Keep the “F-Words” Out of Single-Stream Recycling

Film, food, and foam are dirty words to the single-stream recycling process in Athens-Clarke County. Together, these materials make up about 21% of the waste stream in Georgia. When placed in the recycling bin, these items wind up in the landfill eventually, but they take an expensive journey that destroys other recyclable material along the way. There is an alternative to landfiling these items, but they do not belong in your single-stream recycling bin.

Film
Plastic grocery bags, stretch film, bubble-wrap, cereal box liners, bread or produce bags, clear plastic that holds a flat of bottles together — any kind of stretchy plastic is the worst contaminant at single-stream recycling processing facilities. Like a garden hose (we get those too, sadly), film wraps around the rotating sorting equipment. Imagine tossing a handful of rubber bands onto your car’s engine while it’s idling. Yes, it’s that bad!

Where should it go? Most big-box retail stores will accept plastic grocery bags, and the Center for Hard to Recycle Materials (CHaRM) will accept a wide variety of film plastic, bubble wrap, etc. For a detailed description of what can and cannot be included with film plastic dropped off at the CHaRM, visit www.ABagsLife.com.

Food
Most of the food entering the recycling processing facility is stuck to containers. Beverage containers should be empty and, preferably, rinsed out. Thoroughly rinse food containers that held milk, yogurt, peanut butter, or tomato sauce. If you decide it’s not worth the effort, throw the container in the trash. Pizza boxes are perfectly recyclable in Athens, but not if they are coated with cheese or grease and there are crusts left in the box. And that pepper is definitely not recyclable!

Where should it go? Clean any food residue and place the container in the single-stream recycling collection, or dispose of it in the trash. Or…compost! Paper plates and paper containers like pizza boxes can be composted in a backyard compost bin, as long as they don’t contain any protein, like meat, grease, or cheese. Athens-Clarke County residents are fortunate to have the option of curbside food scraps collection, offered by Let Us Compost. This for-profit company charges a fee to collect food scraps. Unlike backyard composting, Let Us Compost will take protein (meat, dairy, bones, etc.). For more on composting, go to www.athensclarkecounty.com/Compost.

Foam
Expanded polystyrene (EPS), often referred to by the trademarked name Styrofoam, is used in packaging, as well as beverage cups, food clamshells, meat/fruit trays, and egg cartons. EPS is a cheap, lightweight material that absorbs impacts and insulates beverages without sweating. That is all great, but come disposal time, not much EPS gets recycled. It is often dirty (we don’t want the straws or macaroni and cheese, please!), and because EPS hardly weighs anything, it is too expensive to ship to market. An entire tractor-trailer load of loose EPS only weighs 1,000 pounds — truckers like to get 40,000 pounds on a load.

Where should it go? The CHaRM, or any of the local Publix grocery stores, will accept EPS. Remember, the foam must be clean. By using a densifier that removes the air from the EPS, we are able to increase the weight for shipping, making the product marketable. See CHaRM hours, rates, and a list of accepted materials on page 3.

Watch the F-Words come to life in videos posted at www.athensclarkecounty.com/Recycling.

In Happier News...

So film, food, and foam are our Top Three “Don’ts,” but a lot of people are surprised to learn that several materials ARE recyclable in the single-stream collection process. When Athens-Clarke County switched from dual stream (containers and paper) to single-stream (mixed, or commingled) recycling collection, we added several new items:

- Aerosol cans are baled and sold with soup cans. Just remove the cap and make sure the container is completely empty. Done! (You can also recycle the plastic cap, so toss it separately into your recycling bin.)
- Rigid bulky plastics can go in the bin too. Five-gallon buckets, kiddie pools, kitty litter pails — if the plastic is marked with #1-7, it can go in the bin.
- Cartons are now recyclable too. Recovery drinks, juices, and soups are increasingly found in cartons, as are milk and juice. Empty, rinse, and put it in the bin!

For the most up-to-date information, always check www.athensclarkecounty.com/Recycle.

Thanks for recycling right!
“One Man’s Trash…”

MEET THE F-WORDS

The three characters above, film, food & foam, represent the most common forms of contamination that we find at the ACC Recycling Facility. Contaminants reduce the value of recyclable materials and increase the cost to reclaim them. We need your help keeping the F-words out of your recycling bins. Watch the F-words videos at athensdarecounty.com/recycling.

Plastic film, like grocery bags and plastic wraps, can’t go in the recycling bin. They can be recycled at the ACC CHaRM.

Food residue doesn’t belong in recycling bins. Put it in the trash can or composting bin.

Foam is a curbside recycling bin contaminant, but can be recycled at the ACC CHaRM.
For a Better Commercial Recycling Program

- Clearly label the recycling container AND the trash container.
- Pair up the recycling containers with a trash container — a lonely recycling bin will become a trash bin.
- Trash gets a black bag; recycling stays loose or, if necessary, goes into a clear bag.
- Make it just a little harder to use the recycling bin than the trash — recyclables in the trash are better than trash in the recyclables.
- If in doubt, throw it out!
- Make sure your cleaning service knows what to do with the trash and the recycling, and put it in their contract.
- Let everyone using the trash and recycling bins know what goes where.
- Create an incentive for staff to participate.

A Proper Recycling Bin: Note the different-colored lids, clear stickers indicating trash and recycling, and legible poster showing which materials are recyclable. The trash has a black liner, another visual cue, and the recycling container has no bag. Recyclables should be loose — if a bag is needed, it must be a clear bag. Most importantly, there’s a trash bin right next to the recycling bin!

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Fees for Residential Customers
- Five-gallon bucket (or equivalent) of mixed materials that contain bulbs, paint – No charge
- Car (any kind) with mixed materials that contain bulbs, batteries, paint, TVs/monitors – $5
- Truck or SUV (any kind) with mixed materials that contain bulbs, batteries, paint, TVs/monitors – $10
- Truck and Trailer with mixed materials that contain bulbs, batteries, paint, TVs/monitors – $20

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Items Currently Accepted at the CHaRM
- Automotive Fluids (except gasoline)
- Bags (grocery bags and other types of film plastic)
- Batteries (alkaline, rechargeable, lead, car)
- Bicycles (partnership with Bike Athens)
- Books (hardback)
- Cell Phones (partnership with Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful)
- Electronics (partnership with Free IT Athens)
- Fire Extinguishers
- Fluorescent Bulbs/ Tubes
- Grease (used cooking grease/oil)
- Ink Cartridges (partnership with Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful)
- Scrap Metal (including propane tanks)
- Sharps (in a rigid plastic container)
- Shoes
- Shredded Paper
- Styrofoam
- Paint
- Teacher Reuse Store Items
- Tennis Balls
- Tires ($3/tire)

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ACC GreenFest Awards

13th Annual
Friday April 21st
5:30 - 8:30 pm
Public Community Event
Reception, Music, & Awards
Historic Morton Theatre & Pharmacy Room
Downtown, Athens, GA
are you eco?

Is your business compliant with the Athens-Clarke County commercial recycling policy and ordinance? If so, You Are Eco! To learn how to get your business in compliance, send a note to recycle@athensclarkecounty.com.

Green Bags

Got bags? ACC Recycling Division has a fresh supply of reusable, green tote bags for getting all of your single-stream recyclable materials from your place to our place. These are ideal for apartment dwellers, or anyone who uses our recycling drop sites. These sturdy, reusable bags feature clear instructions and a clever bottom handle for easy emptying. To pick one up, stop by the ACC Solid Waste Department at 725 Hancock Industrial Way or the CHaRM at 1005 College Ave. If you need more than a couple, send a note to recycle@athensclarkecounty.com.

SHRED EVENT

Saturday April 22nd, 2017
9 AM – 12 PM
CHaRM (1005 College Ave.)

The Lindsay Group will provide secure destruction of your confidential and sensitive materials for FREE with their mobile shredding unit that destroys materials onsite under your supervision.

The ACC Recycling Division will recycle the shreds.

Area residents and small businesses can shred up to 2 boxes (size of a bankers box) of documents for free. Additional boxes can be shredded for a $5.00 fee per box, payable in CASH.

*The Lindsay Group now offers hard drive destruction for $25.00 per hard drive. Cash Only.
Size: 8.5 in. x 5.5 in. x 1 in.

For more information, please call the ACC Recycling Division at (706) 613-3512 or visit www.athensclarkecounty.com/recycle
MLK Day of Service

Thank you to the 1,033 volunteers who came out to celebrate the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. by serving their community! Volunteers worked at 18 different project sites. To see KACCB’s event photos, go to https://tinyurl.com/k8we2k.

Thank you to our Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service event sponsors: Athens Housing Authority, Athens Land Trust, Athens-Clarke County Stormwater, KACCB, UGA School of Social Work, UGA Center for Social Justice, United Way, Interfaith Hospitality Network, and the ACC Mayors Grant.

Thank you to our Steering Committee: ACC Housing and Community Development, ACC Leisure Services, ACC Solid Waste, ACC Stormwater, Athens Land Trust, Athens Community Council on Aging, Clarke County School District, United Way of Northeast Georgia, Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful, private citizens, and UGA Center for Leadership and Service.

Keep Athens Beautiful Board of Directors Openings

KACCB is seeking dedicated volunteers to serve as members of the Board of Directors. Each applicant must be an Athens-Clarke County resident and a registered voter. The KACCB Board of Directors raises funds to support environmental education and community improvement projects. They meet the first Wednesday of every month from 3:30 to 5 p.m. with additional committee work being conducted between these meetings. The term of office is three years beginning July 1 each year. The deadline for receiving applications is April 30.

For more information or to fill out an online application, visit http://athensclarkecounty.com/4574/Join-the-Board, or contact stacee.farrell@athensclarkecounty.com or 706-613-3501, ext. 312.
April Is GreenFest and the Great American Cleanup

Foster an orphan road

The Athens-Clarke County Adopt-A-Highway program had a great 2016! Volunteers play a big part in helping to keep our roadways clean. However, many roads remain un-adopted or could use an additional cleanup. During April’s GreenFest and the Great American Cleanup, Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful encourages citizens to go the extra mile and help remove litter from our roadways before it makes its way into our waterways!

KACCB has almost 80 Adopt-A-Highway groups, but many roads are still in need of some regular attention. Groups do not need to officially adopt a road to participate in a cleanup. KACCB offers Down & Dirty Cleanups for groups that are seeking a one-time service project. The loan of grabbers, vests, and the pickup of the collected trash is available for groups wishing to participate. This opportunity is perfect for clubs, churches, classrooms, and even individuals and families!

Set up a cleanup by contacting stacy.smith@athensclarkecounty.com or 706-613-3501, ext. 309, or reserve tools at http://athensclarkecounty.com/4176/Adopt-A-Highway.
**Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful Membership Drive**

Contributing members, businesses, and our motivated volunteer Board of Directors give us the resources to implement award-winning outreach projects like the Loop 10 Daffodil Project, Athens Area Tool Shed, Adopt-A-Highway, MLK Day of Service, the School Garden Network, the Litter Hotline, the Green Schools Program, Cigarette Litter Receptacles (and Fairy), and the ever popular “Seriously…y’all still litter?” campaign.

We want to keep the momentum going and we want you right there with us. Please consider beginning or renewing your tax-deductible KACCB membership. Help us “Get Clean for Athens.” Membership starts as low as $15 for students and seniors and is only $25 for individuals. Visit www.keepathensbeautiful.org to join or find more information.

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**Daffodils Now in Bloom**

The daffodils are spreading! KACCB and project partners have now planted FOUR ramps in daffodils. This year’s planting site was the Prince Avenue on and off ramps. One hundred sixty volunteers planted 30,000 bulbs during the MLK Day of Service. A special thank you to the collaborative efforts of the ACC Landscape Division, the GA DOT, UGA Serves, the KACCB Board of Directors, and the ACC Police Department. This year’s bulbs bring the total planted to 61,000 blooms!
Compost Awareness Week

Have you been waiting for a compost bin sale to get your Earth Machine from KACCB? Wait no longer, International Compost Awareness Week will be here the first full week in May! During this week, KACCB partners with other local organizations to celebrate and educate about all things compost! The week-long celebration includes story times, bin sales, commercial compost sales, educational events, and tours. The board of Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful also funds copies of composting storybooks for Athens area schools!

Remember, KACCB celebrates composting year-round with programs and compost bin sales. Visit our composting page to find out more: http://athensclarkecounty.com/4616/International-Compost-Awareness-Week.

Earth Machine Compost bins
Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful

- Ten year warranty
- Conical shape for easy removal
- Twist-locking post resistant lid
- Four screw posts to secure composter to the ground
- Side ventilation
- Locking harvest door

$50.00
We accept cash, checks, and PayPal.

**WE CANNOT SHIP BINS! You must call to arrange pickup of your bin.

www.keepathensbeautiful.org
725 Hancock Industrial Way
706-613-3501 x312

Project Wild/Learning Tree Workshop

As part of the KACCB mission to educate and empower our citizens to become environmental stewards, we will be hosting a Project Wild/Learning Tree workshop for Athens educators. This workshop will focus on ways to use the Project Wild/Learning Tree curriculums to get students outdoors and participating in hands-on learning in their own schoolyards. Teachers will get to try out the activities and will receive their own take-home copies of the guides. The workshop will feature local environmental education organizations that are available to come into the classroom to help students with maintaining and using their outdoor classrooms. The workshop will be held on Saturday, November 11, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Walker Hall at Sandy Creek Nature Center. Contact Stacy.smith@athensclarkecounty.com or 706-613-3501, ext. 309, to register.

Beautiful Business of the Month

Congratulations to all of the Beautiful Business of the Month winners for the beginning of 2017. The Beautiful Business of the Month program recognizes businesses that improve the appearance of our community through their landscaping and beautification efforts. Each month, KACCB accepts nominations for local businesses through the KACCB website. The Board of Directors selects a winner from the nominees at the monthly Board Meeting. To nominate a Beautiful Business, visit our webpage, http://athensclarkecounty.com/1389/Beautiful-Business-of-the-Month.

Congratulations to these winners during the first quarter of 2017:

- January – Avid Bookshop at Five Points
- February – Canopy Studio (pictured)
- March – Thrive Integrative Medicine Clinic
Trash 2 Treasure

Mark your calendars...

Trash 2 Treasure is ON!

This is a yard sale like no other, giving shoppers a chance to put the principles of REDUCE, REUSE, and RECYCLE into action!

You will be amazed by the useful things that others clear out of their homes and send to the landill. KACCB watches for treasures all year and saves them! Furniture, art, home goods, toys, and other unique items. We nab ‘em before they hit the heap.

All proceeds from this sale support the community beautification programs of KACCB.

VULTURE PRE-SALE
Friday, May 5th
4-7pm
$3 Admission
(KACCB Members FREE)

SONGBIRD SALE
Saturday, May 6th
8am-11am
11am-12pm, 50% off
1005 College Avenue
(CHaRM Facility)

Now accepting donations of sale items!
Donations are tax deductible
Support KACCB with your spring cleaning!

For more information, contact
Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful
(706) 613-3501 x312
For updates on sale items, find us online!
keepathensbeautiful.org
TIREd of Trash Tire Cleanup

In mid-February, 38 volunteers converged at a wooded area along John Collier Road that had become badly littered with tires. Our brave volunteers spent the morning pulling tires from the woods, stacking them for removal, and cleaning up illegally dumped trash. Project organizers also worked with local agencies to secure the area in order to stop future dumping there. This project was a collaboration between KACCB staff, the KACCB Board of Directors, ACC Code Enforcement, Jackson EMC, neighbors on John Collier Road, and the ACC Stormwater Division. In the end, the project removed 450 tires and a 30-yard roll-off container full of trash, including old mattresses, rugs, and washing machines. We are happy to have helped turn this wooded stretch of country road back into a beautiful drive instead of an environmental health hazard.

This project kicked off the KACCB TIREd of Trash Amnesty Week. Citizens were able to bring their tires to the ACC Landfill and the CHaRM and have the disposal fee waived February 20–25. The landfill collected 1,517 tires and the CHaRM accepted 250 tires. Most tire retailers will collect and recycle your old tires for a minimal fee and you can recycle your tires at the Athens-Clarke County Landfill and the CHaRM for a fee of $3 per standard passenger car or light truck tire. Proper tire disposal is important because it cuts down on the risk of disease, landscape blight, and tire hazards, as well as reduces the cleanup costs associated with illegal dumping.

If you see illegal tire dumping, please report it to ACC Code Enforcement at 706-613-3790.

“The environment is where we all meet, where we all have a mutual interest; it is the one thing all of us share.”
Claudia “Lady Bird” Johnson, 1912-2007
Businesswoman, First Lady, and Co-Founder of the National Wildflower Research Center