



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ROCKBRIDGE CONTACT:

Tracy Shafer  
Solid Waste and Recycling Manager  
Rockbridge County  
(540) 463-1469

LEXINGTON CONTACT:

Scott Dameron  
Superintendent  
City of Lexington Public Works  
(540) 463-3154

July 13, 2018

**IMMEDIATE CHANGES TO LEXINGTON AND ROCKBRIDGE RECYCLING**

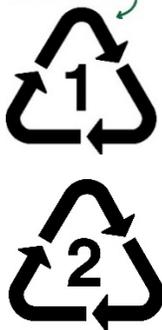
*New standards limit recycling of plastic to #1 (PET) and #2 (HDPE) ONLY, NO shredded paper*

Across the United States the recycling industry is facing an industry downturn which jeopardizes the continued operation of almost every recycling facility nationwide. Pricing has dropped to record lows, quality specifications have changed almost overnight, and some materials don't have a recycling market at all. Lexington and Rockbridge County must adapt to these changes, specifically by making adjustments to what materials can be recycled and how they are recycled.

Recycling communities are being asked to keep contamination low so material collected can be recycled. Please do not dispose of things like plastic bags, food waste, and Styrofoam in recycling containers. It is important for recyclers to ensure collection containers hold only the items permitted for recycling. **The new standards limit the recycling of plastic bottles to those labeled #1 (PET) or #2 (HDPE) ONLY, meaning NO plastics labeled #3, #4, #5, #6 or #7. Additionally, shredded paper will no longer be accepted as a recyclable material.**

Help make your recycling program a success by following these quick tips.

look for this!



**#1 Plastics (recyclable):**



**#2 Plastics (recyclable):**



YES! For Recycling	
CANS	Aluminum Beverage Cans, Steel and Tin Cans
PAPER	Mixed Paper, Newspaper, Magazines, and Cardboard
PLASTIC CONTAINERS	Plastic Bottles, Jugs, Food Containers - #1 and #2 ONLY (check container bottoms)

NO!
NO Plastic labeled #3 up to #7
NO Shredded Paper (look for local events)
NO Food, Liquids or Pizza Boxes
NO Aluminum Foil
NO Toys or Clothing (donate)
NO Plastic Bags (return to retailer)
NO Styrofoam or Bubble Wrap
NO Paint Cans (look for local event)

By following these new standards, residents who recycle can help localities meet the criteria necessary to avoid tons of recyclables being rejected and sent to a landfill instead – a situation which increases the tipping fees paid by localities. Moving forward with a focus on reducing contamination of recycling and putting items into the recycle bin that can be recycled, City of Lexington and Rockbridge County will be on stronger ground to sustain its commitment to environmental stewardship through effective recycling programs.

**Why is the downturn occurring?** A large amount of the United States’ recyclables has traditionally been exported to China. In January 2018, China implemented waste import restrictions which banned a variety of recyclable materials, followed by the enactment of a higher contamination standard. North American-based recycling and waste management companies are working to respond to these disruptions. In the meantime, residents, solid waste departments, processors and beyond must respond to the challenges presented. For more information on this issue, visit Solid Waste Association of North America’s [China Waste Import Restrictions webpage](#).

Please contact Tracy Shafer, Rockbridge Solid Waste and Recycling Manager (540-463-1469 or [tshafer@rockbridgecountyva.gov](mailto:tshafer@rockbridgecountyva.gov)) or Scott Dameron, Superintendent at Lexington Public Works (540-463-3154 or [sdameron@lexingtonva.gov](mailto:sdameron@lexingtonva.gov)) with any questions.