



Effingham Recycles

February 2018 Issue 1

Our First Newsletter!

Thank you for your interest in Effingham Recycles. We hope that you find our newsletter worthy of your time. We aim to give you information that you can use to support your commitment to a better environment at home and in our community.

We are excited to share our progress and information with the Effingham County community through this newsletter. Specifically, please check out the Q and A section about tipping fees. Tipping fees could make a big impact for our community. We hope that you reach out to community leaders or Effingham Recycles if you have more questions. As a group of volunteers, we value your feedback and involvement. We have some exciting events that we hope you will join us for.

Join Us as we Reveal the Survey Results

Thank you to all who participated in last fall's Effingham Recycles Community Survey! We had over 600 responses and 130 comments.

Please join us on: **February 22 @ 6pm** in the **Workman Room** of the **Effingham Public Library**. We will share the results from the survey, address the current state of Effingham recycling services and how we can move forward with more recycling in Effingham.

*"You're doing great!
This is something
Effingham needs,
and I'm so glad to
see so many people
standing up for our
environment."*

- Recycling Survey Comment



Meet (most of) the Effingham Recycles team.

In This Issue

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Material of the Month:

Cardboard

Cardboard is everywhere. In fact, 85% of all products sold in the U.S. are packed in cardboard. It's one of those materials that is associated with the question of, "what is recyclable?" How is cardboard recycled? Let's take a look.

After the cardboard is collected, it is sorted into types. A common type is *corrugated*, or the cardboard that appears to be pleated and often used in shipping boxes. *Boxboard* is a type of cardboard that is only one thin layer, and is usually used in cereal boxes and drink containers.



Next, the sorted cardboard is shredded and pulped by mixing it with water and other chemicals that break it down. Cardboard often has strings, tape, glue and other contaminants on it. The pulpy mix is filtered to remove the materials and then de-inked.

Finally, the clean pulp is set out to dry and rolled into the new cardboard.

Remember, *break it down!*

When recycling cardboard, it is important to break it down to make it as flat as possible. When cardboard isn't completely broken down, it takes up more space, time and energy. In addition, cardboard that has been stained with grease, oil or other food cannot be recycled. Contaminated cardboard can ruin the entire batch!

If you're not ready to recycle, reuse!

When it comes to the famous "3R's," recycling is the last step. Before recycling, try to find a way to reuse a cardboard box. If you know someone who is moving, pass them along to avoid purchasing new moving boxes. Try using cardboard boxes for storage. Corrugated cardboard can even be used as mulch in the garden!

An infographic on a textured, light-brown background. At the top, it says "YOU ARE LIKELY TO MAKE" followed by 11 small red truck icons. Below that, it says "11 moves in your lifetime". A dark blue box contains the text "IF YOU RECYCLE ALL 660 MOVING BOXES YOU CAN SAVE". Below this are six icons with corresponding numbers and units: a tree for 7 Trees, a lightbulb for 18,480 KW of energy, a barrel for 35 Gal. of oil, a fan for 26 Gal. of air pollution, a water drop for 3,080 Gal. of water, and a trash can for 1 Cu. yards of landfill. At the bottom, a box titled "RECYCLING CARDBOARD" shows a recycling symbol icon, a lightbulb, and the text "REQUIRES ONLY 75% of the energy used to make new cardboard." Below this, it says "It also lessens the emission of sulfur dioxide produced when making pulp from trees." The background of the bottom section shows a silhouette of a forest and a power plant.

YOU ARE LIKELY TO MAKE 11 moves in your lifetime

IF YOU RECYCLE ALL 660 MOVING BOXES YOU CAN SAVE

7 Trees	18,480 KW of energy
35 Gal. of oil	26 Gal. of air pollution
3,080 Gal. of water	1 Cu. yards of landfill

RECYCLING CARDBOARD REQUIRES ONLY 75% of the energy used to make new cardboard.

It also lessens the emission of sulfur dioxide produced when making pulp from trees.

Graphic and information courtesy of <https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/cardboard-recycling.php>

Recycling in the News:

Chinese Import Ban Hits Recycling Industry

Sarah Ruholl Sehy

In 2017, China banned imports of 24 different categories of recyclable materials, including scrap plastics and mixed paper. The United States exports one-third of its recycling, half of which was going to China. With the export market cut in half, west coast warehouses quickly began filling up with recyclable waste that would have been bound for China.

Manufacturing is a large part of the Chinese economy, but their natural resources are limited. Imported recyclable waste fueled the manufacturing boom. In a July 2017 filing with the World Trade Organization, China announced its ban as a means of protecting their health and environment. Contaminated, non-recyclable waste mixed into the materials China was importing was cited as a major factor driving the decision to ban the imports.

With China no longer buying the mixed paper and scrap plastic waste produced in American homes and businesses, commodity prices plummeted. Recycling companies in Oregon and California are struggling to find buyers as baled plastics and paper pile up in parking lots and warehouses.

Industry experts expect a long-term solution will work out, as artificial intelligence and sophisticated machinery reduce the manpower and time needed to sort the trash from the truly recyclable material.

In the short-term, many companies are putting new restrictions on what they accept or adding additional bins for sorting.

Source: <https://www.npr.org/2017/12/09/568797388/recycling-chaos-in-u-s-as-china-bans-foreign-waste>

Q and A: Tipping fees

Q: What is a tipping fee?

A: Broadly, any charge on waste brought to a landfill, recycling center, or other disposal facility. The State of Illinois has a law allowing local government units to levy a tipping fee on landfills within their jurisdiction. From here on out, this local-government-levied tipping fee is what we are referring to.

Q: Who pays this fee and how much is it?

A: Trash haulers who dump the waste they collect into the landfill pay the fee based on the weight of their load. The statutory maximum rate is \$1.27 per ton. In 2016, the local landfill, Landfill 33, took in enough waste to generate more than \$160,000, had a fee amount been set at the maximum rate.

Q: What happens with the money collected from that tipping fee?

A: Revenue from that fee can then be spent on certain environmental projects, including education, environmental cleanups, and, of course, recycling.

Q: Does Effingham County collect this tipping fee?

A: No. Effingham County is one of only three counties in Illinois that does not. An ordinance adopting the tipping fee was passed several years ago, but no amount has been set.

Q: What is the status of a tipping fee in Effingham County?

A: Last year, the Effingham County Board created a waste management subcommittee to consider and recommend a course of action on the fee: either set an amount or repeal the ordinance all together. A final decision was put on hold to allow our community survey on recycling to gather data on the subject.

Q: How can I help?

A: Contact your county board representative to tell him or her that you support public funding for recycling services through a tipping fee.

Refuse: the 4th R

Joanna Davies

While we live in a place that does not offer convenient recycling solutions, let us consider how we can live around that problem right here and right now.

“Refusing” means to refuse to bring in packaging and whatnot that would otherwise have to be recycled or just plain thrown away. If we refuse to bring in this waste then we don’t have to wonder what to do with it at the end of its life-cycle. Unfortunately for many single-use items these days the life-cycle can be mere minutes.

I’m talking about everything from the flimsy plastic produce bags (you know, the ones on the roll in the produce section of the grocery store) to single-use water bottles and coffee cups (K cups included) to cell phones.

Here’s How

Next time you’re in the produce section of the grocery store, instead of grabbing a plastic bag for your lemons, just toss them into your cart or better yet bring your own produce bag. Don’t worry, both of these options are allowed. Then, 20 minutes later after you’ve gotten home and unpacked your groceries you won’t have a little bag to dispose of. The same, of course, goes for your grocery bag – take reusable ones with you and forgo the plastic.

Let’s think about the plastic water bottle issue. According to a [2017 Forbes report](#), globally humans buy a million plastic bottles per minute. Did you catch that? Per minute. The report goes on to say that 91% of plastic is not recycled and it takes 400 years for plastic to break down and most of that ends up in the ocean or landfill.

And this is happening why? Is there something wrong with our tap water? In most cases, no there is not. Learning to refuse is all about behavior change, so try to be prepared and take a reusable water bottle or coffee flask with you.

Now on to cell phones. You’re probably asking, “How can we refuse cell phones?” I’m not asking you to refuse cell phones, I am asking you to consider if that biannual upgrade is necessary. Even though manufactured obsolescence does seem to be a thing, when managed properly, our cell phones can have a much longer lifespan than cell phone manufacturers would have us believe. This is especially important to keep in mind considering cell phones contain irreplaceable metals.

Start Small

Now, refusing does take a shift in thinking, so let me challenge you to simply start noticing all of the single-use items you use every day. Once you become aware of all of the unnecessary waste we all generate then begin to start refusing it.

If you need motivation check out [@zerowasteguy](#) on Instagram or [online](#). There’s an entire community of people in the world who are leading a zero waste lifestyle. These guys are the extreme and I could never go “all in” like they do, however watching how thoughtful they are about the purchases they make (and don’t make) can give us all food for thought. No one is perfect, including myself, but if we want to see positive change happen now, this is an easy way to start making it happen.

Upcoming Events

February 22: Survey Results, Workman Room, Effingham Library

April 22: Earth Day, more information to come

June 2: Electronic Recycling Drive and Paper Shredding, EPC



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