

The Carton Council's

Schools Recycle Cartons! Program

The Carton Council has partnered with Environmental Impact Initiative, a Chicago-based nonprofit, to help schools recycle their cartons. We've created a *Carton Recycling in Schools Go-Green* guide to get you started. It contains all you'll need for a successful carton-recycling program at your school. For the full guide, program updates, and other materials, go to www.RecycleCartons.com/schoolsrecyclecartons. Below, we summarize the "why" and "how" of school carton recycling.



Why School Carton Recycling?

Your school can take center stage in caring for the environment!

Cartons have long been schools' number one container choice—they're time-efficient, keep spills to a minimum, and have the added benefit of being made mostly of a renewable resource: paper. But even though milk and juice cartons are recyclable, schools send almost five billion of them—along with countless plastic containers—to landfills each year. This hurts the environment and—equally important—it hinders kids' formation as environmentally responsible citizens.

Cartons Can Be Recycled—But Recyclers Need Schools' Help

Milk cartons and juice cartons are recyclable. Through efforts by the Carton Council and other advocates, recyclers have begun accepting them on a larger scale. But they need to collect as much of the material as possible to defray the costs of equipment upgrades. That's where schools come in—with an abundance of beverage cartons and an eco-minded agenda, your school has the power right now to help them make carton recycling a success!

The hidden costs of improper container disposal

Sending recyclable items to landfill not only hinders recycling efforts, it undermines schools in several ways.

Cost #1: Throwing away recyclables contradicts environmental lessons.

Cost #2: Sending recyclable items to landfills hurts the environment.

Cost #3: Throwing recyclables in with trash leads to higher waste-hauling fees.

The answer: Recycle cartons!

By recycling cartons, you'll be developing confident, green-savvy students, reducing your school's environmental impact, promoting eco-excellence in the community, and practicing sustainable, affordable waste management.

Environmental Benefits



We've found that at a school of 500 students, a year's worth of carton-recycling will conserve:

- 170,561 sheets of paper
- 14 mature trees
- 5,970 gallons of water
- 417 full trash bags of landfill waste space

Over five years, the average school serving one meal will save the equivalent of 781,169 sheets (almost 1,500 reams!) of paper, 72 trees and 29,848 gallons of water, and divert an astonishing 1,956 trash bags from landfill!



"OK," you're thinking, "I'd love to get a carton recycling program going at our school, but where do I start?" We'll tell you how on the next page.



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How to Recycle Milk & Juice Cartons at Your School

In the *Carton Recycling in Schools Go-Green* guide, we lay out the carton-recycling process in five sections, with a checklist to track your progress. You'll also find hands-on resources in the guide's *Helpful Materials* section. Any school-wide effort can seem daunting at first, but don't worry. With a little guidance—a carton-recycling program can be implemented fairly easily—without stressing school resources. Below we summarize the key steps to getting your program moving.



Getting Started. Find out if carton recycling is available in your area and, if so, what recycler will accept them. After securing approval, arrange for that service (see p.9 of the guide for details).

Setting Up Your Program. Here, you'll plan your program, line up resources, and iron out potential issues. Recruit a committee of administrators, principals, teachers and cafeteria supervisors, custodians, PTA members, or students to help. Then, review the guide to establish goals, estimate your program's impact, assess key resources (personnel and basic recycling materials), and anticipate issues (e.g., timely dismissal, disposal, or costs).

After procuring the materials you need, develop your disposal and dismissal process. For efficiency, we suggest set-ups that locate excess-liquids buckets first, recyclables in the middle, and trash at the end. Dumping excess milk and juice is vital, so make sure students are thorough. Communicate the program to staff (don't forget custodians!), students, and the community, using tools in the *Helpful Materials* section of the guide. Hold an assembly to announce and demonstrate the process and create clear signage in the cafeteria to maintain awareness.

Launching Your Program. On kick-off day, begin with a principal's announcement reminding students to recycle and have cafeteria supervisors demonstrate the process in the cafeteria. After you've been recycling for a week, bring together the involved staff to troubleshoot the program.

Auditing & Evaluation. Conduct a recycling audit to measure collection and calculate your program's environmental benefits (see p.18 of the guide for directions). If you can, integrate the audit into various curricula. Afterwards, assess the results—one may be choosing to re-negotiate your waste-hauling contract.

Reporting Your Success. After successfully implementing carton recycling and conducting your audit—it's time to get credit! Use the tools in the guide (see p.22) to create a report for your school and local community and to inspire others to follow your example. And don't forget to report back to us on your program—we've provided a brief report-back form in the *Helpful Materials* section. Send it to us at src@recyclecartons.com. Good luck!

