

## Containers Case Study – Clearwater, FL

**MUNICIPALITY:** City of Clearwater, FL

**WEBSITE:** [http://www.clearwater-fl.com/gov/depts/solid\\_waste/single\\_stream.asp](http://www.clearwater-fl.com/gov/depts/solid_waste/single_stream.asp)

**POPULATION:** 110,703

**IMPLEMENTATION OF CURBSIDE SINGLE STREAM RECYCLING:** 2013

**EXPANDED MATERIALS LIST:**

- All plastics 1 thru 7 (no polystyrene foam, plastic bags or wrap)
- Wide-mouth plastic and rigid plastic containers
- Glass bottles and jars
- Cardboard
- Milk and juice cartons, and juice boxes
- Empty aerosol cans
- Aluminum and steel cans
- Plastic bottles
- Newspaper
- Mixed Paper - if you can rip it, you can recycle it. This includes office paper, magazines and catalogs, junk mail, shredded paper, phone books, paperback books, cereal and food boxes, envelopes, shoe boxes, wrapping paper and folders.

**REASONS FOR EXPANDING:**

- In 2012, Clearwater conducted a single-stream cart-based pilot program in select neighborhoods which led to a citywide rollout of single stream collection in September 2013.

**EDUCATION AND OUTREACH:**

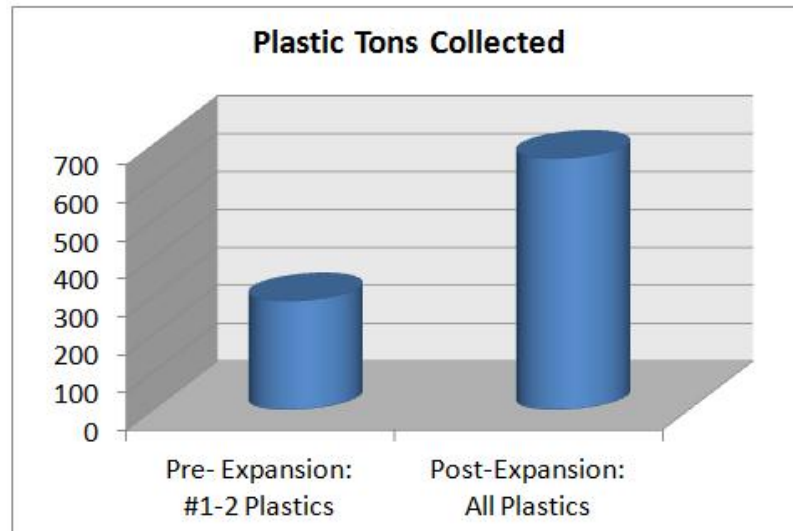
The City's advertising campaign "Do More Blue" promoted the ease of the recycling cart. Their program launch included bill inserts, road signage, recycling truck wraps, direct mail and an information packet with recycling cart delivery

## RECYCLING RECOVERY RATES:

**PRE-EXPANSION:** 286.51 tons or 573,020 pounds of #1-2 plastics

**POST-EXPANSION:** 663.20 tons or 1.3 million pounds of all plastics the first year.

The program saw an average set out rate of more than 70 percent and diverted 5,305.63 tons of total recyclables or 10.6 million pounds in its first year. As of fiscal year 2015, Clearwater was recycling 5,631.67 tons or 11,263,340 pounds of mixed recycling annually.



## CHALLENGES:

- Before their expansion, Clearwater’s MRF did not have the capacity to process single-stream material. The Solid Waste Department transported the commingled material to Waste Management’s (WM) MRF in East Tampa, more than 25 miles from City. Contamination and diving commodities markets made the change to single stream a challenge for Clearwater.
- Despite efforts to educate residents, contamination is still prevalent. The City believes these increased levels of contamination were due to an insufficient continuous education program to residents.

## LESSONS LEARNED:

- Education is key to reduce contamination rates and improve the quality of recycling. Clearwater’s Recycling Specialist spoke of the powerful impact of resident education on the City’s contamination rates for the entire recycling program.
- At the end of 2015, Clearwater had begun a recycling incentive program. More than 6,600 residents have subscribed so far. Clearwater hopes that through ongoing education and the construction of a new single stream MRF, residents will recycle the correct plastics and other recyclables collected by the City.

EXAMPLES OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES:

Excerpt from Yearly Mailer:

# SINGLE STREAM RECYCLING



**Y**ellow recycling bins are now a thing of the past here in Clearwater. Hopefully you are getting acclimated to the new blue recycling barrels and they are filling up faster than you ever imagined. We are seeing some impressive participation and tonnage numbers!

Here are a few friendly reminders about the blue recycling barrel:

- \* All recyclables must be placed loose in the city-provided, approved blue barrels.
- \* Please place blue barrel at the edge of the street with the wheel facing your house (away from street) by 7 a.m. on your collection day.
- \* Weekly collection occurs between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. on your designated collection day.
- \* Place the barrels at least 3 feet apart and 3 feet away from any obstructions that may interfere with pick-up (i.e. black garbage barrels, mailboxes, parked cars, etc.).
- \* Place your barrel at the curb for pick-up no earlier than 7 p.m. the day before collection.
- \* Remove barrel from the curb to a point at the side or rear of the structure (your house) by 7 a.m. the day after collection.
- \* More Tips: When out, garbage containers should be placed within two feet of the curb, with the handle facing away from the curb, and at least three feet from any obstructions such as vehicles, mailboxes, recycling barrels, trees, etc.

## YES! RECYCLE THESE ITEMS:

- **All Plastics**  
*(no Styrofoam, bags or wrap)*
- **Wide Mouth Plastic & Rigid Plastic Containers**
- **Glass Bottles & Jars**
- **Cardboard**
- **Milk & Juice Cartons, and Juice Boxes**
- **Empty Aerosol Cans**
- **Aluminum & Steel Cans**
- **Plastic Bottles**
- **Newspaper**
- **Mixed Paper**  
*(If you can rip it, you can recycle it! This includes: office paper, magazines & catalogs, junk mail, shredded paper, phone books, paperback books, cereal & food boxes, envelopes, shoe boxes, wrapping paper, and folders)*



## NO! THESE ITEMS ARE NOT RECYCLABLE IN YOUR BLUE BARREL:

- **Plastic Bags, Film, or Wrap**
- **Pizza Boxes** *(or other cardboard with food residue)*
- **Styrofoam**
- **Electronics:** *TVs, Audio & Video Cassettes, & Photographic Film*
- **CDs & DVDs**
- **Rubber or Tires**
- **Paint Cans**
- **Ceramics & Household Glassware**
- **Light Bulbs**
- **Batteries**
- **Clothing or other fabric**
- **Household Garbage**
- **Yard Waste**
- **Toys**



**Excerpt From Multi-Family Recycling Brochure:**



**SINGLE  
STREAM  
RECYCLING**

GLASS • PLASTIC  
METAL • FIBER

**It's Easy to Start Doing Your Part for the Environment with Single Stream Recycling.**

Single Stream recycling is easy and convenient to use. Clearwater's service will not only allow you to recycle more, it is also a cleaner and greener collection method. The improved recycling service will make it easier than ever for your community to make a commitment to become avid recyclers and Do More Blue. Apartment and Condominium complexes are provided the opportunity to recycle with a program designed to fit the needs of their community.

**WHAT CAN I RECYCLE?**

Residents will be able to recycle many new items to further reduce the waste going into the landfill. Please make sure all items are empty.

**YES! RECYCLE THESE ITEMS:**



**New! All Plastics**  
(no Styrofoam, bags or wrap)

**New! Wide Mouth Plastic & Rigid Plastic Containers**

**New! Glass Bottles & Jars**

**New! Cardboard**

**New! Milk & Juice Cartons, & Juice Boxes**

**New! Empty Aerosol Cans**

**Aluminum & Steel Cans**

**Plastic Bottles**

**Newspaper**



**Mixed Paper** (If you can rip it, you can recycle it!  
Including: Office Paper, Magazines & Catalogs, Junk Mail, Shredded Paper, Phone Books, Paperback Books, Cereal & Food Boxes, Envelopes, Shoe Boxes, Wrapping Paper, and Folders)

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