



RECYCLING UPDATE

*Nancy Albright, Commissioner of Environmental Quality and Public Works
Environmental Quality and Public Works Committee
December 3, 2024*



Agenda:

- We Currently Accept
- What We Accepted in 2020
- 2022 Recycling Facility Upgrades
- 2023 EPA and The Recycling Partnership Grants
- 2024 New Baler Purchase and Installation
- Timeline

We Currently Accept:

MIXED CURBSIDE RECYCLING



Recycling is local. Please support our recycling program by recycling right.



Recycle ONLY these items in Central Kentucky.



**#1 and #2 Plastic
Bottles, Jugs & Jars**



**Glass Bottles
& Jars**



**Steel & Aluminum Cans,
Canisters and Lids**



**Dry Cardboard &
Paperboard**



Paper



**Food & Beverage
Cartons**

**MATERIALS SHOULD BE CLEAN, DRY AND LOOSE.
NEVER BAG RECYCLABLES.**

What We Accepted in 2020

- Suspended curbside paper collection in 2019
 - Poor quality product was unsellable
- Several equipment breakdowns at MRF
- Council subcommittee on recycling formed
- Pilot to recycle 3-6 plastics unsuccessful
- Commitment to continue exploring technical upgrades to improve recyclable products



 **RECYCLING**
Recycling is local. Please recycle right.

MIXED CURBSIDE RECYCLING
The following items are accepted in the blue curbside recycle carts. No plastic bags.


Plastic screw top bottles and jugs


Glass bottles and jars


Paperboard (not packaging for refrigerated/frozen goods)


Aluminum and steel cans


Dry cardboard

PAPER DROP-OFF RECYCLING
Mixed paper can be taken to a yellow paper-only bin. Mixed paper is not currently accepted in blue curbside recycle carts. No plastic bags.


Mixed paper

DO NOT BAG RECYCLABLES.
Never put trash, plastic bags, liquids, food or wet materials in the recycling.


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#RecycleRightLex

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Additional information:
LexingtonKY.gov/Recycle
LexingtonKY.gov/PaperRecycling

2022 Recycling Facility Upgrades

- LFUCG invested \$4.2 million to upgrade equipment and improve the sorting process
- Received \$150,000 grant from the Carton Council
 - Added 2nd optical sorter to improve plastic & carton sorting
- Cartons (broth boxes, milk cartons, and juice boxes) added to the list of acceptable materials
- Glass sorted out earlier in the process to reduce equipment damage from broken glass
- Began accepting commingled paper again after source-separating for nearly two years



Optical sorter



April 2022 Re-opening Event

2023 EPA and The Recycling Partnership Grants

- In 2023 Waste Management applied for and was awarded a \$1.8 million EPA SWIFR Grant (Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling)
- The grant is part of \$2,452,816 in EPA awards to expand recycling infrastructure and waste management systems across Kentucky
- Additionally, The Recycling Partnership has awarded \$300,000 towards facility upgrades
 - Includes an educational component to assist in community outreach efforts



EPA and The Recycling Partnership Grants

- The proposed upgrades will:
 - Expand recyclable items to include polypropylene plastic (yogurt cups, butter tubs)
 - Upgrade areas of the facility with state-of-the-art equipment including a duel eject optical sorter, a robotic arm, conveyors, and an upgraded compressor
 - Robotic component will assist in more efficient sorting of HDPE plastic into natural HDPE (colorless bottles) and mixed HDPE (mixed colors)
- Polypropylene can be recycled into plastic packaging, household products such as laundry baskets, children's toys, automotive parts, machinery parts, and more



Robotic arm

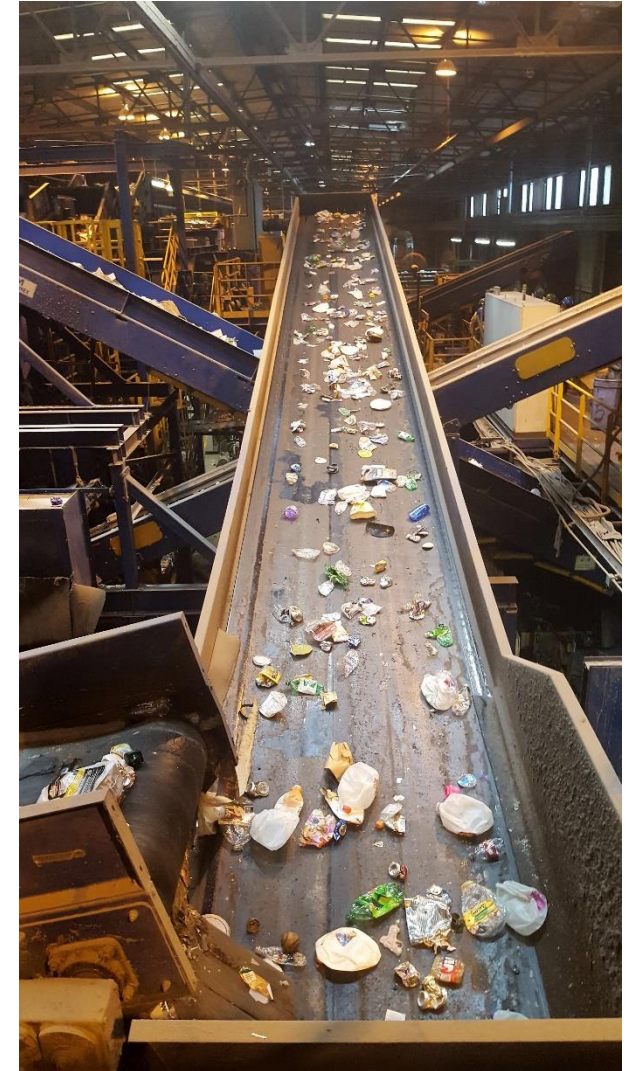
2024 New Baler Purchase and Installation

- The current materials baler is 12 years old and has reached the end of its lifespan
- A new baler was bid out in early 2024 and BE Equipment, Inc. won the project bid
- The new baler is currently being built to specification
- Installation to begin in a few days
- Will provide improved reliability and more efficient processing of bales



Timeline

- We will stop collecting recycling later this week.
- During this shut down we will also:
 - Replace the roof over the material drop area
 - Make repairs to the loading dock where we ship out the baled material
 - Clean and maintain the rest of the sorting equipment
- Materials will be collected again beginning December 16*



Questions?