



Recycle CLEAN



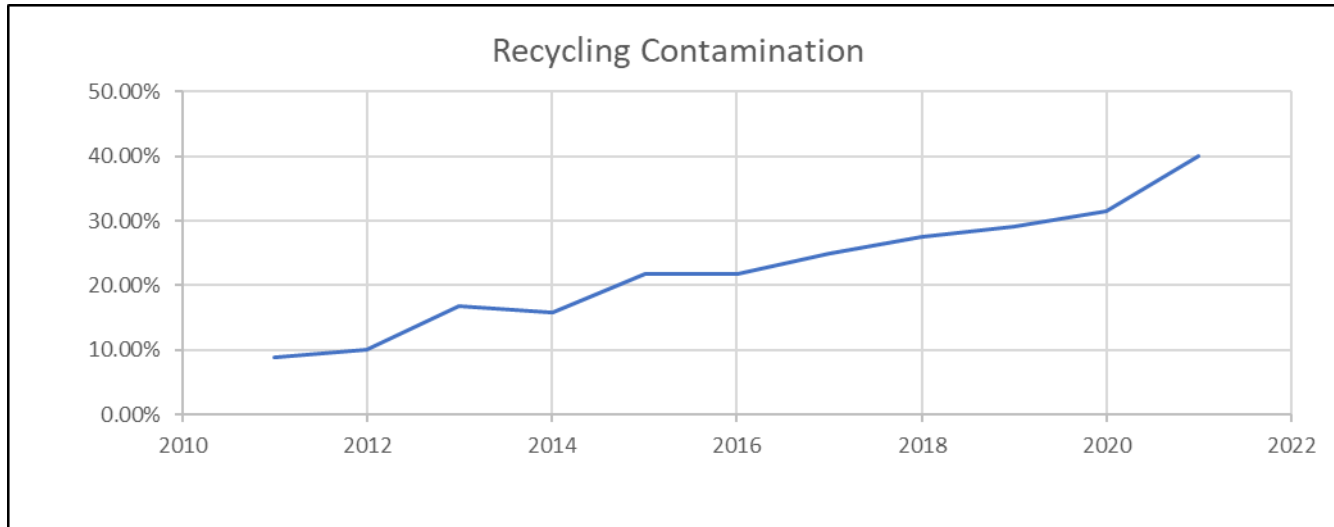
August 17, 2021



Historical Contamination



A Recycling Inspection & Education Program will begin in October to combat the City's increasing recycling contamination problem





Historical Contamination



The most recent audit revealed an average contamination rate of over 40%


- Some customers have little to no contamination, but a majority the recycle carts contain up to 75% trash
- We want to focus on the 50% to 75% contamination customers



What is Contamination?



Items that are not recyclable in our program

- The recycling triangle  does not mean that an item is recyclable in our City.
 - The symbol was designed to indicate the type of plastic, not its recyclability
- Many items are recyclable in other cities' programs, but are not recyclable at our contractor's Material Recycling Facility (MRF) due to:
 - Processing equipment limitations
 - Market conditions



What Items Are Considered Contamination?



Glass
Drink Cartons
Aluminum Foil
Any Type of Plastic Bags
Styrofoam
Soiled/Dirty Cardboard (Pizza Boxes)
Clothing
Yard Waste
Hoses / Lawn Furniture
Hazardous Materials
Ceramics
Electronics



Cost of Contamination



Contamination is expensive!

- Contamination adds to:
 - The collection cost for recyclables
 - The processing cost of \$126 per ton for sorting recyclables
 - The residential customer pays \$500 thousand annually to process contaminated waste
- Identified contaminants are transported to the landfill, adding an additional cost
- Contamination decreases the value of the recyclables



Recycle CLEAN



Staff has researched the practices of Austin, Houston, McAllen and San Antonio to determine the industry's best practices.*

City	% of Contamination	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense	4 th Offense
Austin "Recycle Right"	35% to 17.8%	Education - \$20	Continued Education - \$20	Continued Education - \$20	Remove Cart If "egregious"
Houston "Feet on the Street"	41% to 39%	Education - Notice	No Collection of cart	No Collection of cart	No Collection of cart
McAllen "Recycle Right"	80% to 50%	Education - Notice	Remove Cart, add \$12.50 for 2 nd trash cart		
San Antonio	32% to 20%	Continued Education - \$25 / \$50	Continued Education - \$25 / \$50	Remove Cart	

*All programs saw a reduction in contamination and minimal reduction in participation



Recycle CLEAN



Recycle CLEAN program will replicate similar programs that are employed in other Texas localities that have effectively reduced their contamination rate.

City	% of Contamination	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense	4 th Offense
Corpus Christi “Recycle CLEAN”	40%	Education - Notice	Continued Education - \$25	Continued Education - \$50	
Austin “Recycle Right”	35% to 17.8%	Education - \$20	Continued Education - \$20	Continued Education - \$20	Remove Cart If “egregious”
San Antonio	32% to 20%	Continued Education - \$25 / \$50	Continued Education - \$25 / \$50	Remove Cart	



Recycle CLEAN



The Recycle CLEAN Program:

- Goal is to reduce contamination from 40% to 20% or less by 2026
- Cost savings from reduced collection costs and processing fees
- Resources (already funded in FY21 budget):
 - 5 Full time employees
 - 4 inspection vehicles with an annual lease-purchase of approximately \$37,146.93
 - 1 automated refuse collection truck with an annual lease-purchase of \$69,713.65



Summary



1. Recycle CLEAN is a program based in education, not fines
2. Department's goal is not to fine residents who experience incidental occurrences of contamination in their recycling bins
3. Inspectors will maintain the ability exercise discretion when addressing contamination concern



Way Forward



1. Council approves the Recycle CLEAN Program
2. Modify City ordinances
3. Hire the inspectors (in process)
4. Purchase the 4 right hand drive trucks (already ordered)
5. Begin inspections in fall of 2021



Recommendation



Staff recommends Council approve the Recycle CLEAN program which utilizes industry best practices, concepts, and approaches from other large Texas localities who have effectively reduced their contamination rates