



GRAFFLIN GOES GREEN NOVEMBER

Sponsored by Grafflin's Environmental Committee

RECYCLING

November 15th is America Recycles Day!

Celebrate by taking a few moments to learn about the benefits of recycling and buying products made with recycled materials.

Did you know the average American discards 4.6 pounds of garbage EVERY DAY. From individually packaged food servings to disposable diapers, more garbage is generated now than ever before. This garbage, the solid waste stream, goes mostly to landfills, where it's compacted and buried. As the waste stream continues to grow, so will pressure on our landfills, our resources and our environment.

Recycling is one of the easiest ways you can help reduce waste, and in turn slow climate change and global warming. By recycling at home, you help significantly lower carbon emissions associated with extracting virgin materials, manufacturing products and waste disposal.

This month's newsletter is filled with loads of simple and useful information on how to be a more informed, and therefore better, recycler. Don't forget to stop by the Grafflin Green Station in the Grafflin lobby for more tips and info. While you're there, drop off your old cell phones, printer cartridges, RECHARGEABLE batteries, eyeglasses and bottlecaps in our recycle collection bins.

The Lowdown on Recycling Plastics

Plastic does not break down in landfills, and since it can be recycled to make many diverse products, efforts should be made to recycle all plastic waste. When recycling your plastics, look for the triangle with the number in it- usually on the bottom of the bottle, bag or container. The numbers indicate the type of plastic. A number must be on the item in order for it to be recycled.

That being said, you need to know which numbers your town accepts.

New Castle and Mt. Kisco accept #1-#7.

Mt Pleasant accepts only #1 and #2

RECYCLING YOUR PLASTICS

A Primer on what it all means

Recycling by the Numbers

The symbol code we're familiar with—a single digit ranging from 1 to 7 surrounded by a triangle of arrows—was designed by The Society of the Plastics Industry (SPI) in 1988 to allow consumers and recyclers to differentiate types of plastics while providing a uniform coding system for manufacturers. The symbols also help recyclers do their jobs more effectively.

Easy Plastics to Recycle- #1 and #2

The easiest and most common plastics to recycle are made of polyethylene terephthalate (PETE) and are assigned the number 1. Examples include soda and water bottles, medicine containers, and many other common consumer product containers. Once it has been processed by a recycling facility, PETE can become fiberfill for winter coats, sleeping bags, life jackets, bean bags, car bumpers, tennis ball felt, furniture and, of course, other plastic bottles.

NOTE: Because it is difficult to clean PETE plastic without releasing harmful chemicals, bottles made of PETE should not be reused.

Number 2 is reserved for high-density polyethylene plastics. These include heavier containers that hold laundry detergents and bleaches as well as milk, shampoo and motor oil. Most grocery bags are made of high density polyethylene as well. Number 2 plastic is often recycled into toys, piping, plastic lumber and rope.

NOTE: Most grocery stores have bins outside so customers can drop off used plastic bags for recycling.

Plastics Less Commonly Recycled- #3, #4, #5

Polyvinyl chloride, commonly used in plastic pipes, shower curtains, medical tubing, vinyl dashboards, and even some baby bottle nipples, gets number 3. Wrapping films, grocery and sandwich bags, and other containers made of low-density polyethylene are designated #4. #5 is considered one of the safest plastics. It is used for packaging items such as yogurt, cottage cheese, margarine and Tupperware, and is contained in food wraps and bottle tops. #5 is one of the least expensive plastics to make. However, the process of recycling plastic #5 is less efficient than other plastics, and the end result has little market value.

Another Useful Plastic to Recycle- #6

Number 6 goes on polystyrene (Styrofoam) items such as coffee cups, disposable cutlery, food trays, packing “peanuts” and egg cartons. It is widely accepted because it can be reprocessed into many items, including cassette tapes and rigid foam insulation. #6 does not biodegrade. Try to reduce your use of this material.

Hardest Plastics to Recycle

Last, but far from least, are items crafted from various combinations of the aforementioned plastics or from unique plastic formulations not commonly used. Usually imprinted with a number 7 or nothing at all, these plastics are the most difficult to recycle.

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR RECYCLING (COMINGLED) COLLECTIONS

From the New Castle Recycle Center, which accepts all #'s (1-7)

GLASS BOTTLES AND JARS

DO RECYCLE:

food bottles and jars
wine bottles
liquor bottles (remove caps)
pyrex and ceramics

DON'T RECYCLE

drinking glasses
light bulbs
window panes

METAL

DO RECYCLE

clean cans
clean aluminum pie plates
clean aluminum foil
empty aerosol cans

DON'T RECYCLE

hangers
oil or paint cans
pots and pans
solvent or pesticide containers

PLASTIC CONTAINERS

DO RECYCLE:

milk jugs
clean grocery store plastic bags
(stuff all bags into one bag)
styrofoam (bagged and tied up)
detergent bottles
plastic containers numbered 1 thru 7

DON'T RECYCLE:

toys
any item without a number
any item containing sharps clean
(needles etc)

PAPER ITEMS:

Tie with string into bundles, place in brown paper bags or put into separate blue bin.

DO RECYCLE:

newspapers
magazines
junk mail

DON'T RECYCLE:

paper cups and plates
tissues, napkins, paper towels
office waste paper

CORRUGATED CARBOARD

Must be flattened and be in pieces no larger than 48x48. They should be tied with string into bundles and should be set out at curbside on recycle collection day.

DO RECYCLE:

cardboard boxes
boxes
tissue boxes

DON'T RECYCLE:

waxy cardboard such as milk cereal
cartons or frozen food boxes

NOTE: Compact Fluorescent bulbs and styrofoam packing peanuts (bagged up) need to be brought down to the recycle center.

All the materials listed above that cannot be accepted for recycling should be put out for collection with the regular household garbage.

GRAFFLIN RECYCLES

News on our Recycling Drives

During the course of the year, the Environmental Committee will be hosting a number of ongoing recycling drives for Eyeglasses, Printer Cartridges, Cell Phones, Rechargeable Batteries and Bottle Caps. All donations will be accepted at the Green Station.

A NOTE ON BATTERIES: We have noticed that some of the batteries being deposited in the Green Station are not recyclable. Please note that only rechargeable batteries are recyclable (camera, rechargeable appliances, cell phones, cordless phones, laptops...). AA, AAA, C and D batteries can be thrown in the regular trash.

Check out our Recycle link for more information on our drives.

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

Tips for November

Reduce: Got catalogues? And catalogues and catalogues? Most of which you have no time or interest in looking at? 'Tis the season! You can actually remove your name from many of these lists quite easily, and in doing so REDUCE this massive waste of paper. Every year, over 100 million trees in the U.S. get used for junk mail. Check out www.proquo.com. This website helps you identify the catalogues you don't want to receive and then takes care of all the hard work of removing you from their lists. It can help put a stop on up to 90% of your junk mail. And that means more trees are left standing. What a wonderful gift to give back to the Earth.

Reuse: With Halloween over and our thoughts moving towards Thanksgiving, have you been wondering what to do with all those cute uncarved pumpkins still sitting on your front step? REUSE them into centerpieces for your Thanksgiving table. Just carve out the insides and fill them with fresh flowers or greens. They make a festive table and you can feel good about creating just a little less waste in your holiday presentation.

Recycle: As we've seen, it's incredibly important that you RECYCLE your items, but in order to complete the cycle, you also need to BUY RECYCLED ITEMS. This is called "Closing the Loop". As consumers, we must choose products with recycled content and packaged in recycled materials, so that the materials we recycle are put to use, and markets are sustained. The following products can typically be made with recycled content:

- Boxes for foods such as cereal, crackers and cake mix.
- Bottles for laundry detergent, dishwashing liquid, shampoo & household cleaners.
- Toilet paper, tissues, napkins, paper towels, greeting cards, writing paper and corrugated cardboard shipping boxes.
- Coat hangers, storage organizers, playground equipment and toys.
- Fleece, Tennis shoes and hiking boots.

For more detailed information, check out the Grafflin Green Station bulletin board located in the Grafflin lobby.