



News Release

For Immediate Release

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CHICAGO AREA RESIDENTS HAVE HUNDREDS OF LOCAL OPTIONS TO RECYCLE PLASTIC WRAPS AND BAGS

WASHINGTON (May 18, 2016) –“Residents of Chicago and Cook County can recycle flexible plastic wraps and bags—a category of materials also known as ‘film’—at nearly 400 local grocery and retail stores.” That’s the message a consortium of plastics makers, manufacturers and brand owners is working to clarify after a recent change in guidelines by Chicago’s Department of Streets and Sanitation may have led to some confusion.

“While it’s important for residents to avoid placing plastic wraps in curbside bins, that’s only half the message,” said Shari Jackson, director of the Flexible Film Recycling Group (FFRG), an organization that’s working to significantly increase film recycling across the United States.

“Residents of Cook County should know they have hundreds of local options for recycling post-use plastic wraps, bags and film,” Jackson said. “Nearly 400 local stores, such as Jewel-Osco, Target, Mariano’s, Lowe’s and many others, collect these valuable materials in bins located in store front areas.”

In fact, at-store film recycling programs are on the rise. The number of Cook County stores that collect post-use flexible wraps grew 25 percent between just 2014 and 2015.

Cook County residents can recycle a variety of post-use flexible plastic packaging through store drop-off programs, including: bags from bread, produce and dry cleaning; wraps from beverage cases, napkins, paper towels, bathroom tissue and diapers; sealable food storage bags; shipping pillows; shopping bags and bubble wrap.

“Both hard and soft plastics are widely recycled, but they are recycled differently,” explained Jackson. “The key is to remember that harder plastics, like bottles, containers and lids, go in your curbside bin, while flexible plastics, like wraps and bags, get recycled at major stores.”

To find the drop-off location closest to home, consumers can visit plasticfilmrecycling.org and click the “Find a Drop Off” tab to search by zip code and see a full list of plastic film items collected at store recycling programs.

[\[WATCH: Take Your Plastic Product Wraps to a Grocery Store for Recycling\]](#)

Plastic film is one of the fastest growing areas of recycling with national collection growing nearly 80 percent since 2005. At least 1.17 billion pounds of postconsumer film was recovered in 2014,



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and the national recycling rate for polyethylene film has grown to 17 percent, according to the most recent data from the U.S. EPA. Currently, more than 70 percent of Americans have access to a program that collects polyethylene wraps and bags, primarily at more than 18,000 grocery and retail stores across the country.

Recycled polyethylene film can become durable outdoor lumber for decks and fences, shopping carts, or new packaging.

To meet its goal of doubling film recycling by 2020, the FFRG is partnering with cities and states around the country to implement the Wrap Action Recycling Program, or WRAP. Connecticut, North Carolina and Wisconsin are official WRAP partners, with additional states close to announcing new WRAP campaigns.

Please follow WRAP campaign news on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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