

RDG PUBLIC WORKS

Introducing City-Wide Recycle Cart Opt-In

This fall the City of Reading will offer new recycling carts to all residents with City curbside recycling. These carts are larger, more durable, and come with an attached lid to keep your recycling dry and prevent it from becoming litter. They also come with wheels, which make the carts easy to roll out on collection day. The new carts will be available to all households enrolled in the City's curbside recycling program. To sign up for a no-cost upgrade, fill out the [online form](#) or call the Citizen's service Center at 1-877-727-3234.

WHY RECYCLING CARTS?

The City is providing new recycling containers in order to improve quality and quantity of recyclables collected and reduce litter in neighborhoods throughout the city. They will help keep recyclables dry and provide space to recycle more. Additionally, the new carts have serial numbers to help with asset tracking, as well as RFID chips that will allow the City to take advantage of new technologies to track recycling rates and find lost carts. Although recycling is not the only source of litter, lidded carts will help cut down the amount of litter in our streets and improve the quality of life for all residents. The City is funding this program through the 902 Recycling grant, a Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection grant for recycling capital projects.

AS OUR HABITS CHANGE, SO MUST OUR EQUIPMENT

For many residents, the old square recycling tubs they have been using for years no longer contain their recycling. Those iconic square bins were first commonly used in the 1980s when we used far less packaging and 'Amazon' was not a household name. In the three decades since, the amount of recyclable material has increased dramatically – an average household may create 800 to 1,000 pounds of recyclables per year!¹ Today Reading employs a "Single Stream"



¹ [The 2016 State of Curbside Report](#). The Recycling Partnership. <https://recyclingpartnership.org>

recycling technology, meaning you no longer need to separate your paper and cardboard from your cans and bottles. This two for one deal eliminates the need for two bins but increases the need for a larger recycling container.

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY CLEAN & PROSPEROUS

A healthy, prosperous community is a place where people want to live and work. A

clean city promotes businesses that bring jobs to our community and increases the quality of life for every resident, worker, and visitor. Although litter comes from many sources, we know our outdated recycling containers are contributing to the situation. Many old square tubs are overflowing on collection day, and when strong summer storms hit recyclables sometimes can be seen floating down the street or flying through the air. All that litter usually ends up in storm drains, which drain directly to the Schuylkill River where it flows downstream and eventually enters the Atlantic Ocean – where it wreaks havoc on our marine ecosystems. The new recycling carts are doing their part to stop litter by keeping your recycling in the cart – you can do your part by organizing a community cleanup or joining an existing group cleanup organized by the South of Penn Task Force, Reading JROTC, and other community organizations.

PILOT PROGRAM SUCCESS

The City unveiled new recycling carts last September in a pilot program for residents whose recycling is collected on Monday. This included the 18th Ward, Glenside, Northmont, and a few smaller neighborhoods. Almost 3,700 recycling carts were delivered in small and large sizes. After several months trying their new carts, residents responded to a survey by showing strong satisfaction with their new carts. Over 70% of respondents said the cart was easier to move and more than half saw a noticeable reduction of litter in their communities.

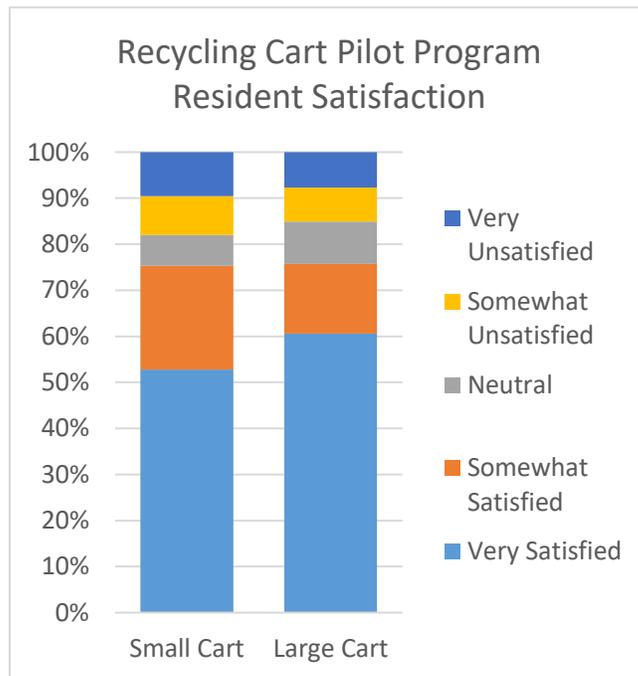
COMING SOON – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Based on the feedback from residents in the pilot program, the City will continue deploying the new recycling carts this fall through an opt-in program. Any household on the City’s recycling program can sign up, regardless of location. Each family or individual can choose which cart they would like to upgrade to or choose not to upgrade. The City will continue to provide the round recycling cans for those who choose not to upgrade, but will no longer provide square tubs. Residents with mobility challenges who are concerned about the new carts are encouraged to contact the City to determine what works best for them.

PROFILE OF THE HIGHEST-PERFORMING CITIES SURVEYED (OVER 400 LBS/HH/YR)



Of the top cities surveyed in The Recycling Partnership's The 2016 State of Curbside Report, 83% of cities collect with carts. Reading already provides automatic and single-stream collection, which are also standard in top performing cities.



YOUR RECYCLING CONTAINER OPTIONS

Large Cart (65 gallons)



Small Cart (35 gallons)



Can (32 gallons)



To request an upgrade to your new recycling cart, fill out the online survey at www.readingpa.gov/CleanCity or call the Citizen's Service Center at 1-877-727-3234.

Questions? To request a presentation for your community, contact the Citizen's service Center.

