



TOWN OF TYNGSBOROUGH

25 Bryants Lane

Tyngsborough, MA 01879

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Dear Tyngsborough Resident:

The Town of Tyngsborough was awarded the RecyclingIQ grant from Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. This grant funds education efforts that will be coordinated by the Sustainability Committee and the Board of Health to help residents understand what can and cannot be recycled in our curbside program. The goal is to lower our recycling contamination rate. Our current contamination rate is 14.8%, measured by weight. This might not sound like much, but our top issue is plastic bags, which are very light compared to the rest of the material collected for recycling.

What does this program mean for me, a Town resident?

The Recycling IQ program is a robust education campaign that includes educating our residents and inspecting recycling carts curbside. A tag will be left on the cart handle of contaminated carts and the cart will be rejected by Republic Services. This tag will include information about what types of contamination were found. **Once the issue has been corrected, the cart will be collected during the following pick up.** We know it will be difficult for you if we reject your cart. We also know that recycling has become increasingly complex in recent years and we are now strengthening our education efforts to keep up with this growing complexity.

Why did the Town choose to implement this program?

We chose to implement the RecyclingIQ program for three reasons:

- We heard from residents that there is a great deal of confusion around what belongs in the recycling cart. This program will provide direct mail and other targeted communication to residents to help us be better recyclers.
- Recycling Contamination costs everyone money. When the wrong items arrive at the sorting facility, it is very costly and time consuming for the processor to deal with. These costs are passed on to the town and ultimately to the residents who pay taxes. We can all do our part to keep these costs down by making sure only clean recyclables are being sent for processing.
- Contamination endangers the health and safety of recycling workers. Plastic bags and films get caught in the sorting equipment, which requires an employee to cut them free from the line.

What does recycling contamination mean?

Contamination in the recycling typically comes in two forms:

- **Materials that belong in the recycling cart but are not prepared correctly.** For example, when there is food remaining in a plastic container or a half-filled bottle of juice. Containers should be clean and empty. (Just a quick rinse is fine.)
- **Materials that do not belong in the recycling cart.** Our top issue is plastic bags and other film plastics. Other contaminants include: tangles (like cords and hoses), aseptic cartons (like broth and some milk/juice), scrap metal & wood, textiles and electronics.

Where can I get more information?

Please visit the Town website or www.recyclesmartMA.org with questions about what's accepted in our curbside recycling program and for more information about RecyclingIQ.

We believe deeply in diverting waste whenever possible. But unless you are certain that something is recyclable, put it in the trash instead. **Think - when in doubt, throw it out!** Please contact me if you have any questions about this new initiative. Thank you for doing your part to Recycle Smart.

Sincerely,
Liz Antanavica, Sustainability Committee, Chairperson