

DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

RECYCLES!

A Recycling Newsletter for DPS Employees • Winter 2018



RESOLVE TO RECYCLE MORE IN 2019!

A new year is almost upon us, which means it's time to reflect and set new waste reduction goals. This is a good time for schools to take stock of their recycling programs and look at starting a lunchroom composting program.



DENVER RECYCLES CAN HELP YOU RECYCLE MORE IN THE NEW YEAR WITH:

- Save the Food pledge cards.
- Lesson plans and fact sheets.
- Our fun waste sorting game: <https://denver.recycle.game/>.
- Presentations for staff and students.
- Classroom recycling bins and our new recycling station poster.
- Ideas for creating waste reduction, reuse projects and recycling contests at your school.
- Step-by-step assistance in planning a lunchroom composting program.

If your school would like to resolve to make less waste in 2019, please contact Denver Recycles and we can help you make it happen.

PLEDGE TO SAVE THE FOOD

An estimated 40% of food in the United States goes to waste, and you can see this play out daily in DPS lunchrooms. All too often, sandwiches sent from home go untouched, salad bar choices barely get noticed, and prepackaged snacks are never even opened. Instead, students simply toss these perfectly edible items in the trash (or compost) and head outside to recess.

This New Years, Denver Recycles is asking students and their families to take the **My Save the Food Pledge** and commit to reducing their food waste. Just send [this pledge card](#) home with students to complete with an adult and return to school. Then, display all the pledge cards together in a central location. You can print directly from the PDF that this newsletter links to, or if your school is tight on printing resources, please contact Denver Recycles for assistance.

STUDENTS CAN WORK WITH THEIR FAMILIES TO:

- Discuss what foods they like in their lunch.
- Help make their lunch — they are more likely to eat what they make.
- Pack reusable containers in their lunch and bring home all uneaten food.
- Purchase locally grown produce, which will stay fresh longer and will more likely be eaten.
- Pack cut pieces of fruit rather than whole fruits, which they are more likely to throw away.
- Eat lunch box leftovers as a snack later.
- Limit the amount of food they take from the school salad bar to only what they can eat.



EVERY CARTON COUNTS!

DID YOU KNOW THAT
THE AVERAGE U.S.
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
USES 53,200 CARTONS
EVERY YEAR?



The good news is DPS schools can recycle their milk and juice cartons in the lunchroom. Considering how many cartons the District serves, **this could make a big impact**. Just empty all liquid and remove the straw before placing a carton in the purple cart.

Cartons are mainly made from paper as well as very thin layers of polyethylene plastic. Shelf-stable cartons (like broth cartons) contain some aluminum as well. At the paper mill, recycled cartons are added to a large machine called a Hydrapulper (essentially a giant blender) that uses water to break them down into two components. The paper fibers are turned into things like paper towels, tissues and office paper, while the plastic and aluminum can be recycled into building products like ceiling tiles and wallboard.

By recycling cartons at school, you can:

- Reduce cafeteria waste.
- Increase the potential to save money on disposal costs.
- Help students develop environmentally-friendly habits.
- Reinforce the connection with recycling at home by recycling at school.

Recycling Q&A

PLASTICS 101

Denver Recycles makes it easy to recycle many plastics, but there are still some plastic items that you should **never put in your purple cart**. Review these commonly asked questions to ensure that you and your students are recycling plastics correctly.

Q: How can I determine what plastics to recycle?

A: *Plastic items must meet these two requirements to qualify for recycling:*



1. *They must be a rigid plastic container (like bottles, jugs, jars, tubs, cups and trays). If you can easily crumple the item in your hand, then it is not rigid and does not belong in your purple cart. For example, a plastic chip bag is not rigid so you should not recycle it.*

2. *The rigid container must also be labeled with a number 1 through 7 (1 through 7).*

Q: My plastic bag has a recycling symbol, so why can't I put it in my purple cart?

A: *Plastic bags do not qualify for the Denver Recycles program because they are not a rigid container. Additionally, plastic bags can cause damage at the recycling center by getting tangled around the sorting equipment. Although plastic grocery bags are not accepted in your purple cart, most grocery stores take back bags for recycling. Better yet, bring your own reusable bags. Also, you should **NEVER bag recyclables**.*



No Plastic Bags
(return to store)

Q: What do recycled plastics become?

A: *Plastic is recycled into things like fiberfill for clothing, sleeping bags and carpet, or it can become playground equipment and plastic lumber. Making these items from recycled plastic, rather than petroleum, saves energy and reduces emissions.*

HAVE A SCHOOL RECYCLING QUESTION?

Email it to [Denver Recycles](#) with the subject line "School Recycling Newsletter," and we will get you an answer. We may even post your question in our next newsletter.

RECYCLING HERO



Congratulations and a big thank you to **Dee Bethel** and **Rebekah Lauck** at **Denver Language School Whiteman campus** for helping make their recycling and composting program a continued success!

Despite the school getting an entirely new staff and student body, and being in the middle of a major campus construction project, **Dee (facilities manager)** has remained dedicated to maintaining the program. She diligently gets the recycling and composting carts out for collection at the curb in all sorts of weather and communicates well with the staff and **Rebekah (parent volunteer)** about program needs.

Rebekah regularly volunteers to help make the program run smoothly and plans to wash the recycling carts once every few months. Dee and Rebekah make a great team and truly are recycling heroes.

RECYCLE THESE

- ♻️ Aluminum cans & foil
- ♻️ Cardboard
- ♻️ Colored paper
- ♻️ Construction paper
- ♻️ Glass bottles & jars
- ♻️ Juice boxes
- ♻️ Junk mail
- ♻️ Magazines & catalogs
- ♻️ Newspaper
- ♻️ Notebook & office paper
- ♻️ Paper bags
- ♻️ Paperboard
- ♻️ Paper cups
- ♻️ Paper folders
- ♻️ Paper milk & juice cartons
- ♻️ Pizza boxes
- ♻️ Rigid plastic food and beverage containers labeled
- ♻️ Steel cans

DPS COMPOSTS

Public schools across Denver are joining the DPS lunchroom composting program and taking advantage of its potential to drastically reduce their waste. There are now **36 schools** participating, and each school keeps an average of **100 pounds of food waste** out of the landfill each school day.

Schools collect lunchroom leftovers in green carts and Denver Solid Waste Management transports the leftovers to a local composting facility where they are transformed into a beneficial soil amendment called compost. The compost produced is used in local agriculture and landscaping projects to create healthy soil. By composting, not only are schools helping to reuse their food waste, they are also reducing greenhouse gas emissions by sending less food waste to the landfill. Students and staff participating in the DPS Composts program are empowered to help nature.

Schools interested in starting a lunchroom composting program will receive:

- Step-by-step assistance in planning your program and ongoing support.
- Free assemblies, classroom presentations for student compost monitors, and staff training.
- Banners for the lunchroom.
- Waste sorts so you can see exactly what is in your school's trash.

Email DenverRecycles@DenverGov.org to learn more about starting a compost program at your school or call 311 to sign up for residential compost collection at your Denver home.



DENVER

Treecycle 2019

NEW DAY-OF-SERVICE SCHEDULE THIS YEAR

Treecycle Collection Schedule

January 2019

SU	MO	TU	WE	TH	FR	SA
	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Tree Collection Day

Your tree must be placed at your trash set-out location by 7 a.m. on your scheduled trash collection day.

New Year's Day Holiday

No Solid Waste Management collections.

PARTICIPATING IN Treecycle IS SIMPLE, AND RECYCLING YOUR TREE AFTER THE HOLIDAYS IS AS EASY AS 1, 2, 3!

- 1 Remove all decorations, lights, and the tree stand from your tree.
- 2 Set your tree out for collection on one of your scheduled trash collection days during the two-week Treecycle collection period.
- 3 Reclaim free mulch made from your tree at the annual Mulch Giveaway & Compost Sale in May.



For detailed program guidelines and additional information, visit DenverGov.org/Treecycle or call 311 (720-913-1311).

STUDENT OPPORTUNITY RECYCLING POSTER CONTEST

ENTRIES DUE BY APRIL 26, 2019



THE ANNUAL RECYCLE COLORADO POSTER CONTEST IS HERE!

Please encourage students to submit entries that showcase their artistic talent and their commitment to the environment. Prizes will be awarded to students and schools!

Visit www.recyclecolorado.org for more information.

DID YOU KNOW?

- **A student environmental club** or green team is a great way to create student-driven change at your school. By meeting at least once every other week, students can identify and implement steps they can take to address environmental challenges such as improving the school's recycling program.
- **There are several ways** to choose participants, including by application, essay contest, teacher selection or class elections.
- **Many schools** rely on student environmental clubs/green teams to empty recycle bins from classrooms as well as common areas like the library and offices.
- **The group may choose** to take on additional responsibilities like monitoring classroom recycle bins and trash cans to ensure the right items go in the right place; communicating program updates through announcements, presentations and posters; and running school recycling and waste reduction contests.
- **To learn more** about starting a environmental club/green team, contact Denver Recycles.

