

Additional Questions Asked in the Chat Box

Recycling and Waste Management

***I would encourage Cuyahoga County residents with questions about recycling and waste management to visit the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District's excellent and very informative website (cuyahogarecycles.org).

- ***Q: The definition of acceptable plastic bottles is tricky for people. I think people need to see more samples of what is acceptable and what is not.***

A: For the answer to this question and other similar questions, type in the item on the main page of cuyahogarecycles.org in the *What Do I Do With?* box. For plastics, only bottles and jugs may be recycled. A bottle or a jug are defined as having a "neck."

- ***Q: Where do you find plastic to wrap bulk furniture in?***

A: Look for plastic wrap at the following locations: local hardware stores, online at Amazon, U-Haul and other moving supply stores, GFS, and boating supply stores.

- ***Q: A lot of the recycling seems addressed towards residences. What measures and opportunities are being developed for the downtown business district?***

A: Check out cuyahogarecycles.org for business recycling webinars and/or contact Doreen Schreiber, the Business Recycling Specialist at the Solid Waste District.

- ***Q: When we begin curb-side recycling, should we recycle all plastic or only specific numbers?***

A: The only plastic that should be put in curbside recycling are bottles and jugs. The numbers in the chasing arrows on the bottom of many plastics is an indicator of what resins were used in the manufacturing of the item and should not be used by the consumer for recycling. The consumer should only pay attention to the shape of the item and not the numbers.

- ***Q: You mentioned the police station drop offs for medication - I believe they only take pills, no inhalers or liquids, correct?***

A: For information on what is accepted at medication drop offs refer to:

<https://cuyahogarecycles.org/medications>

Participants made several suggestions during the meeting. These suggestions will be shared with the relevant City Departments, partners, our waste consultant and with the Solid Waste District. Those suggestions were:

- FYI, (at least pre-COVID), a lot of area nursing homes would take older (but still working) TVs because a lot of residents have to provide their own and don't necessarily have the means to afford it.
- FYI - If anyone has a mattress that's being replaced but is in good condition, you can donate it to the Furniture Bank.

- Here's a good resource regarding the recycling in apartments:
<https://blog.cuyahogarecycles.org/recycling-apartments-condos-cuyahoga/>
- For recycling, would it be possible to create a recycling toolkit for those who want more information, who need to talk to their landlords, etc. so it is easily accessible and can be shared?
- FYI - If anyone has a mattress that's being replaced but is in good condition, you can donate it to the Furniture Bank.
- What if we have people filter their recycling into bins. You can have a bin for "I wish I can recycle this"
- I know many products are labeled Recycle but what if we had a large sticker on containers that ARE NOT recyclable? Similar to the YUCK stickers on liquids that are toxic? This would 1. encourage manufacturers to use a recyclable container and 2. limit the "wishful" recycling
- ***Q: Have you considered shifting the Zero Waste Event focus to Zero Waste Take-Out guidance and best practices to drive impact during COVID19?***

-and-

Q: Is there are group working with locally-owned restaurant owners to switch to compostable take-out containers and other items? In this time where more people are doing take-out, the amount of waste going straight to the landfill is increasing. It is really disheartening, and I wonder is anything proactive is happening in helping our small business owners be more aware of the issue.

A: The Plastic Reduction Working Group is working with the [Northern Ohio Surfrider Foundation](#) on their Great Lakes Friendly Restaurant Program. This program is similar to their [Ocean Friendly Restaurant Program](#). The Group is developing Northeast Ohio specific resources for restaurants and will be offering workshops in the future.

There is also an excellent new resource for re-opening restaurants being published on July 1st by [Oceanic Global](#). They already have some excellent resources on their site. For more information or to join the Plastic Reduction Working Group or the ZeroWasteNEO Working Group, contact Cathi Lehn (clehn@city.cleveland.oh.us).

Circular Economy

Several of the questions asked are related to the circular economy.

The City of Cleveland is committed to developing a circular economy. We are partnering with the [Council of the Great Lakes Region](#) in an international collaboration as part of [NOAA's Great Lakes Marine Debris Action Plan](#) (2020-2025). Additionally, our Office will also be discussing this with the waste consultant the City has contracted with to assess our waste stream and solutions.

To learn more about the circular economy, visit:

<https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy/concept>

- **Q: A goal “If it can’t be reduced, reused, repaired, rebuilt, refurbished, refinished, reused, recycled or composted, then it should be restricted, redesigned or removed from production.”**
- **Q: What public/private recycling facility plans have been discussed?**
- **Q: There are a number of scrap metal recyclers in the area. Has any thought been given to metal scrap pick up to increase the amount of metals that are recycled?**

- **Q: How do we deal with the plastic problem from the top down (corporations, like Exxon Mobil) as opposed to trying to address the problem from bottom up (consumers)?**
A: The [Story of Plastic](#) and [Plastic Wars](#) are highly recommended documentaries to help address questions related to the circular economy and recycling. Manufacturers need to be made responsible for their products. In order to do this, they need to hear from their customer base. We are certainly not going to get out of this mess by recycling.
- **Q: Right to repair needs to be a thing. I don’t want to throw my cell phone away but Apple keeps making repairs harder.**
A: This is part of the circular economy and extended producer responsibility.
- **Q: How do we create more repair shops--especially for small household appliances?**
A: Great question will consider for circular economy. Identify where gaps are needed. Finding neighbors. [Neighborhood Connections](#) marketplace In the meantime, suggest connecting with the marketplace through Neighborhood Connections. Sharing skills with neighborhoods and community building. Support the local economy and your neighbors.

Other Sustainability-related Questions

- **Q: Do you accept proposals for local solutions to equitable economic development and climate change?**
A: The City of Cleveland is required to competitively bid out all contracts. Visit the [Division of Purchasing and Supplies](#) website to register and to get more information. We also encourage you to join us for the [Sustainable Cleveland Summit](#) on October 14th and 15th to learn more and network with other professionals in the region.
- **Q: Do you guys post your 2020/2021 goals for sustainability? And what are the biggest challenges to your goals?**
A: While we have not established formal goals for 2020 we have a number of projects/initiatives underway, including the [LEED for Cities](#) certification. We will be better positioned to establish annual goals through this certification process. Also, please refer to the [Cleveland Climate Action Plan 2018](#) to see our ongoing goals.

- ***Q: What overlap exists between Sustainable Cleveland and the Cleveland 2030 Districts Network: The Cleveland 2030 District is a movement to create high-performance building districts throughout Greater Cleveland with the goal of dramatically reducing the environmental impacts of building construction and operations while increasing Cleveland's competitiveness in the business environment and increasing owners' return on investment.***

A: We have worked very closely with Cindy Cicigoi and the Cleveland 2030 District. Watch our [Sustainable Cleveland 2019 video](#) for a segment with Cindy at ~2:00.

Related to Energy

- ***Q: In the description of the priorities of Sustainable Cleveland, I was shocked and disappointed that the lowest hanging fruit--helping owners and renters reduce energy consumption by helping make their home more energy efficient--was not even mentioned (please correct me if I'm wrong)!***

A: You will see in the [Cleveland Climate Action Plan](#) that the first focus area and first action relate to energy efficiency in the home. This is a very important area and one in which everyone can play a part.

- ***Q: Besides more solar panels, is Cleveland doing anything to reduce its carbon footprint?*** A: For a complete answer please check the [Cleveland Climate Action Plan](#) and its Appendices and the [Progress Dashboard](#).