



NEWS RELEASE

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

1021 North Grand Avenue East, P.O. Box 19276

Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276

Phone: 217/782-3397

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Contact: Kim Biggs

217-558-1536

Kim.Biggs@illinois.gov

Illinois EPA Celebrates America Recycles Day, Highlighting the Importance of Recycling and Launching Recycling Education and Mapping Tool

Curbside Recycling Guide and Collection Location Map Developed to Encourage Proper Residential Recycling

SPRINGFIELD —Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Director Alec Messina today recognized America Recycles Day by announcing the launch of the online Recycle Illinois platform that will help address typical problems in curbside recycling. The tool will also help residents locate appropriate outlets for items that cannot be collected in most curbside recycling programs in Illinois. The Recycle Illinois platform can be found at <https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/waste-management/Pages/recycling.aspx>.

“While recycling is one of the easiest ways to improve our environment, we want to continue to educate residents on the importance of recycling properly,” said Illinois EPA Director Alec Messina. “The online education tool provides details on what can and cannot be recycled, and the online mapping tool will direct residents to the nearest collection point for all items that may be recycled but cannot be accepted by most curbside programs.”

Illinois EPA conducted a statewide survey of county recycling coordinators in the fall of 2017 to identify the types of items recycled or collected and what types of collections are available. Information gathered from that survey was used in the development of the new Recycling Locator tool.

In late 2017, end markets for American recyclables significantly narrowed when China banned the import of recyclable materials that exceed minimal levels of contamination. In response, the Illinois Recycling Contamination Task Force was formed to develop a consistent statewide education campaign to help mitigate the efforts of the import ban in Illinois. The Task Force is comprised of members of federal, state, and local government, as well as waste industry and affiliated recyclers.

Following several meetings, the Task Force identified common issues that adversely impact recycling in Illinois, items that are universally acceptable by haulers in Illinois, and items that are universally prohibited. Based on those discussions, the Task Force has developed guidelines to represent the common recycling denominators of all programs throughout the state, and the goal is to have them as go-to guidelines for all programs, all haulers, and all educators in Illinois. Those guidelines were used in the recycling education on the Agency’s Recycle Illinois platform.

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