organization is driven by the work and passion of more than 600 Keep America Beautiful affiliates, millions of volunteers, and the collaborative support of corporate partners, social and civic service organizations, academia, municipalities, elected officials, and individuals. Join us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#). Donate and take action at [kab.org](#).

###

Social Media

There is a lot of competition for people's attention across social media and with ever-changing algorithms, it is vital to publish posts that combine quality content and creative copy. The following guidelines can help build a strong and engaging presence across platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

How to Use Social Media

First impressions

Images have the power to make a lasting impression on your audience, especially in today's short-attention world. Avoid posting too many pictures with text overlay. Images with a similar look and feel can help build your identity. This also ensures that your message is consistent across your different platforms. Include high-quality images featuring people in action – for example, placing a water bottle in the correct bin.

Define tone

Every time you post on social – in addition to your website, newsletter or blog – you showcase your brand voice. When your brand voice is used through the right channel, you increase your influence. It is also important to determine your brand voice and use consistent tone when replying to comments and messages. Showcase your passion for your mission, while using a professional but approachable tone to convey your thought leadership. Communicating data points is also key to demonstrating making impact. For example, include a statistic of how many recyclables have been collected.

Timing

Monitor when you have the highest activity. It is recommended to consider the following: know your audience and use the same content to test different times

1. Facebook
 - a. Between 12 p.m. and 3 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.
 - b. Despite lower engagement on the weekends, the optimal time to post on Saturdays and Sundays is from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.
2. Twitter:
 - a. 3 p.m. Monday to Friday.
3. LinkedIn
 - a. 7:45 a.m., 10:45 a.m., 12:45 p.m., and 5:45 p.m. Monday to Thursday.
4. Instagram
 - a. 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. Monday to Friday.

How to Use Social Media to Message Where and How to Recycle in Your Public Space

Announce bin installations

These announcements can assist in generating public enthusiasm and generate engagement in recycling in public spaces.

Before – announce the bins were granted to help increase public space recycling in the community. This can help people get excited about the bins coming to their parks, beaches, trails, etc.

During – share pictures and location information as the bins are being placed.

After – monitor if people are using the bins, ask people for testimonials and share pictures of people recycling in the bins.

Polls

Prompt people to answer a question by using the poll features on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram stories to collect answers or information on your audience. For example, you can ask a question about how often they recycle in public spaces which can provide insight into community behaviors and opinions. This can also provide initial insight when deciding bin locations.

Share results

Statistics are a great way to help tell a community's story. Data can help show growth in recycling behavior over time, which can be a beneficial tool in encouraging the community to increase and improve their own behavior. Other metrics can include items most likely to be recycled.

Behavior change

Education is key to successful behavior change and lasting impact. Social media can be used to share information regarding what can and cannot go in the recycling bin. Information can also be shared about what to do when a bin is full, or if someone cannot locate a public space recycling bin. Education can help improve recycling, in turn reducing contamination in the bin and less litter on the ground and in waterways.

How to Create a Community Discussion about Public Space Recycling

Work together

Encourage city officials and government, local businesses and organizations and neighbors to share their experiences with public space recycling. Engage with these posts and comment when relevant. This can get more people involved in spreading the word on the bins, as well as how to dispose of items properly.

Go live

Record a live video on Facebook or Instagram during a bin installation in a public space to show people where it is and what can be recycling in the bin. During the live video, you can ask questions to the audience and answer them on the spot. This can create and encourage a community dialogue.

Sample Social Posts

The Coca-Cola Company and Keep America Beautiful are working together to address one of the primary barriers to recycling in public spaces by making access to recycling bins more readily available and convenient in public spaces through the Coca-Cola/Keep America Beautiful Public Space Recycling Bin Grant Program. The awarded recycling bins are made possible through a grant from The Coca-Cola Foundation, the philanthropic arm of The Coca-Cola Company.

Please use our ongoing social media hashtag, #BeRecycled, to share the where and what you recycle in the public space bins to help us create awareness on the importance of public space recycling. You can create your own posts or use some of our sample posts below for easy sharing. When sharing, include a picture of your public space recycling bins.

1. Recycling starts with you! Recycling bins are now available to the public in [INSERT LOCATION] to help increase public space recycling. Thanks to Keep America Beautiful (@KeepAmericaBeautiful on Facebook and Instagram, @kabtweet on Twitter) and X for their generous support! #BeRecycled
2. [INSERT MATERIALS – plastic water bottles, aluminum cans, glass bottles, etc.] can now be recycled at home AND on-the-go! Recycling bins are now available to the public in [INSERT LOCATION]. #BeRecycled
3. Recycling contamination happens when trash gets mixed with recyclable items. When there are too many contaminants, everything in the bin get sent to a landfill. Do your part to dispose of items properly at on-the-go. There are new recycling bins located in [INSERT LOCAITON] available to the public! #BeRecycled

Promoting Recycling at Special Events

Sample Messaging for Collection Bins

Signage matters. Research states people are more likely to correctly sort items specifically listed on bin signs. Labels with words and no images showed the strongest results. (Refer to appendix)

Appendix

The following is included in the appendix (in order):

Special Event Clear Stream Signage

Tale of Two Landfills Table Tent

Table Tent Folding Instructions

Tale of Two Landfills Tabloid Size Poster

Tale of Two Landfills Letter Size Poster

Tale of Two Landfills Accordion Fold Bookmark

Bookmark Folding Instructions