MassDEP’s Recycling IQ Kit

Increasing Quality in Municipal Recycling Programs
The Problem: Contamination
Contamination effects

- Materials that could have been reused are wasted
- More money and time are required to separate contaminants
- Sorting machinery stoppages to disentangle non-recyclables,
- Can expose recycling workers to hazardous wastes & cause unsafe conditions
- Quality of recyclable byproduct decreases if contaminated, reducing the market value
- Recycling companies struggle to recoup the cost of contamination and pass cost on to Municipalities
What is the Recycling IQ Kit?

• It’s a MassDEP grant to clean up recycling
• Awards up to $40,000
• Two main components:
  • Outreach and Education
  • Curbside feedback (8 consecutive collection cycles)
Outreach & Education

• Recycling Information mailer to all households (mandatory)
• Biggest Issue postcard to targeted households (mandatory)
• Banners, billboards, posters, sandwich boards, electronic signs
• Newspaper, radio and local television advertisements
• Social media ads and town website with RecycleSmartMA.org
• Earned media: newsletters, local blogs, town websites, op-eds
• Community events, tabling, guest speaker
The Biggest Issue Mailer

NO PLASTIC BAGS!

Your Organization
123 Street
City, ST 12345

NO PLASTIC BAGS!

DO NOT BAG Recyclables

Collecting recyclables in a bag?
Empty the contents into the cart.
Return plastic bags to retailers.

Town and Department
(123) 456-7890

Recycle Smart
RecycleSmartNA.org

SampleUrl.org

Funded in part by NAABER in association with D.C. Department of Energy and Environment.
June 3, 2019

Dear Billerician Residents:

We need your help. The Town of Billerica’s recycling contains 20.4% contamination. Contractually, the Town is required to have a contamination rate of 5% or less. There is a heightened emphasis on compliance due to the global recycling market’s depression. Consequently, the Town of Billerica is embarking on a focused initiative to educate our residents on better recycling habits and lower our contamination rate.

The Town received a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to fund an robust educational campaign, help us implement what’s in the recycling carts and to communicate that information to residents. We will be performing curbside inspections of residential recycling carts beginning June 7th. Contaminated carts will involve a warning and specific feedback on what issue was found. A tag indicating the issue found will be left on the cart handle, and your cart will be left behind. Once the issue has been corrected, the cart will be collected the following week.

While we understand that your cart being delayed for a week is an inconvenience, please understand that recycling has become increasingly complex in recent years and has become necessary to increase our educational efforts to keep up with this growing complexity.

Contamination in our recycling typically comes in two forms:

1) Materials that belong in the green cart but are not prepared correctly. For example, contamination occurs when there is stuff left in a plastic container or a small handful of junk. Containers should be empty and clean (just a quick rinse) before being placed in the green cart.

2) Materials that do not belong in the green cart. Such as:
   - Plastic bags
   - Other plastic film (such as the wrap around a case of bottled water)
   - Totebags (such as produce bags, wine, hoses)

Materials that do belong in the green bin include:

- Empty bottles, cans, and containers made of metal, plastic, and glass
- Paper
- Roasted cardboard

We believe deeply in diverting waste whenever possible to lessen our environmental footprint. But, unless you are absolutely certain that something is recyclable in the green cart, put it in the trash instead. Think “when in doubt, throw it out!”

Please contact us if you have any questions about this new initiative. For more information about how to recycle correctly, check out the www.recycleyourtrash.org website.

Thank you for your help and your commitment to a more sustainable Billerica.

Sincerely,

Christine McLaughlin
Recycling Coordinator, Town of Billerica
978-672-3337
cmlaughlin@town.billerica.ma.us

Appendix E: Press Coverage

Sept 27, 2019

Mayor’s Update

We need your help.

The City of Newton’s recycling contains 13 percent contamination. Contractually, the City is required to have a contamination rate of 5 percent or less. As a result, the City was charged $1,060,000 based on the amount recycled from the household recycling carts.

This yearNewton is focusing on the global recycling market. A drop in the market rate has caused a decrease in the value of recycled materials. With the decrease, the cost to the City has increased by $4,000,000.

As a result, we need your help. We have a team of experts with over 30 years of experience. They are here to help you understand the key factors that contribute to contamination. The team will be visiting your neighborhood to educate residents on how to recycle correctly.

Please contact us if you have any questions about this new initiative. For more information about how to recycle correctly, check out the www.recycleinnewton.org website.

Thank you for your help and your commitment to a more sustainable Newton.

Taking the Next Step on Washington Street
Contaminated recycling costing the town

Radio

Newspaper

Local TV
Social Media
Partner with RecycleSmart

recyclesmartma.org
Curbside Feedback (8 weeks)
Prior to launch of Curbside Feedback

- Get approval for leaving contaminated carts behind
- Kick-off meeting with Town and Hauler
- Pre-Audit at Materials Recovery Facility (MRF)
- Decide routes to be inspected
- Staffing: Temporary positions (9-10 weeks)
  - A few hours week day mornings
  - Summer hires, Temp workers, College students, Seniors in community...
- Order all tagging materials
The Week Before the Launch of Curbside Feedback

Warning Tags

Thank you for recycling!

**PLEASE NOTE:** Soon, we will be inspecting bins in your neighborhood. Bins containing non-recyclable items (plastic bags, food, hoses, etc.) may not be collected. You will receive a tag to let you know why. No worries, just clean up your bin and it will be emptied next time.

For more information on what to recycle, visit our website:

SampleUrl.org
8 Weeks of Curbside Feedback
8 Weeks of Curbside Feedback
Inspections and Oops Tags
8 Weeks of Curbside Feedback

Success
The Recycling IQ Kit works!

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Average Contamination Reduction on Routes Inspected</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dartmouth</td>
<td>83%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Everett</td>
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<td>Lynn</td>
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<td>Stoneham</td>
<td>71%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tewksbury</td>
<td>86%</td>
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Recycling IQ Kit Municipal results on inspected routes

Calendar Year 2018
Curbside Feedback: The 8 Week Trend
Curbside Feedback: 75-90% compliance with a single tag
Final MRF Audit
Maintaining Clean Recycling

The Hauler

Recycling Coordinator
Recycling IQ Kit Next Steps

Follow link to Recycling IQ Kit

Contact your Municipal Assistance Coordinator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coordinator</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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