

Got a Plastic Bottle?

Recycle It!

CREATING AN EFFECTIVE "ALL BOTTLES" COMMUNITY EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAM



The SUCCESS of an all plastic bottles collection and recycling program

depends on enthusiastic public participation. Most consumers are eager to recycle plastics. The challenge for community recycling coordinators is to support and encourage their enthusiasm while helping residents recognize which plastic items go into the recycling container and which do not.

If your city or county has decided to adopt an “all plastic bottles”¹ collection program, congratulations! Collecting all plastic bottles is a great way to simplify the recycling message for plastics and increase the number of bottles captured for recycling.

To help you get your new, “all plastic bottles” program off to a good start, the Environment and Plastics Industry Council (EPIC) has developed this publication to provide specific suggestions on the most effective promotional approaches and tools to use. These ideas come from communities that already have implemented “all plastic bottles” programs. If your community is just beginning to consider adopting an “all plastic bottles” program, we recommend that you first consult [Simplicity = Success: Answers to Six Common Questions About “All Plastic Bottle” Collection Programs](#). The publication is available on our Web site www.plastics.ca/allplasticbottles.

And remember, there’s much more information about how to conduct successful plastic bottle recycling programs on our Web site:



www.plastics.ca/allplasticbottles

Seven Steps to Success

STEP 1. Create Excitement!

Most residents are now firmly in the habit of recycling. But that means to get them to adjust to an “all plastic bottles” program, you must create excitement. Begin the new program with a substantial promotional campaign, notifying residents two weeks in advance of changes. A printed brochure that is mailed or hand-delivered to every household is essential.

A kickoff event can have a big impact. Many communities combine the launch of an “all plastic bottles” program with the addition of other new materials, such as metal paint cans, magazines, or aerosol cans. That makes the news even bigger.

¹ “All plastic bottles” refers to all resin types (1 through 7) but without any requirement for the consumer to look for the resin identification.

Timing the launch of an “all plastic bottles” program around an existing event, such as Waste Reduction Week, can be very effective especially when budgets are limited.

A big splash helps draw attention to your program, inspiring residents to learn more about the changes. Be sure to involve the local media.

STEP 2. Develop a Consistent Theme.

Give all of the promotional pieces used in your “all plastic bottles” program and education campaign a consistent, professional look to capture the public’s attention. Use the same graphic style and wording for brochures, signs at drop-off centers, collection vehicles, household containers, etc. In every piece, follow these simple principles:

● **BE CONSISTENT:** Decide your “do’s and don’ts” upfront and stick to them. A consistent program that is reinforced over time will maximize participation,

reduce confusion, and improve the quality of all plastic bottles collected.

● **BE CLEAR:** The simpler the directions, the better! Use big pictures and few words. Avoid use of the resin identification code and instead focus on the description of a bottle. Reinforce written instructions with colorful graphics. Most people will look at the instructions for just a few seconds; they must be able to grasp the directions at a glance.

● **ADDRESS THE BASIC ISSUES:** Usually an “all plastic bottles” program is an expansion of an existing recycling program. Be sure to tell residents how to identify and prepare plastic bottles, what other new materials have been added, and whether other recycling requirements have changed. Include:

- What bottles should be set out? Be very specific. List what products should be included or excluded. Even though an “all bottles” program should technically take all bottles, some bottles con-

tain substances — such as motor oil or pesticides — that your end market may not want. Check with your end market before making the decision to accept these bottles. Be sure to train your hotline representatives to let the public know that these bottles themselves are recyclable, but your program does not include them due to the residue.

- How should residents prepare the bottles? Remove caps? Empty? Squash bottles?
- When should residents set out the materials?
- Where should they take materials (for drop-off programs)?
- Who can they call for more details? Is program information available on the Web?

Print the list of acceptable and non-acceptable plastics on one side of the brochure so it can be posted in a handy place, such as the refrigerator.

STEP 3. Hit the High Points.

Other communities have started “all plastic bottles” programs. They say four key points must be made in all informational materials:

- Encourage residents to step on plastic bottles to reduce the volume.
- “Check for the neck” is an effective phrase to use to help residents easily identify bottles versus other types of plastic containers. An acceptable bottle should be defined as one “with an opening smaller than its base.”
- Include a detailed list of what IS and what IS NOT collected.
- Instruct residents to remove pumps, caps, and lids, and to completely empty the bottles to improve the quality and marketability of collected bottles.

Turn the page for detailed instructions on how to create an effective brochure.

STEP 4. Think Outside the Ice Box.

A key element in promoting “all plastic bottles” collection is encouraging residents to “think outside of the refrigerator” when recycling their plastic bottles. Remind residents to recycle plastic bottles used in their bathrooms, pantries, cabinets, and laundry rooms. Using specific examples of products other than beverages that come in plastic bottles will increase the number of shampoo, mouthwash, peanut butter, cooking oil, ketchup, barbecue, and detergent bottles that are collected and recycled.

STEP 5. Bring Back Those “On-the-Go” Bottles.

The expansion to an “all plastic bottles” program can also be an ideal time to remind residents to bring home for recycling all the plastic bottles the family uses—including those beverages consumed away from home, on the go.

STEP 6. Use Visual Tools.

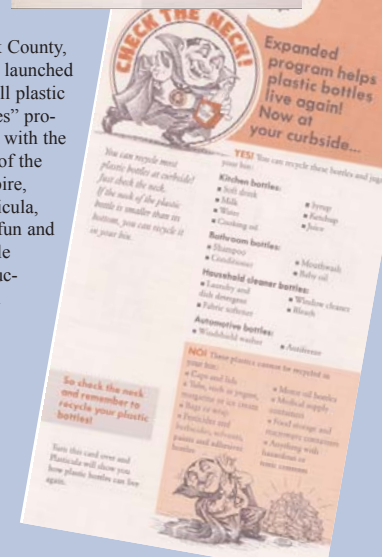
Because it helps to see what bottles can be included in an “all plastic bottles” program, posters in schools, libraries, and recreational centres are effective and inexpensive tools. Your city or county Web site is also a great place to provide more details on your new “all plastic bottles” program.

STEP 7. Thank and Repeat!

Six months after the launch, give residents a refresher course on proper “all plastic bottles” collection and recycling procedures, call attention to common mistakes, and be sure to thank them for recycling more bottles!



Clark County, WA, launched an “all plastic bottles” program with the help of the vampire, Plasticula, plus fun and simple instructions.



The City of Milwaukie, OR, produced an effective graphic to explain how to “check for the neck,” plus a thorough list of what bottles should be included or excluded.



Simple, attractive and to the point.

An Easy Way to Know

What Goes Into the Recycling Container

Here's an easy way to identify the proper plastics to put in your recycling bin: **Check for the Neck!** A bottle or jar with an opening that is smaller than the base (or widest part) is usually acceptable for recycling.

Your community logo and return address here.

Printed on recycled paper

NOW YOU CAN RECYCLE

All Plastic Bottles!

Appealing cover

Side 1

Local address printed here

Easy steps to recycling

Plastic bottles to recycle

Recycling Plastic Bottles Is Easy.

HERE'S HOW:

1. Collect and recycle all plastic bottles and jars that have an opening smaller than the base (or widest part). See the list at right.
2. Remove caps, lids and pumps.
3. Empty contents and rinse thoroughly.
4. Crush plastic bottles by carefully stepping on them so they take up less room in the recycling container. Hold onto a countertop or doorway so you don't slip.
5. Place uncapped and flattened empty plastic bottles in your recycling container along with your other recyclables.

DO include

these kinds of empty plastic bottles:

- Kitchen**
Soda, Milk, Water
Juice, Syrup
Ketchup
Cooking oils
Jars with necks
- Household Cleaners**
Liquid dish detergent
Liquid household cleaners (window, bathroom & kitchen cleaner)
- Bathroom**
Shampoo
Conditioner
Mouthwash
Lotions
- Laundry**
Liquid laundry detergent
Bleach
Liquid fabric softener
- Beverage Containers At Home & On the Go**
Soft drinks
Sport drinks and teas
Water

DON'T include

these kinds of plastic bottles:

- Transmission fluid bottles
- Brake fluid bottles
- Gasoline bottles
- Other bottles that used to contain flammable liquids
- Motor oil bottles
- Herbicide and pesticide bottles

Now you can collect and recycle all plastic bottles!

Now you can collect and recycle more plastic bottles in your recycling bin. All plastic bottles (bottles are containers that have an opening smaller than the base)—and only bottles—will be collected for recycling. Remember, other kinds of plastic items will not be collected.

Plastic bottles collected from your neighborhood will be made into new plastic products such as carpeting and clothing, garden furniture and accessories, new plastic bottles and a variety of other products.

QUESTIONS?
(000) 000-0000
OR
WWW. _____ .GOV

Plastic items not to include

Side 2

These lists should be tailored to your community's specifications

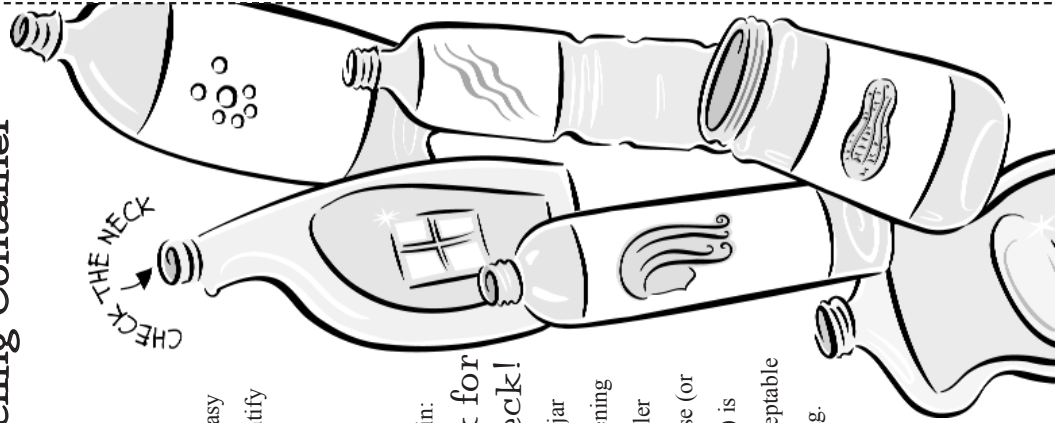
An Easy Way to Know

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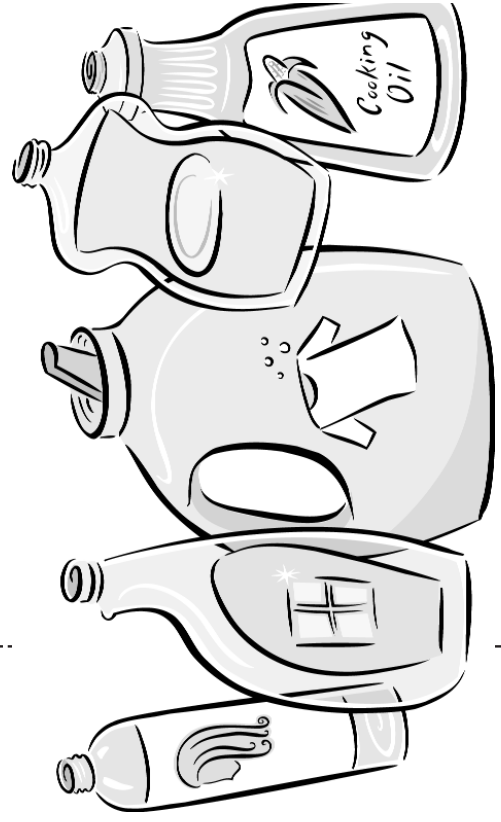
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Your community logo and return address here.

NOW YOU CAN RECYCLE

All Plastic Bottles!




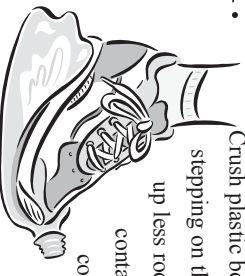


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Tear It Out. Mark It Up. Design Your Own!

Recycling Plastic Bottles Is Easy.

HERE'S HOW.

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2. Remove caps, lids and pumps.
3. Empty contents and rinse thoroughly.
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5. Place uncapped and flattened empty plastic bottles in your recycling container along with your other recyclables.

DO include these kinds of empty plastic bottles:

Kitchen

Soda, Milk, Water
Juice, Syrup
Ketchup
Cooking oils
Jars with necks

Household Cleaners

Liquid dish detergent
Liquid household cleaners (window, bathroom & kitchen cleaner)

Bathroom

Shampoo
Conditioner
Mouthwash
Lotions

Laundry

Liquid laundry detergent
Bleach
Liquid fabric softener

Beverage Containers At Home & On the Go

Soft drinks
Sport drinks and teas
Water

DON'T include these kinds of plastic bottles:

Transmission fluid bottles
Brake fluid bottles
Gasoline bottles
Other bottles that used to contain flammable liquids
Motor oil bottles
Herbicide and pesticide bottles

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Now you can collect and recycle all plastic bottles!

Plastic bottles collected from your neighborhood will be made into new plastic products such as carpeting and clothing, garden furniture and accessories, new plastic bottles and a variety of other products.

QUESTIONS?

(000) 000-0000

OR

WWW. _____ .GOV

The inclusion of "all plastic bottles" makes identification of recyclables easier

for residents and increases capture rates. In addition, contaminants often are reduced, so the overall recycling program becomes more efficient and less costly to the community. An "all plastic bottles" program renews the community's interest in recycling — everybody wins.



Every community has its own style for educating the public about "all plastic bottles" collection and recycling, but all approaches shown include the key elements recommended. For more sample brochures, visit the new Web site.

EPIC's new Web site devoted exclusively to the collection and recycling of "all plastic bottles" is www.plastics.ca/allplasticbottles. Visit it to find more resources to help you launch a successful "all plastic bottles" collection program, including:

- More than 25 illustrations of plastic bottles that you can download and use in your community materials
- Case studies and testimonials from communities that are recycling "all plastic bottles"
- More tips on language and wording for your printed pieces and press releases
- Samples of print advertisements you can customise
- A sample of a poster you can customise

www.plastics.ca/allplasticbottles



A Word About the Resin Identification Codes

The resin identification code was intended for use by recyclers (the people actually doing the sorting at the recycling facility), not consumers. Therefore, if you choose to educate consumers using the codes, you must use caution. Recycling programs that encourage consumers to refer to the codes often wind up collecting unwanted container types. To avoid this, specifically request "bottles with necks (or openings) smaller than the base" and don't mention the code at all. Use pictures and graphics instead of the chasing arrows symbols. Refer to the publication *Simplicity = Success* for more information on our website.

What the Experts Say

“When we added the all bottle program, we had a substantial increase in our collection of plastic bottles. It's just so much easier for customers. We are very pleased with the results and I'd recommend this program to any other community.”

—Bruce Walker
Director of Sustainable Development
City of Portland, OR

“By concentrating on an 'all plastic bottles' message, there is less confusion for residents about what numbers to recycle and we are able to recycle more plastics.”

—Ruth Westfall,
Recycling Coordinator,
Grand Prairie, TX

ENVIRONMENT AND PLASTICS INDUSTRY CANADA

5915 AIRPORT ROAD

SUITE 712

MISSISSAUGA, ON L4V 1T1

TEL 905-678-7748

FAX 905-678-0774

www.plastics.ca/epic

EPIC is a council of the Canadian Plastics Industry Association

A NOTE ABOUT RECYCLING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Plastic bottle collection and recycling varies from community to community. Collection programs should be designed according to each community's unique circumstances. Check to see if all plastic bottles can be collected and recycled in your community.



EPIC'S WEB SITE

www.plastics.ca/epic

FEATURES MORE RESOURCES FOR YOU, INCLUDING
INFORMATION ON:

- Products made from recycled plastics
- Markets for recycled plastics
- Maintaining quality in collection programs
- Recycling plastic bottles at drop-offs
- Technical information about plastics recycling