

Making Signage Effective

Effective signage draws positive attention and educates, thereby attracting participants and reducing contamination through proper participation. Different types of signage will be necessary for different aspects of the program, and it may have different purposes in different areas. The three keys are:

- 1) Be consistent in the look and placement of the signage (for it to be easily and readily identifiable).
- 2) Be clear in the purpose and wording of the signage (so it is understandable and doable).
- 3) Make it attractive and attention-grabbing.

Using a slogan for the program provides a good through-line for signage. Signage should be checked periodically to be sure it is still in good condition (attached, holding up under the stresses of container usage and cleaning, etc.). Replace and update signage as necessary.

When designing signage, ask yourself the following questions:

For what purposes is signage needed? Consider this:

- General education
 - ◇ Identifying recyclable materials
 - ◇ Identifying general steps for participants to follow
 - ◇ The overall process of recycling
- Specific tips
 - For areas throughout the office and/or facility, such as:
 - ◇ Copying and printing areas
 - ◇ Food areas
 - ◇ Maintenance areas
 - ◇ Medical areas
- Promotion
 - ◇ Of the program - brief history; include motivation behind and commitment to
 - ◇ Of incentives/rewards

Where is signage needed? Consider this:

- Areas that can contribute to a high level of recovery of recyclable materials
 - ◇ On the containers (on the side – or above, if containers are short – and on the lid near the opening)
 - ◇ In office copying and printing areas
 - ◇ Point-of-sale areas
 - ◇ High traffic areas/high visibility areas
 - ◇ Loading dock/compactor/maintenance areas
- Multiple signage in the same area as reinforcement of purpose

- ◇ Signage directly on the containers as well as above the recycling stations
- ◇ On the office recycling containers as well as near copy machines and printers

What “look” should signage have? Consider this:

- Location
 - ◇ Is placement on a wall?
On a container?
On equipment?
 - ◇ Is placement in a public area?
In a staff area?
In a “VIP” area?
In an eating area?
- Consistency
 - ◇ In using logos, slogans, fonts, graphics - a “look” specific to a particular area, but tied into overall facility “look”
 - ◇ Pre-set design parameters - established by the organization and needing an “O.K.” to proceed
- Clarity
 - ◇ Is it readable?
 - ◇ Is it understandable?
 - ◇ Is it obvious what compliance entails?
 - ◇ Is it too “busy” in details or wording?
 - ◇ Are graphics, especially directional ones, accurate and helpful?
 - ◇ Does the sign serve its purpose?
- Material sign is composed of
 - ◇ Would it be more appropriate/effective as an adhesive label?
 - ◇ A poster-sized board sign?
 - ◇ A note that can be pinned up at a desk area?
 - ◇ A paper sign?
 - ◇ A metal sign?
 - ◇ A stenciled sign painted onto a container or a wall above containers?

How will signage be affixed? Consider this:

- Location
 - ◇ Does it need to be affixed to a wall or container?
 - ◇ Does it need to be weather-resistant?
- Surface to be attached to
 - ◇ Is it wooden? Plastic? Metal?
 - ◇ Porous? Non-porous?
 - ◇ Treated? Temperature variant?

- Material the sign is composed of (appropriate to where sign is being affixed)
 - ◇ Is it an adhesive label?
 - ◇ Wooden sign?
 - ◇ Paper?
 - ◇ Metal?
 - ◇ Plastic?
 - ◇ Is the signage to be stenciled onto a surface?

Instructions & Tips for Educational Container Signage

Purpose: to help participants **quickly** understand how to properly recycle. This can aid in decreasing the amount of possible contamination in your containers.

- ◆ These are just guidelines. Be sure to check with YOUR recycler regarding what materials are and are not acceptable.
- ◆ For the sake of your audience, include both symbols and words. Symbols provide instant recognition about what and how to recycle. This is helpful for those in a hurry and for people whose first language is not English.
- ◆ Be consistent in the look and placement of the signage (for it to be easily and readily identifiable).
- ◆ Be clear in the purpose and wording of the signage (so it is understandable and doable).
- ◆ Make signage attractive and attention-grabbing.
- ◆ TIP: Signage should be checked periodically to be sure it is in good condition. (attached, holding up under the stresses of container usage and cleaning, etc.). Replace and update signage as necessary.
- ◆ For additional tips on designing signage, reference the *Making Signage Effective* tool.



MIXED PAPER ONLY

Including:

- ◆ **Magazines/Newspaper**
- ◆ **Mail** (envelopes w/ windows o.k.)
- ◆ **Copy paper**
- ◆ **Phone Books**

Please, NO FOOD PAPER





PLASTIC DRINK BOTTLES ONLY

- ◆ **Empty**
- ◆ **Remove top**
- ◆ **Recycle**

Please, NO BOTTLE TOPS





ALUMINUM CANS ONLY

- ◆ **Empty**
- ◆ **Crush**
- ◆ **Recycle**

Please, NO TIN FOOD CANS



Instructions & Tips for Promotional Container Labels

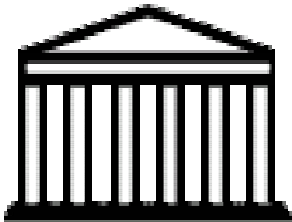
Purpose: to promote sponsorship of program.

- ◆ Apply to sides of recycling containers.
- ◆ TIP: Good advertising for clubs and/or organizations which agree to help support your program through volunteer work or financial contribution. Their logos would replace the logos on the bottom of the sample.

This container provided by the

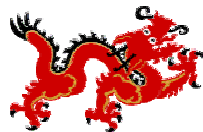
YOUR
ORGANIZATION
NAME
HERE

Your recycling program sponsored by
these fine organizations

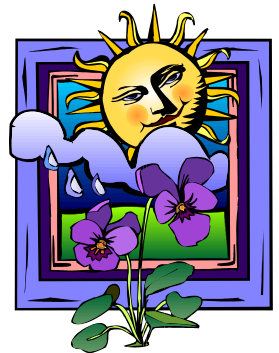


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