

## **“Chicago Recycles: Blue Cart Segment” Video Text**

With this goal in mind, Chicago is rolling out its successful blue cart residential recycling program. Materials are sorted, collected, and processed in order to manufacture and sell them as new products. Recycling decreases emissions of green house gases that contribute to global climate change. When we recycle, we also reduce the need for landfills, save energy, reduce pollution, and conserve natural resources such as timber, water, and minerals. To help make recycling a success in Chicago, it’s important to understand what the blue cart recycling program is and how it works.

The City of Chicago provides garbage collection to approximately 600,000 homes. This includes all single family homes and multi-unit buildings with 4 units or less. In all, the city collects over one million tons of waste every year. If you are a resident without a blue cart or you are not serviced by the city, head to [www.chicagorecycles.org](http://www.chicagorecycles.org) or call 311 to learn about our recycling drop-off centers and recycling in multi-unit buildings. You can also download and print your recycling pick-up schedule, a poster of accepted materials, and an educational brochure from the website. The brochure is also available in Spanish.

In an effort to responsibly handle this residential waste, collection is divided into the three different waste streams: garbage, recycling, and yard waste. Each stream is collected by a different, separate truck. Let me show you how it works.

First and foremost recycling begins in the home. For eligible homes, the city’s blue cart program provides a simple and easy way to recycle. All you need to do is separate your recyclables from your garbage and place them in your blue cart. Recyclables can be placed in the cart loose or in a bag, whichever is easiest and most convenient for you. No sorting is required. Recyclables can be mixed and placed in your blue cart together. Accepted items are:

- aluminum cans and foil
- steel and tin cans
- glass bottles and jars
- paper, milk and juice cartons
- and the plastic containers that have a
- recycling symbol with chasing arrows with the number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 7 inside.

You can find the recycling symbol on the bottom or side of most containers. Just about everything made of paper can be recycled including newspapers, magazines, office paper, junk mail, cardboard boxes, food boxes, paper bags and telephone books.

If you are a resident without a blue cart, you can bring all these same materials to the closest recycling drop-off center. The city of Chicago provides free drop-off centers for residents to bring their recycling.

The centers are open 7 days a week during daylight hours. Please be sure to break down boxes to make room for more materials. For a list of locations and more information, please visit [www.chicagorecycles.org](http://www.chicagorecycles.org).

Some important things to remember: All items placed in the blue cart should be emptied. As best as you can, you should flatten boxes and large plastic items to save space in the cart. Break down larger cardboard boxes, secure them together, and place them outside the cart for pick up. For sanitary purposes, we recommend that you rinse any recyclables that once contained food, though a bit of food residue does not affect the recycling process.

Items not accepted in the blue cart program are

- clothes
- plastic bags and plastic film
- Styrofoam
- Items made of plastic that are not bottles or containers
- Glass items that are not a bottle or a jar
- Wood
- Other household items

Plastics marked with number 6 commonly called Styrofoam are not accepted in your blue cart. We cannot recycle number 6 plastics because there is not a market to sell them or to make new products. Since number 6 plastic can come in many shapes and forms it is a difficult item to recycle. Do not place any of these items in your blue cart.

You can see a list of accepted materials on the website at [www.chicagorecycles.org](http://www.chicagorecycles.org)

Every other week the Department of Streets and Sanitation will send a recycling only truck to your block to empty the blue carts. If you have curbside service, your day of recycling will be on the same day as your garbage collection. For residents with alley collection, blue carts need to be accessible during the entire week to ensure that your cart is emptied.

A blue cart containing excessive contamination or too many items that are not accepted for recycling will not be emptied. Instead, the recycling crew will place a sticker on the top of your cart to let you know it's too contaminated and cannot be collected for recycling. Leave the sticker on the cart, and the next time they are in the alley the garbage crew will empty the contents of that blue cart into a garbage cart and remove the sticker. Follow the program guidelines more carefully in the future when placing items in the cart.