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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



Recycle Right Tennessee Statewide Recycling Messaging Program Launches

Communities across Tennessee are simplifying how to recycle

A new statewide campaign to unify recycling messaging in Tennessee, called Recycle Right Tennessee, was officially launched on April 30. The website www.recyclerighttn.org explains the program developed by the Southeast Recycling Development Council (SERDC), through funding from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation. Communities across the state that have curbside recycling programs or convenience centers can have a recycling guide created for their websites to help residential participation. There is no cost for communities to participate.

"We want Tennessee residents to know that recycling is alive in their community, but contamination continues to be a problem in many programs. Recycle Right Tennessee is here to help simplify and unify the message. It makes the presentation and management of this information much easier for communities." said Jennifer Dabbs, Director of Outreach for SERDC.

Last spring, SERDC conducted research into the state's network of material recovery facilities (MRFs) and community recycling programs operating either curbside or convenience center drop-off points. The goal of the study was to

create a “common suite” of materials and identify the primary contaminants found in recycling streams. Studies have found that over 50% of residents rely on the internet to find information on recycling.

The research found that while communities and MRFs were on the same page as far as items collected, there was a huge disconnect in how that information was being relayed on websites. Most online community resources that were evaluated scored average or below average in ability to easily understand the message. Websites had too much text and the important information that residents were searching for was often missing or at the bottom of the page.

SERDC’s research, in addition to three regionalized workshops with communities across Tennessee, prompted creation of a unified messaging program, Recycle Right Tennessee. The website features information on the program, outlines common contaminants found in single stream recycling, such as plastic bags and batteries and enables communities to sign up for the program.

Recycle Right Tennessee answers two common question “what can I recycle?” and “how do I recycle?” into simplified answers:

Material Type:

- Cans
- Bottles
- Containers
- Paper
- Cardboard

Preparation:

- Clean
- Empty
- Dry
- Check Local (for specifics)

Single stream recycling (where everything goes in one bin or container) does not have to be confusing. These statewide guidelines have been developed to simplify the directions. SERDC is also working with Convenience Centers, which may have different recycling collection requirements and additional areas for recycling material not typically collected in a Curbside program.



“Recycling is important on so many levels. Not only does it save landfill space, those materials are resources that become feedstock for new products. Recycling creates jobs and provides tax dollars to communities.”

Tennessee communities can go to www.recyclerighttn.org/join-today to sign up. Recycling guide layouts are available for both curbside and convenience center programs. Convenience center guides will feature locations and a map of their locations. Once set up, communities will receive a link to their own webpage link, which they can post on their website. The recycling guide will allow residents to print a flyer of the guide for their own use. SERDC offers guidance for communities on simplifying their existing website pages as well. SERDC partnered with The Recycling Partnership to include the ability to print labels for curbside bins and convenience center signage using the same imaging for consistent messaging to residents.

Please Contact jen.dabbs@serdc.org for more information.

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