



Plastic Film Recycling



Outreach Tips

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Plastic Film Recycling Outreach Tip Sheet

Outreach for Responsible Units, Community Recycling Programs and Civic Action Groups

The state of Wisconsin is piloting the Wrap Recycling Action Program (WRAP) to reduce plastic waste and increase plastic bag and film recycling rates locally and nationwide. Responsible units, community recycling programs and civic action groups can play a crucial role and are encouraged to take part. Local groups can spread the word, encourage local businesses to take part, set up local collection programs and register locations as community drop-off centers.

With even the smallest steps, your group or community can be recognized as a WRAP Champion.

This packet contains free and easy tips to help you expand your film recycling outreach efforts, ranging from simple steps to more advanced actions.

FREE RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

The following resources are completely free and can be copied and tailored for individual programs:

1. Information for the General Public, Volunteers, Businesses and Civic Groups
 - The [Wisconsin W.R.A.P. Plastic Bag and Film Recycling Poster \[PDF\]](#) is an easy-reference “how-to” guide for plastic wrap, bag and film recycling. It explains which plastic films are recyclable, which items are NOT recyclable and how citizens can reduce, reuse and recycle film plastics. Search for “WA-1694” at dnr.wi.gov.
 - The [Wisconsin W.R.A.P. Plastic Bag and Film Recycling 1/3-page Flier \[PDF\]](#) is a leaflet flyer that you can distribute in your community to build awareness of plastic film recycling. Search for “WA-1695” at dnr.wi.gov.
2. Information for Businesses and Drop-Off Locations
 - [Wisconsin WRAP Plastic Film Recycling Tips for Businesses and Retailers \[PDF\]](#) is an informational packet you can distribute to local businesses. Search for “WA-1703” at dnr.wi.gov.
 - The website www.plasticfilmrecycling.org provides resources for [setting up a local collection program](#) and for [registering locations as local drop-off centers](#).
 - The website www.plasticfilmrecycling.org maintains a [searchable directory of buyers and haulers](#).
3. Directory of Local Drop-Off Locations
 - The website www.plasticfilmrecycling.org features a [Drop-Off Location Directory](#) where users can find and/or register drop-off locations. The public is encouraged to add locations and to report any errors in the Directory listings. New locations are not added without owner/management approval.
4. More Information and Resources
 - For more information on plastic film recycling and outreach, search for “[plastic film recycling](#)” at dnr.wi.gov, or contact Lis Olson at (608) 264-9258.
 - The website www.plasticfilmrecycling.org features tools to learn what is recyclable, calculate benefits, find recyclers and design a collection strategy. It also provides downloadable signs and links to bin vendors, success stories, other informational resources and links to other sites and organizations dedicated to plastic film recycling.

Consider Becoming a WRAP Champion

If you take any of the steps listed in this packet, you can get immediate recognition for your efforts as a WRAP Champion by registering online at www.plasticfilmrecycling.org/Wisconsin. When you sign up, your group/unit will receive a free online profile that lets you advertise your recycling efforts, communicate with other recyclers, upload pictures and notes about your efforts and add your community to a map of film recycling communities nationwide.

Other participants can also be recognized as WRAP Champions. Recyclers can be Champions by simply reviewing the website's best practices for handling film and by listing in the recycler directory. Recyclers can become WRAP Partners by listing in the directory, participating in pilots and sharing data from those pilots.

Retailers can also get Champion status by simply listing in the [Drop-Off Directory](#) on www.plasticfilmrecycling.org. By using the signage and participating in educational campaigns, retailers can obtain Partner status.

To get involved, visit www.plasticfilmrecycling.org/Wisconsin to sign up. Request posters for retail or non-retail locations. In return, www.plasticfilmrecycling.org asks you to list locations with posters in place and to share any news about film recycling in your area. Additionally, as a part of a statewide partnership with Roundy's (Pick 'n Save, Copps, Rainbow or Metro Markets), a limited number of new recycling bins (along with posters) may be available for these stores in your area.

WRAP COMMUNITY CHAMPION!

- Check your local listings of recycling locations in PlasticFilmRecycling.org's Drop-Off Directory. Send out a press release or use social media to announce your community's efforts.
- Instruct your residents on what and how to recycle plastic film packaging by listing resources on your web site and/or adding information to mailers or newsletters.
- Check your local listings of recyclers in PlasticFilmRecycling.org's Recycler Directory. Encourage new film collection programs by sharing tip sheets, directories, and signage—all found at www.plasticfilmrecycling.org/tips.
- Conduct an educational campaign about recycling film beyond bags (examples will be available after June 2014.)
- Share photos or stories of film recycling in your community.
- Add a link to www.plasticfilmrecycling.org to your website.

Note: you are encouraged but not required to complete all actions below to become a WRAP Community Champion.

Questions? Contact: Tonya@plasticfilmrecycling.org

More information on page eight of this packet.

Step 1: Building Awareness

At the most basic level, using resources already available, your RU or group can spread the word about how to recycle plastic film. You can:

- Spread the word about plastic film recycling locally by word of mouth, in-house newsletters and e-mails or communication with local businesses, schools, civic groups, volunteers and other organizations.
- Add links to dnr.wi.gov/topic/Recycling/bags.html and www.plasticfilmrecycling.org to your own website.
- Include information about plastic bag recycling in your community outreach efforts. If you have a recycling guide or mailer, include the Web address for www.plasticfilmrecycling.org so that residents and businesses can learn more about plastic bag and film recycling.
- Send out a press release, using the press release template on page six of this packet.
- Give special attention to drop-off locations in your community by posting pictures of their locations on your website or by offering drop-off locations free/discounted advertising space. Encourage these locations to list in the Film Drop-Off Directory.
- Educate yourself and update your employees so that you can answer questions and spread the word.

Step 2: Taking Action and Fostering Partnerships

Beyond spreading the word, you can take greater steps to encourage plastic film recycling and collection. You can:

- Create a list/directory of local drop-off locations; update the information on www.plasticfilmrecycling.org.
- Create a contact sheet for local officials and haulers using the template on page five of this packet.
- Visit existing drop-off sites in your area and provide tips for optimum placement and visibility of drop-off bins. Develop relationships with these drop-off locations as partners in outreach, providing them with links to information and encouraging them to spread the word about film recycling themselves.
- If a retailer agrees to add plastic film recycling bins, you can visit the site to ensure the collection area is adequate and offer display posters from plasticfilmrecycling.org or the DNR.
- Visit retailers, distribution centers, schools, civic centers and other locations in the area and assist them in conducting a waste audit (see www.plasticfilmrecycling.org/tips for tips).
- Encourage students and teachers to spread the word by working with schools in the area. Encourage student projects on plastic film recycling or school recycling/waste reduction challenges to raise awareness. Giving schools a waste reduction goal can be a powerful local motivator. Some manufacturers that use recycled plastic film as feedstock, like Trex®, will support education initiatives.
- Partner, when possible, with local universities and encourage all schools to conduct waste audits. University partners—including statisticians and researchers—can investigate and propose sound methods for tracking plastic bag and film reduction.
- Coordinate educational efforts with local retail stores.
- Forward positive media about businesses that recycle as a constructive way to encourage other businesses to participate in recycling efforts. You can use e-mail lists, social media, newsletters and releases to local news outlets.

Step 3: Encouraging Commercial Collection

You can help local businesses and other groups set up a collection program in your community with five easy steps:

1. Survey recyclers, haulers and buyers. Find out if and how they pick up film. Find out which recyclers have the space to separate, bale and store bales until there is enough to ship to a buyer.
2. Search the [Recycler Directory](http://www.plasticfilmrecycling.org) on www.plasticfilmrecycling.org. This will help you become familiar with potential services in your area. You can also encourage new service providers to list in the directory.
3. Assess which businesses generate film in your area. Many retailers and distribution centers that generate cardboard also generate plastic film. Encourage businesses to set up a collection program and update you on their progress.
4. Assist large generators. Very large commercial generators (>1 ton per month) may be able to work directly with a buyer, may have the option to backhaul material to their distribution center or may have enough room to store large quantities for pick up by a buyer. If companies generate smaller amounts or have no room for a baler try to connect them with a recycler who can pick up bagged plastic film with other recyclables such as cardboard.
5. Share information. Distribute the [Wisconsin WRAP Plastic Film Recycling Tips for Businesses and Retailers](#) to sites interested in contributing to the WRAP initiative. It is available for free by searching for "WA-1703" at dnr.wi.gov.

Things to Remember

- Major chain stores such as WalMart, Kohls and others might want a clean "bag only" stream since their plastic film buyers may have specific bale specifications. They may not be aware they can include other film along with bag recycling. Also, the larger stores usually need corporate approval to change or implement new programs.
- Individual haulers, buyers and recyclers may have special criteria for recycling film, bags and wrap. Be sure to check with local haulers, buyers and recyclers.
- Industry strongly encourages individual consumers and household recyclers to use retail drop-off locations rather than include them in curbside collection programs

Stories From the Field: Tell Us Your Stories!

Once you have started your plastic film and wrap recycling outreach, be sure to keep the DNR updated on your progress. Your experiences are valuable resources for testing and designing new outreach efforts. Sharing your stories is also a great way to inspire other communities and raise awareness of your own successes. Send stories to Cynthia Moore, at Cynthia.Moore@wisconsin.gov or (608) 267-7550.

Local Contact Information Template

Responsible units, community recycling programs and civic action groups distributing the Wisconsin WRAP Plastic Film Recycling Tips for Businesses and Retailers packet may want to provide local businesses and retailers with local contact information. This template demonstrates how individual RUs, programs and action groups might easily compose such an additional contact page.

Copy and paste the template below into a word processing document. Items marked with <<brackets>> below require original, regionally-specific input. Make other alterations, additions or subtractions as needed.

For easy inclusion in the existing Wisconsin WRAP Plastic Film Recycling Tips for Businesses and Retailers packet, include the contact sheet as page #9.

Local Contact Information

Information and Contacts

For more information about plastic film recycling in <CITY/COUNTY/RU REGION>, please use these contacts.

<<ORGANIZATION OR RU NAME>> Representative: <<NAME, PHONE NUMBER, E-MAIL>>

Recycling Haulers in <CITY/COUNTY/RU REGION>:

<SAMPLE: Action Recycling>
<2969 S Chase>
<Milwaukee, WI 53207>
<Nick Schultz, 414-671-5777>
<nick.schultz@actionrecyclers.com>

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*****PLEASE CONTACT HAULERS DIRECTLY FOR MATERIAL OR HANDLING RESTRICTIONS*****

Plastic Wrap, Bags and Film Recycling Press Release Template

The following is an alterable template for drafting regionally specific press releases on local plastic bag and film recycling. Copy and paste the template below into a word processing document. Items marked with <<brackets>> require original, regionally-specific input. Consider adding city, county or other organization logos and local examples. Make other alterations, additions or subtractions as needed.

<<City/county/RU region>> reinvigorates recycling with Wisconsin WRAP

<<CITY/COUNTY/RU REGION>> – In 2014, Wisconsin becomes the first and model state in the Wrap Recycling Action Program (WRAP), a nationwide initiative to reduce plastic waste and build economic opportunities. With a few simple steps, businesses and citizens in <<CITY/COUNTY/REGION>> can help lead the way.

Grocery and retail stores, distribution centers and volunteer groups can support Wisconsin WRAP by collecting their own plastic case wrapping, bags and packaging material, by working with haulers to set up a local collection program and by registering their locations as community drop-off centers on the website www.plasticfilmrecycling.org. Private citizens can participate by recycling their clean and dry packaging wraps and bags.

“It’s a great way for <<CITY/COUNTY/REGION>> businesses, civic groups and citizens to work together, reduce waste and create jobs” said <<REPRESENTATIVE NAME>> of <<YOUR ORGANIZATION>>, “There really is a role for everyone!”

Plastic film recycling recovers clean, dry plastic wrap, bags and film and reuses them as raw material for manufacturing products like new plastic bags, composite lumber, park benches and playground equipment. Wrap, bags and film are in high demand but many people are not aware they are recyclable.

Drop-off centers are crucial to the WRAP project because plastic wrap, bags and film clog standard recycling machinery and are difficult to separate from other materials. The industry strongly encourages individual consumers and household recyclers to use retail drop-off locations.

A 2012 Department of Natural Resources study concluded that Wisconsin could see substantial economic benefits by recycling more of the valuable plastic film that currently ends up in landfills. The DNR partnered with the American Chemistry Council and GreenBlue's Sustainable Packaging Coalition to launch Wisconsin WRAP. In <<CITY/COUNTY/REGION>, efforts are already underway.

By volunteering as a community drop-off center and encouraging customers to reduce, reuse and recycle their own bags and wrap, businesses like <<LOCAL BUSINESS/DROP-OFF LOCATION>> have already helped Wisconsin to tap the potential of recycled plastic bags and film.

“As demand for recyclable plastic material grows, recycling it has never been easier,” said <<REPRESENTATIVE LAST NAME.>>.

Current partners in the WRAP initiative include << LOCAL BUSINESSES AND PARTNERS>>. A directory of local drop-off locations is available at www.plasticfilmrecycling.org.

For more information on what plastic wrap and film items are recyclable, plastic film recycling in general or how your business can join the initiative, visit <<YOUR WEBSITE>> or contact <<PHONE CONTACT NAME>> at <<PHONE NUMBER>>.

Free Informational Posters Available on the Wisconsin DNR Website

Recycle clean, dry plastic bags and film packaging

Recycle if Clean & Dry

Store Drop-off

PLASTIC

BAGS / FILM / WRAP

how2recycle.info

ONLY frozen food bags with the above how2recycle label
 NO prewashed salad mix bags
 NO degradable bags

Recycled plastic bags and wraps can become new packaging or durable home building products.

plasticfilmrecycling.org

Nonpaper Bags
 Produce Bags
 Retail Bags
 Food Storage Bags
 Air Pillows
 Cases Wrap (e.g. snacks, beverage cases)
 Napkin, Paper Towel, Bathroom Tissue and Diaper Wrap (packaging)
 Bread Bags
 Dry Cleaning Bags

Recycling plastic bags and film

First REDUCE your use of plastic bags and film, then REUSE and then RECYCLE!

Can I recycle plastic bags and film if they...

YES!

- ...are colored plastic? **YES**, the color does not affect the recycling process.
- ...stretch when I pull them apart with both hands? **YES**, this is the correct type of plastic to recycle. If you cannot stretch them apart with your hands, throw it in the garbage.
- ...have a paper label or tape stuck on? **YES** but labels, tape and adhesive strips **MUST** be removed prior to recycling.

NO!

- ...are thicker plastic like a dog/cat food bag or a frozen vegetable bag? **NO**, this type of plastic will degrade the quality of the plastic film collected.
- ...were used for water softener salt? **NO**, this plastic bag will have traces of salt on it and should be thrown away. The salt will degrade the recycling process.
- ...make a loud crinkle sound (like a chip bag or candy wrappers) when I mash it in my hand? **NO**, this plastic film is not recyclable.

Remember: plastic containers like water bottles and yogurt containers need to go in your recycling bin and should not be included with your plastic film and bags.

If in doubt, throw it out! Plastic film must be clean and dry and the right type in order for it to be recycled. Materials that can harm the recycling process include: tape, labels, paper receipts, food residue and crumbs, salt, and crinkly or rigid plastics (bottles and tubs). These contaminants can ruin the quality of the plastic and may result in it not being recycled.

Remember: Reduce, Reuse, then Recycle!

Why do plastic bags and film need to be clean and dry? Most plastic bags and film do not go through a wash process before turning into a new product and therefore must be received clean. Moisture can be a problem when bags are bunched up or balled tightly together. Mold can form, thus contaminating and ruining the batch.

W.R.A.P.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services, and activities under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of Natural Resources, Washington, D.C. 20240.

This publication is available in alternative format (large print, Braille, audio tape, etc.) upon request. Please call (608) 265-2111 for more information.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Bureau of Waste & Materials Management
PO Box 7821 | Madison, WI 53707 | (608) 265-2111
DNRWasteMaterials@wisconsin.gov
WA-1694

For a [free full-size PDF download](#) version of this poster, visit dnr.wi.gov and search "WA-1694"

WRAP was created by The Flexible Film Recycling Group (FFRG) in partnership with the Sustainable Packaging Coalition and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.



The Wrap Recycling Action Program (WRAP) is a new public awareness campaign designed to empower motivated stakeholders to contribute to a common goal: to make plastic film packaging a commonly recycled material with a strong and ever-growing recycling rate. Join other communities and organizations that are leading the charge to share information about the opportunities to recycle plastic film beyond bags.

Want To Get Involved?

Become a WRAP Community Champion!

1. Please visit plasticfilmrecycling.org/Wisconsin to sign up.
2. Request posters for retail or non-retail drop-off locations (see reverse side for posters).
3. In return, we ask you to list locations with posters in place and to share any news about film recycling in your area.
4. If you are interested in doing more such as gathering data on recovery before and after posters please contact us. A limited number of bins are available (thanks to Trex Company) for communities that have Roundy's stores (Pick 'n Save, Copps, Rainbow and Metro Market) in the area.

Note: you are encouraged but not required to complete all actions below to become a WRAP Community Champion.

WRAP COMMUNITY CHAMPION!

- Check your local listings of recycling locations in PlasticFilmRecycling.org's Drop-Off Directory.
- Send out a press release or use social media to announce your community's efforts.
- Instruct your residents on what and how to recycle plastic film packaging by listing resources on your web site and/or adding information to mailers or newsletters.
- Check your local listings of recyclers in PlasticFilmRecycling.org's Recycler Directory.
- Encourage new film collection programs by sharing tip sheets, directories, and signage—all found at www.plasticfilmrecycling.org/tips.
- Share photos or stories of film recycling in your community.
- Add a link to www.plasticfilmrecycling.org to your website.

Benefits: Reduce plastic waste and increase public understanding and involvement to expand plastic recycling. Be recognized for your efforts and inspire other communities to get involved!

Questions? Contact: Tonya@plasticfilmrecycling.org

Why Is Film Packaging So Abundant?

Film provides dramatic light-weighting, which saves on fuel costs and emissions.

Why Isn't More Recycled?

Every household and business has plastic film packaging (e.g., paper towel overwrap).

* Most consumers are unaware they can recycle plastic film—in addition to bags—through participating store drop-off programs.

- There is no shortage of opportunities with nearly 18,000 film drop off locations in the United States.
- Access is not the issue; it is mostly lack of awareness about the many types of film packaging that can be recycled.

* Many small to midsize businesses struggle to find efficient collection and consolidation options.

- There is a growing list of local recycling service providers in the Film Recycler Directory on plasticfilmrecycling.org
- Demand is strong for scrap film provided it's kept clean and dry, as is often the case in retail collection programs.



We need consistent messages from retailers and local recycling coordinators about what and where to recycle plastic film packaging.

Please become a WRAP Champion and help get the word out!