

Effective Education Strategies for Proper Recycling

Cindy Jolicoeur & Anna DeMers, C+C



The Situation

- Simply put, recycling “right” can be confusing
- Experiencing all-time high contamination rates between 14 to 40 percent
- Due to contamination, China has banned import of mixed paper and mixed bales of #3-7 plastics cutting off the key market for these materials
- Municipalities are having to try and find alternate international markets or further process materials for domestic markets

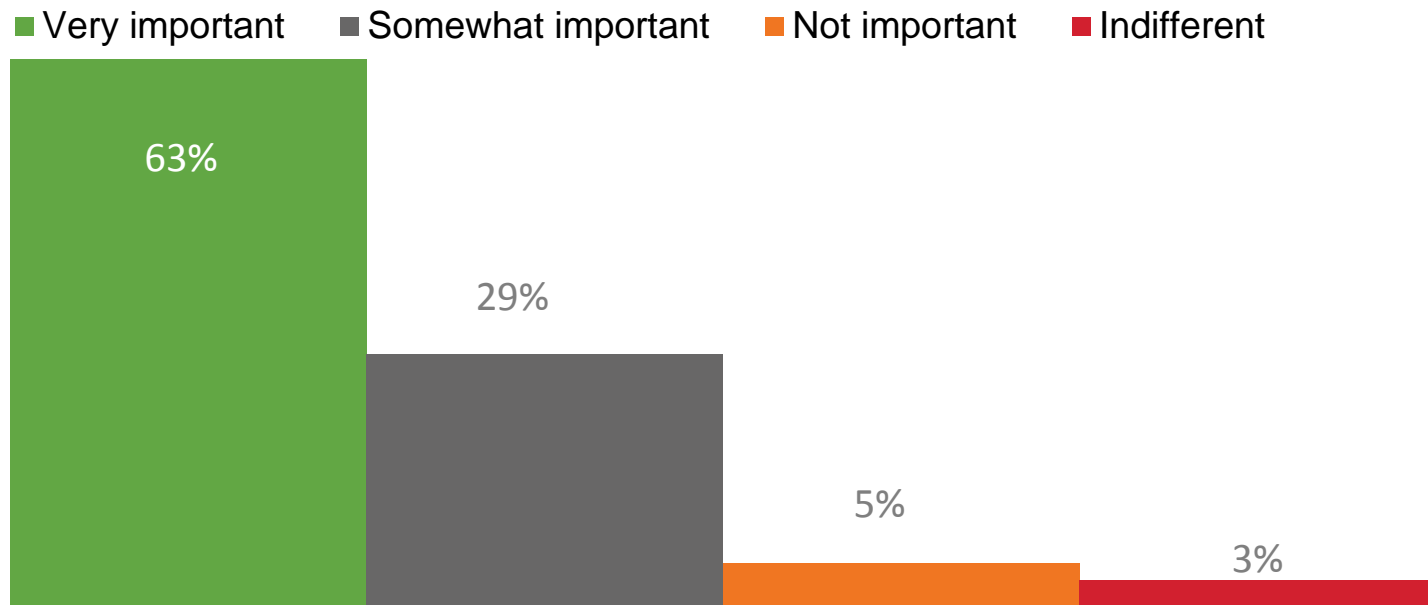


The background features a large, light blue letter 'C' on the left side. To its right, there are several concentric, semi-circular arcs of varying lengths, also in a light blue shade, creating a sense of motion or a signal wave.

RECYCLING DATA

Recycling is Important to Most Americans

How important is it to you to recycle?

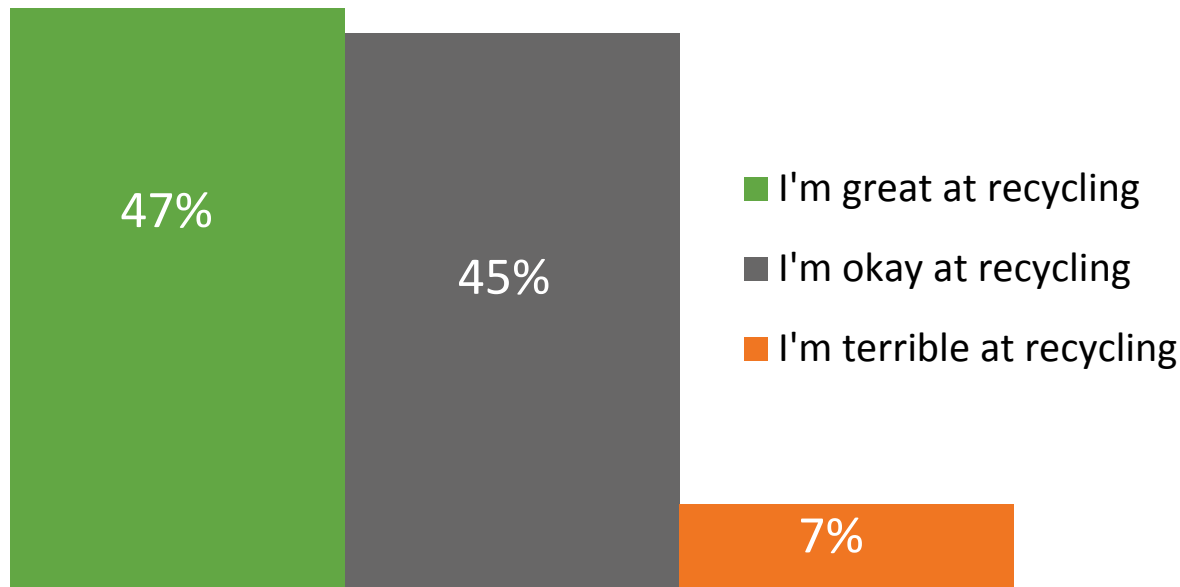


- Residents with higher incomes and education and those with kids at home consider recycling of greater importance



Most Consider Themselves Good Recyclers

What kind of recycler are you?



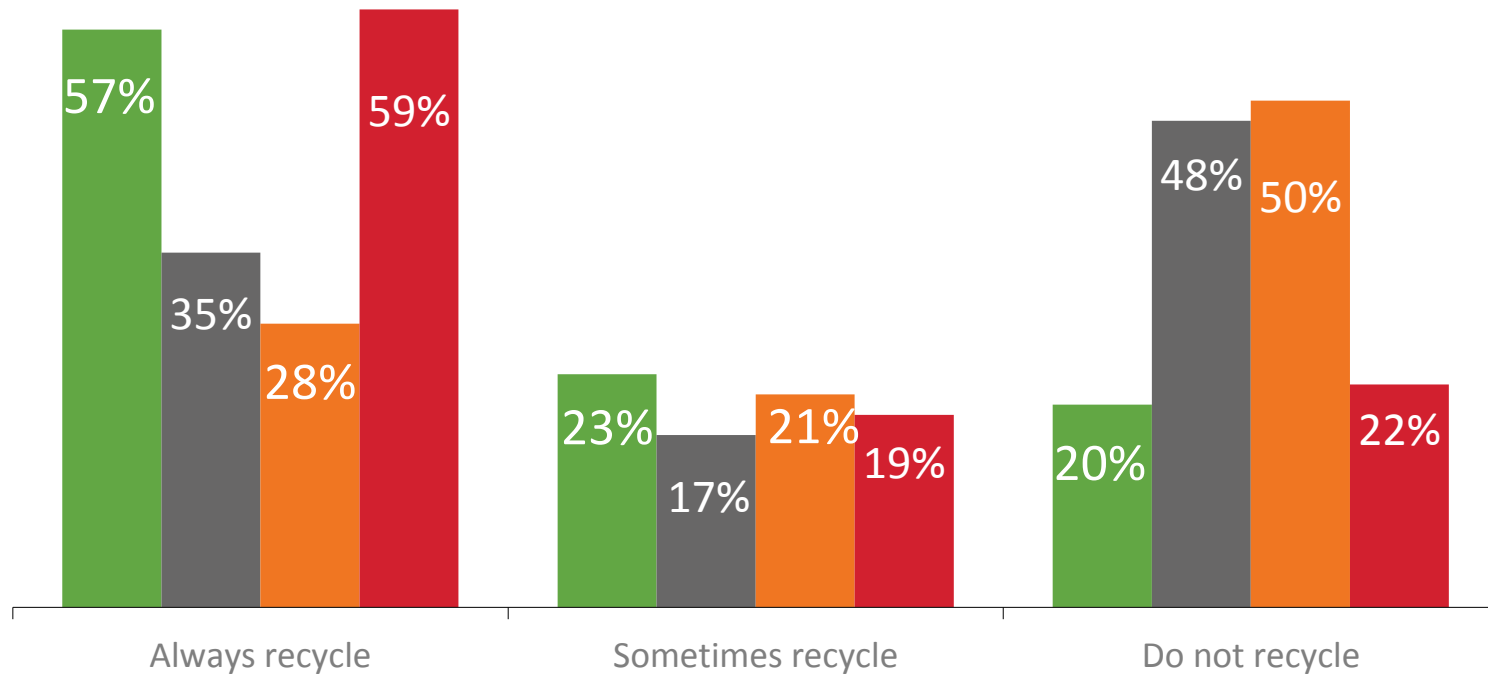
- In fact, of those who say recycling is important, 92% consider themselves great, while those who rate recycling somewhat important see room for improvement



But There is Lots of Room for Improvement

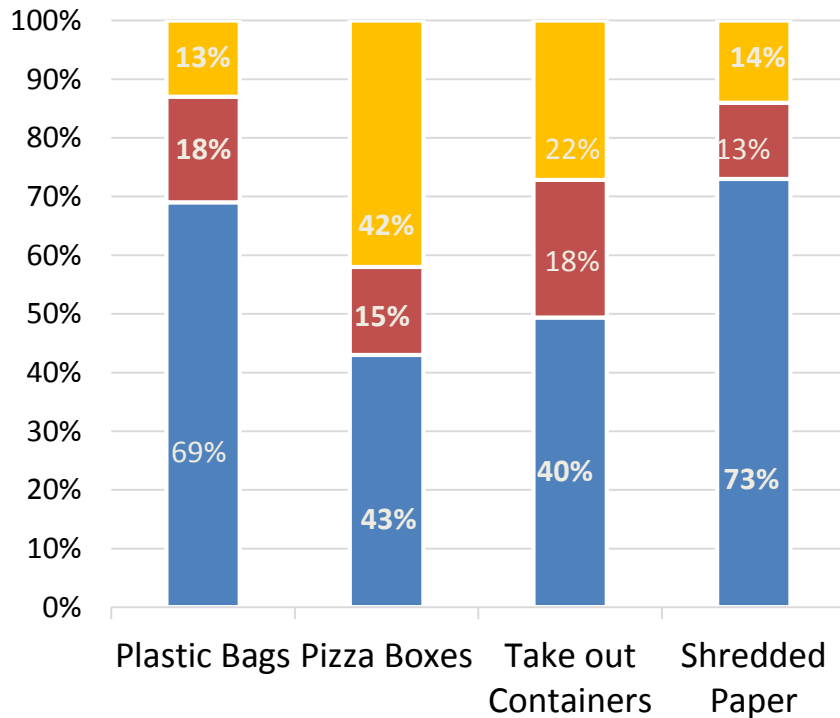
How often, if ever, do you recycle each of the following items?

■ Plastic bags ■ Greasy pizza boxes ■ Take-out containers ■ Shredded paper

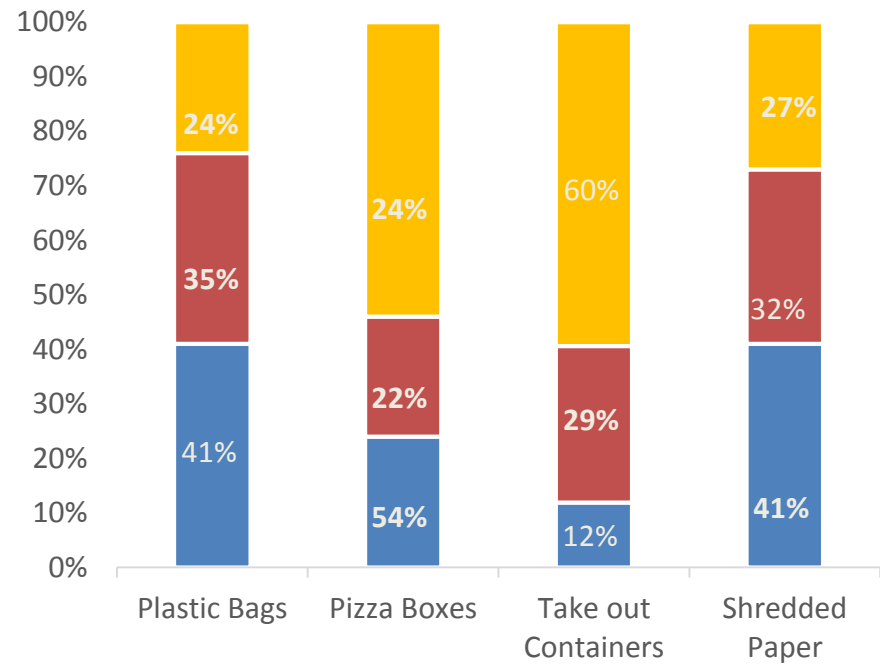


And Even the Best Recyclers Need Help

Recycling is Very Important



Recycling is Somewhat Important

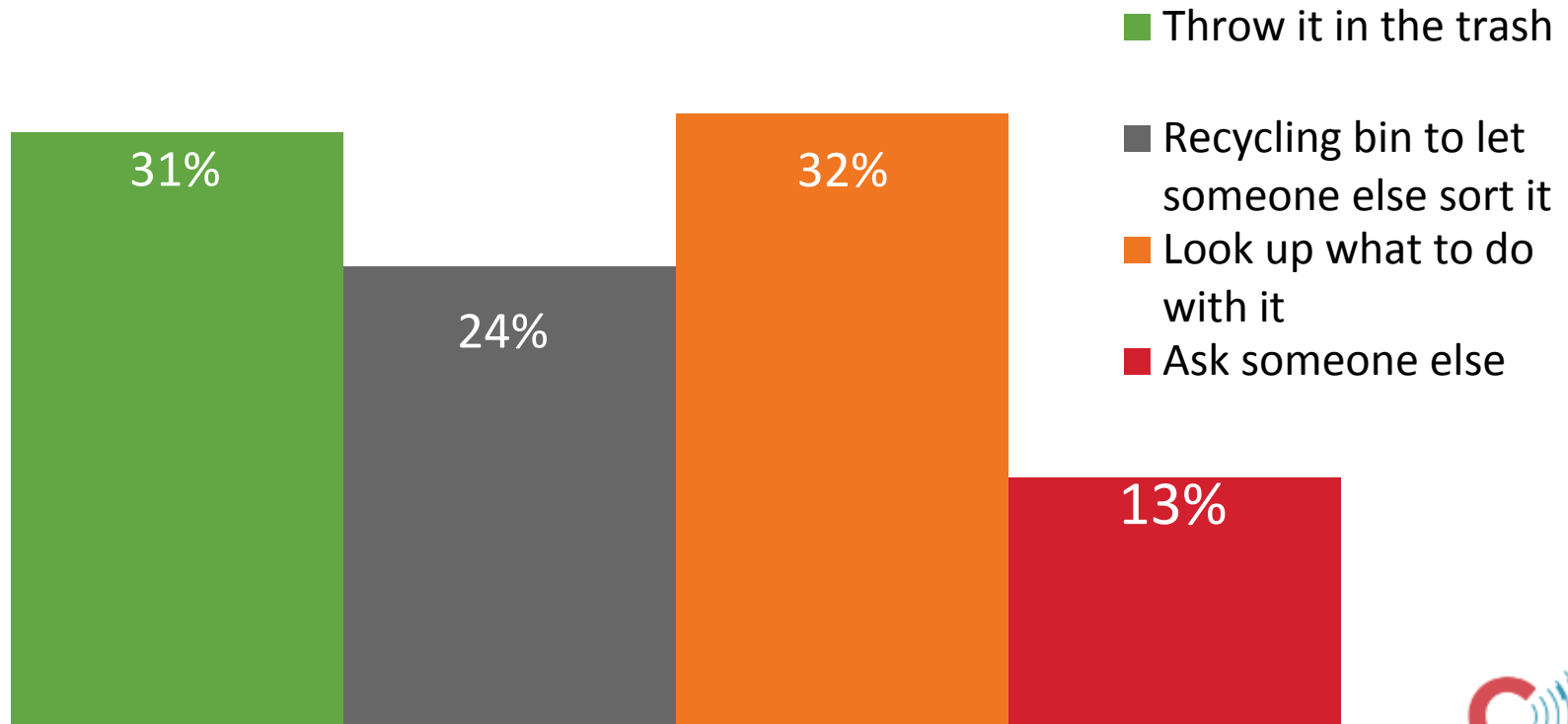


■ Always ■ Sometimes ■ Never



And Residents are Looking for Direction

When in doubt, what do you do with an item ready to be disposed?



The background features a large, light blue letter 'C' on the left side. To its right, there are several concentric, semi-circular arcs of varying lengths, also in a light blue shade, creating a sense of motion or a signal emanating from the center.

GETTING THE MESSAGE OUT

Where do they look for info?

Consumers increasingly rely upon websites for answers to their recycling questions:

- 54% respondents rely on their city, county or recycling company's website as the first or second choice source
- 52% respondents rely on Internet searches
- 36% percent of Americans say that they either seek out or are provided with recycling information from their local government.

And yet... a recent Recycling Partnership study found less than 41% of communities studied had recycling information on city websites



Opportunities

- Provide clear and simple instruction
- Provide easy access to information
 - Meet consumers where they are
 - Online
 - Front and center on the respective program's page
 - Search engine marketing/optimization
 - Use name of community and 'recycling' as the keywords
 - At the trash bin
 - Community events
 - Social content/advertising
 - Consider innovative ways to educate children
 - School content
 - Educational events



But...

- People see/hear 2,000-3,000 messages per day
- You only have 3-5 seconds to catch their attention

So...

- Keep it SIMPLE!
- Focus on what matters



The background is a solid red color. On the left side, there is a large, faint, semi-transparent letter 'C'. To the right of the 'C', there are several concentric, semi-transparent arcs that resemble a stylized signal or a series of expanding waves, moving towards the right edge of the frame.

CASE STUDIES

The image features a large, faint recycling symbol (a triangle of arrows) in the background. To the right of the text, there are several concentric, curved lines that resemble a stylized globe or a series of ripples. The text is centered and reads:

**RECYCLE OFTEN.
RECYCLE RIGHT.SM**

The Program: What is Recycle Often. Recycle Right?



Emphasize education:

- Act as a base for behavior change
- Set groundwork for feedback activities
- Focus on accepted items that are (almost) nationally universal
- Increase recycling of basic materials with value/markets
- Address contamination that causes the most issues



Recycle all my empty bottles, cans and paper.



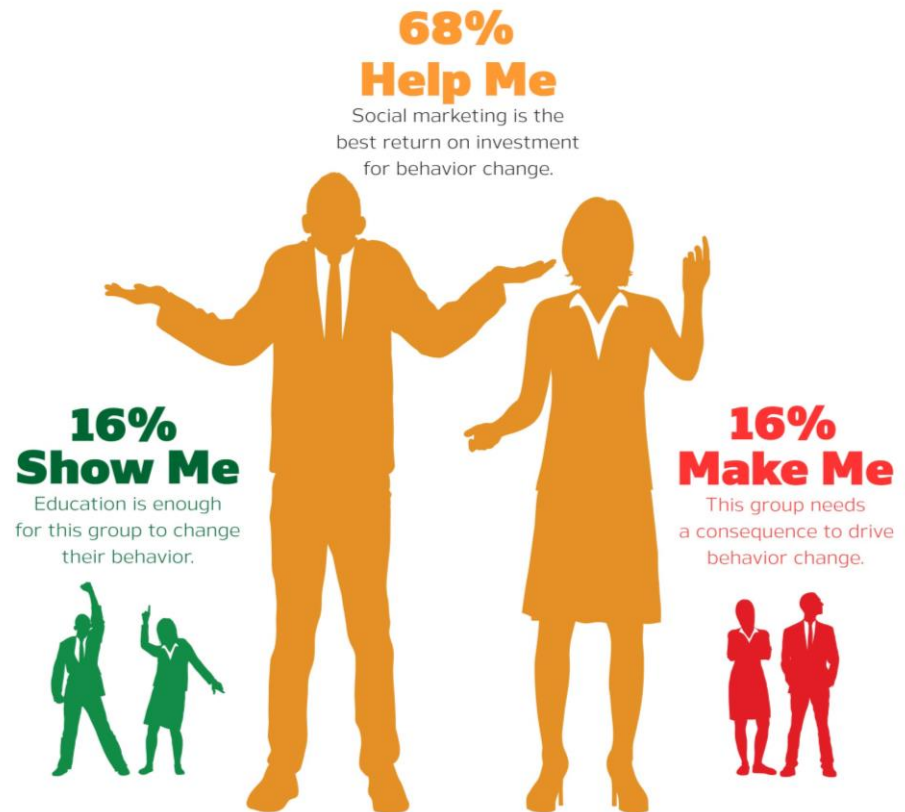
Keep food and liquids out of my recycling.



Keep loose plastic bags out of my recycling.

Getting Back to the Basics of Recycling

- For the “Show Me” Segment
 - Use consistent basic recycling education tools
- For the “Help Me” Segment
 - Keep it simple
 - Focus on barriers and benefits
 - Tell people why
 - Ask for a commitment
 - Remind and prompt
- For the “Make Me” Segment
 - Use feedback levers to change behavior



The Goal: Feedback at the Cart

- **Design cart tags to emphasize recycling right** at home
 - Target the recycling myths: When in doubt, more than 24 percent of consumers put an item in the recycling bin anyway.
- **Decrease contamination**
 - Maintain behavior; form new recycling habits



Desired Behaviors

Focus on these three steps..

Let's get back to
the basics of recycling.

**Remember these three rules
each time you recycle:**



Recycle all my empty
bottles, cans and paper.



Keep food and liquids
out of my recycling.



Keep loose plastic bags
out of my recycling.

And improve your recycling rates and decrease
contamination....

Pilot Location



- WM identified a city about 35 miles outside of Chicago that was seeing high volumes of contamination
- City has support from key stakeholders to support a pilot to target contamination
- Population: almost 50% Hispanic
- Identified routes to test cart tagging

Strategy

Educate

Tag

Track

The background features a large, light blue, stylized letter 'C' on the left side. To the right of the 'C', there are several concentric, semi-circular arcs of varying lengths, also in a light blue shade, creating a ripple or wave effect that extends towards the right edge of the image.

EDUCATE

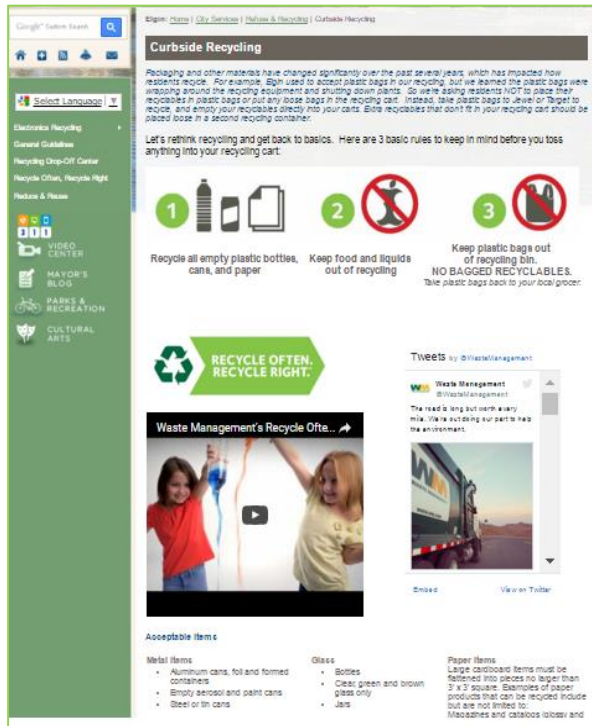
Mailer



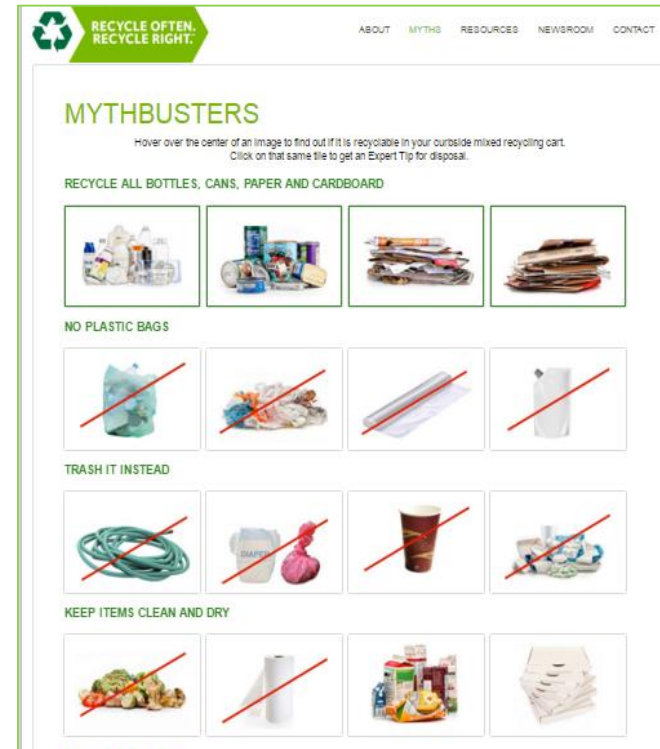
Initial mailer sent to
routes to notify tagging



Online Education



Recycle Often. Recycle Right. messaging on city website



Recycle Often. Recycle Right. Myth Page

Social Media Outreach



Videos on social media



Facebook ads within
city's zip codes

The background features a large, light blue stylized letter 'C' on the left side. To its right, there are several concentric, semi-circular arcs of varying lengths, also in a light blue shade, creating a ripple or signal effect. The entire design is set against a solid medium blue background.

TAG & TRACK

Positive and Negative Tags

- Important to reinforce good recycling habits
- Census data showed high Hispanic population – tags were transcreated from English to Spanish



Thanks for doing a great job recycling!
¡Gracias por hacer un excelente trabajo con el reciclaje!

Your recycling looks great and your actions are going a long way towards turning all of our waste into a resource for a brighter, more sustainable future.

Su reciclaje se ve excelente y sus acciones ayudan a convertir todos estos desechos en recursos para un futuro más brillante y sostenible.

Your Waste Management Driver
Su conductor de Waste Management

Customer Service
Servicio al Cliente 661-947-7197

WM
WASTE MANAGEMENT

THINK GREEN®



Your recycling has garbage in it.
Hay basura en su reciclaje.

We found one or more of the following items:
Encontramos uno o más de los siguientes artículos:

- ☐ Recyclables bagged in plastic bags
Artículos reciclables en bolsas de plástico
- ☐ Dirty/wet items (like food and liquids left in your recycling)
Artículos mojados y/o sucios (no deje alimentos o líquidos en sus artículos reciclables)
- ☐ Non-recyclable items (like garden hoses or propane tanks)
Artículos no reciclables (como mangueras de jardín o tanques de gas propano)
- ☐ Other Otro: _____

When in doubt, leave it out.
Si tiene alguna duda, déjelo afuera.

Your Waste Management Driver • Su conductor de Waste Management

☐ As a courtesy, we picked up your recycling. Please keep garbage out to avoid service interruptions or penalties.
Como cortesía, recolectamos su reciclaje. Por favor mantenga la basura fuera para prevenir interrupciones de servicio o penalizaciones en el futuro.

☐ We had to leave your recycling behind. Please sort out the garbage and we'll try again on your next service day.
No pudimos recolectar su reciclaje. Por favor seque la basura y tratemos de nuevo el próximo día de servicio.

Customer Service
Servicio al Cliente 661-947-7197

ADDRESS DIRECCIÓN _____

DRIVER CONDUCTOR _____

ROUTE # NO. DE RUTA _____ DATE FECHA _____



Evolution of the tag

1

3

2



Today's recycling grade:



Your actions are going a long way towards turning all of our waste into a resource for a brighter, more sustainable future.

To expand your recycling chops, visit RecycleOftenRecycleRight.com.

Thanks for recycling and keep up the good work!


THINK GREEN!



Today's recycling grade:



It's time to rethink recycling.

We found some problem items in your recycling cart:

- ☐ Recyclables bagged in plastic bags
- ☐ Loose plastic bags
- ☐ Soggy items (like soda left in the can)
- ☐ Dirty items (like peanut butter jars)
- ☐ Non-recyclable items (like garden hoses)
- ☐ Other: _____

When in doubt, leave it out.

ADDRESS _____
 DRIVER _____

ROUTE # _____

1

2

3

4

5

6



Today's recycling grade:




Recycle Often. Recycle Right.SM
ALL STAR

Your actions are going a long way towards turning all of our waste into a resource for a brighter, more sustainable future.

To expand your recycling chops, visit RecycleOftenRecycleRight.com.

Thanks for recycling and keep up the good work!


THINK GREEN!



Today's recycling grade:


Needs Improvement

It's time to rethink recycling.

We found some problem items in your recycling cart:

- ☐ Recyclables bagged in plastic bags
- ☐ Loose plastic bags
- ☐ Glass
- ☐ Soggy items (like soda left in the can)
- ☐ Dirty items (like peanut butter jars)
- ☐ Non-recyclable items (like garden hoses)
- ☐ Other: _____

Recycling "right" can be confusing. But when the above items end up in your recycling, they can turn the entire load into trash.
So when in doubt, leave it out.


THINK GREEN!





Thanks for doing a great job recycling!

¡Gracias por hacer un excelente trabajo con el reciclaje!

Your recycling looks great and your actions are going a long way towards turning all of our waste into a resource for a brighter, more sustainable future.

Su reciclaje se ve excelente y sus acciones ayudan a convertir todos estos desechos en recursos para un futuro más brillante y sostenible.

Your Waste Management Driver
 Su conductor de Waste Management

Customer Service
 Servicio al Cliente **661-947-7197**


THINK GREEN!





Your recycling has garbage in it.
Hay basura en su reciclaje.

We found one or more of the following items:
Encontramos uno o más de los siguientes artículos:

- ☐ Recyclables bagged in plastic bags
Artículos reciclables en bolsas de plástico
- ☐ Dirty/wet items (like food and liquids left in your recycling)
Artículos mojados y/o sucios (no deje alimentos o líquidos en sus artículos reciclables)
- ☐ Non-recyclable items (like garden hoses or propane tanks)
Artículos no reciclables (como mangueras de jardín o tanques de gas propano)
- ☐ Other: _____

*When in doubt, leave it out.
Si tiene alguna duda, déjelo afuera.*

Your Waste Management Driver - Su conductor de Waste Management

Customer Service
 Servicio al Cliente **661-947-7197**

ADDRESS DIRECCIÓN _____
 DRIVER CONDUCTOR _____
 ROUTE # NO. DE RUTA _____

DATE FECHA _____

Execute & Track



1.

DRIVERS TAG

Drivers used tags along their routes and identified problem carts using their cameras on the trucks and opened carts

2.

SOCIAL NORMING

Green tags indicate residents doing a good job and influence others to do the same

3.

IDENTIFY REPEAT OFFENDERS

Data shared with city allows conversations re: next-level consequences for the Make Me Group

Maintaining Behavior Change

EDUCATE, EDUCATE, EDUCATE

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate! Refresh content, create new community events, and continued to maximize social media

CELEBRATE SUCCESS!

Share results with all stakeholders – internal and external. Energize the team, get their insights and feedback – reducing contamination takes a village!



Recycle all my empty bottles, cans, and paper.



Keep foods and liquids out of my recycling.



Keep plastic bags out of my recycling.

The background features a large, light blue stylized letter 'C' on the left. To its right are several concentric, semi-circular arcs of varying lengths, also in a light blue shade, creating a sense of depth or a stylized 'E' shape.

RESULTS

Behavior Change Results



Results

Contamination reduction rates ranging between 20 - 40%!



Teamwork

Drivers, Route Managers, Dispatch, and more worked together -7,000 carts tagged



Education

Direct outreach to 15K HH by year end with RORR newsletter and poster in English and Spanish!



Communication

Key city stakeholders, website, social media helped to share the educational messages

The background features a large, light blue stylized letter 'C' on the left side. To its right, there are several concentric, curved lines that resemble a stylized globe or a series of ripples, also in a light blue shade. The entire design is set against a solid medium blue background.

WASTE MANAGEMENT ORGANICS

Waste Management Organics Task

60% of all waste sent to the landfill contains food scraps, yard debris and food-soiled paper

All of these materials are compostable and can easily be diverted from the landfill but the industry is seeing a lot of contamination.

Goal: shed light on the impact of non-organic contamination like plastic.



Keep Compost O'Natural!

Produce Sticker Trading Card was developed to educate customers on a main source of contamination found in compost, plastic stickers on produce.

Customers were prompted to fill up their card with produce stickers and then redeem it for a free bag of compost at the Cedar Grove landscape yards.



Keep Compost O'Natural!

3.6% response rate

1,600 cards redeemed by December 31, 2014

Many customers filled up the Trading Card that was mailed to them and then continued to put their stickers on cards they created





C+C | ALL ABOUT THE GOOD

Cindy Jolicoeur & Anna DeMers

cjolicoeur@cplusc.com ademers@cplusc.com