

THE
COURIER-NEWS

SECTIONS



ADVERTISEMENT

ELGIN COURIER-NEWS

SUBURBS

Pilot recycling program expands to more Elgin neighborhoods

By GLORIA CASAS

ELGIN COURIER-NEWS | AUG 19, 2016



FEEDBACK



Subscribers, get Chicago's top newsletter

Sign up for Daywatch

A Waste Management truck picks up garbage and recycling items recently on Spring Street. The company and the city of Elgin are expanding a pilot program to reeducate residents about recycling. (Gloria Casas. / The Courier-News)

Waste Management wants to teach Elginites a simple lesson about recycling:
"Recycle Often. Recycle Right."

If you don't, your recycling bin could get red-tagged.

ADVERTISING



Replay

FEEDBACK

The pilot program known as "Recycle Often. Recycle Right.", or RORR, was created by the city's waste contractor to help communities educate residents and address a growing problem with "contamination" in recycling bins, company officials said.

"The RORR campaign was developed to simplify and decrease confusion about what is and isn't recyclable in curbside recycling programs," said Lisa Disbrow, Waste Management spokeswoman. The goal of the program is to improve recycling and decrease contamination, she said.

Subscribers, get Chicago's top newsletter

Sign up for Daywatch

Recycling right can be confusing, Disbrow said. About 26 percent of people recycle items despite being unsure if they are recyclable, she said. "It's no surprise that 16 percent of loads are contaminated," she said. Contamination includes liquids left in bottles, plastic bags and food left in take-out boxes, according to a letter the company sent to residents whose neighborhoods are being added to the pilot program.

[\[Most read\] Remembering the Standard Club, which lived large, then passed quietly »](#)

Waste Management launched the pilot program in Elgin at the beginning of the year and recently added more routes, Disbrow said. More neighborhoods will be added as the program progresses, she said. Elgin was chosen because city officials and residents are "forward-thinking, they care about recycling and want to do it right," she said. "The program directly supports the city's sustainability goals, and the city has been an excellent partner in this pilot."

FEEDBACK

Subscribers, get Chicago's top newsletter

Sign up for Daywatch



A Waste Management truck picks up garbage and recycling items recently on Spring Street. The company and the city of Elgin are expanding a pilot program to reeducate residents about recycling. (Gloria Casas / The Courier-News)

Elgin is one of two cities in the country in the pilot program, and bringing it to the city has been a collaborative effort, said Molly Center, a multimedia communications specialist and a liaison to the city's Sustainability Commission.

"We are really on board with it," Center said. "We are trying to promote better recycling practices not just in Elgin but outside the area because the recycling industry has changed so much in a few years."

FEEDBACK

Eight years ago, the city passed out magnets with information about what can be recycled, but that list has changed, she said. For example, plastic bags are no longer acceptable in recycling bins, she said. Food containers, like Styrofoam cups, are also not allowed in recycling bins, she said. Even if the container has a recycling symbol, it doesn't necessarily mean it is recyclable, Center said.

Bottles and cans cannot have any food or liquid in them. she said. Pizza boxes are

having food, liquid or grease on it is that it contaminates other items, she said.

[\[Most read\] Five reputed gang members charged in RICO conspiracy that includes brazen fatal shooting of Chicago rapper FBG Duck »](#)

"It spoils the load, and the entire load of recycling ends up in the trash," Center said. "We don't want that to happen. We want to recycle as much as we can. We want to encourage the public on the proper method."

The program's website features simplified rules: Recycle bottles, cans and paper; keep out food and liquid; and don't put plastic bags in recycling bins.

"We are trying to reinforce those three basic guidelines of recycling. If you follow those three rules, everything in your cart should have no issue," Center said.

If residents don't follow those rules, their bin will be red-tagged.

"It's more of an awareness thing. If you get a red tag, hopefully you have the chance to change your behavior," Center said. "The theory is the more educated you are about recycling, the more you will change your behavior."

[\[Most read\] Defy city vaccine deadline, Chicago police union boss tells officers. Mayor responds to threat of FOP lawsuit: 'Bring it' »](#)

FEEDBACK

A green tag means residents are doing a great job recycling, she said.

"It's been a very positive thing so far," Center said. "The first week a lot of people would get a red tag and the next week it (the number of red tags) was significantly less."

The red tag component has not deterred people from recycling, Disbrow said.

"We have not experienced any decline at all in participation in the recycling

Subscribers, get Chicago's top newsletter

Sign up for Daywatch

engagement with Elgin residents wanting to learn more about recycling and recycling the right materials."

Gloria Casas is a freelance reporter for The Courier-News.

Which Travel Card Can Earn You Points Towards Your Dream Getaway?

NerdWallet | Sponsored

No Offense, But These 2 Big Retailers Aren't The Cheapest Places To Shop

MoneyWise.com | Sponsorizzato

Dr. Kellyann: "Weight Loss After 50 Comes Down To This One Thing"

Dr. Kellyann | Sponsorizzato

15 Most Gorgeous Mountain Towns in America

Thrillist | Sponsored

Elgin: Startup Is Changing the Way People Retire

SmartAsset | Sponsorizzato

Pierce Brosnan's Wife Lost 120 Pounds - This Is Her Now

Noteably | Sponsorizzato

Dr. Kellyann: Weight Loss After 50 Comes Down To This One Thing

Dr. Kellyann | Sponsored

Chicago White Sox reliever Mike Wright Jr. is suspended for 3 games manager

[Subscribers, get Chicago's top newsletter](#)

[Sign up for Daywatch](#)

intentionally throwing at Los Angeles Angels designated hitter Shohei Ohtani, Major League ...

Chicago Tribune

Ex-wife of Chicago Bulls great Michael Jordan sells River North mansion for \$4.5M

The mansion has six full bathrooms, three half-bathrooms, four fireplaces and a five-stop elevator.

Chicago Tribune

What Are the Best Travel Credit Cards of 2021? Find Out.

NerdWallet | Sponsored

Netflix Cancels Another Round Of Great Shows

MoneyPail | Sponsorizzato

Top 50 schools according to World University Rankings Report

Forbes | Sponsorizzato

Defy city vaccine deadline, Chicago police union boss tells officers. Mayor responds to threat of FOP lawsuit: 'Bring it'

Chicago Tribune

Five reputed gang members charged in RICO conspiracy that includes slaying of Chicago rapper FBG Duck

Chicago Tribune

25 Best Small Lake Towns in the U.S.

Far & Wide | Sponsored

Subscribers, get Chicago's top newsletter

Sign up for Daywatch

Skip the Hassle - Upgrade to the World's Smartest CPAP Without Visiting the Doctor

Easy Breathe CPAP Company

Carhartts New Line Of Gear is Tremendous

All Things Apparel | Search Ads

Average Retirement Savings By Age: Are You Normal?

SmartAsset

Portugal has nearly run out of people to vaccinate

Washington Post

by Taboola

ADVERTISEMENT

CONNECT



TRIBUNE PUBLISHING

- New York Daily News
- Orlando Sentinel
- The Morning Call of Pa.
- Daily Press of Va.
- The Daily Meal
- The Baltimore Sun
- Sun Sentinel of Fla.
- Hartford Courant
- The Virginian-Pilot
- Studio 1847

Subscribers, get Chicago's top newsletter Sign up for Daywatch

Careers	About us
Help Center	Privacy Policy
Terms of Service	Archives
Contact us	Local print ads
Manage Web Notifications	Chicago Tribune Store
Media kit	

Copyright © 2021, Chicago Tribune