

Contact: Randy Frazer
Phone: [\(620\) 441-4415](tel:6204414415)
Fax: (620) 441-4426
rfrazer@arkansascityks.gov

City Manager's Office
City of Arkansas City
118 W. Central Ave.
Arkansas City, KS 67005



News Release

Ark City, Winfield continue efforts to improve recycling program

Cardboard no longer accepted at Central Shop; all recycling at Strother Field

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (August 28, 2020) — The City of Arkansas City and City of Winfield are starting to see positive results from the June 1 change in the shared recycling effort between the two cities.

To maintain reduced contamination and costs, customer education regarding sorting and drop-off of materials at Strother Field is increasing, and Arkansas City no longer offers drop-off at its Central Shop.

For both communities, the shared Arkansas City/Winfield Recycling Operations Center, located at 7th Avenue and D Street in Strother Field, remains open for community drive-through drop-off from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. *(It will be closed Sept. 4-5, Nov. 27-28 and Dec. 25-26 for holidays.)*

Annual city-shared materials costs rose from approximately \$700 in 2017 to \$225,000 in 2019.

In June, the two cities implemented a new plan designed to focus primarily on the highest volume of material by weight (corrugated cardboard) and combine it with clean, dry, and sorted materials to reduce costs. That plan shifted pickup in the two cities to cardboard only, with all other materials going to the shared Recycling Operations Center at Strother Field on Friday and Saturday mornings.

Fridays at the Recycling Operations Center have averaged around 70 vehicles per day since June 1, while Saturdays have seen an average of about 100 vehicles utilize the service.

The plan, with a few exceptions, seems to be working. Prior to June 1, approximately 60 percent of the materials the two cities sent to their vendor's recycling floor in **Hutchinson** were sent on to the landfill.

Since June 1, though the two cities have seen a 95 percent "clean rate" in the corrugated cardboard stream and 70 percent in the mixed materials stream. Costs are down, too. Comparing June, July and August of 2020 to the same months in 2019, the two cities' costs are reduced by about 75 percent.

Controlling this contamination of materials has not come without some work for customers and the program officials, however.

For immediate release

more

In Arkansas City, the corrugated cardboard trailer at the Central Shop continued to see contamination with junk, trash, bags, Styrofoam and other non-recyclable items. Many times, the trailer was bypassed from the recycling stream to the landfill due to this contamination. To ensure that the maximum possible Ark City materials actually are recycled, the Central Shop trailer has been removed.

“The goal of the change in June was to help materials actually get recycled,” said Randy Frazer, city manager for Arkansas City. “If customer ‘B’ ruins the recycling stream in the trailer by throwing in trash, clothes or other items, that means customer ‘A’ doesn’t have their items recycled. We don’t want that.”

In Winfield, customers at the curb have been contacted directly if they have contamination (non-corrugated cardboard) in their cart and the materials are not recycled. If continual problems occur, the customer can be removed from the program.

On site at the Recycling Operations Center, staff has seen customers doing a better job with pre-sorting and having materials ready to go when they arrive. Still, city officials want to see that improve.

“Cleaning up the stream is our only bet at ensuring the materials actually are recycled and we can control our costs. We are making great strides and just need to continue to work at it as communities that are committed to helping the environment,” said Shawn Mugler, Winfield Sanitation superintendent.

Mugler stressed the importance of making sure materials dropped off at Strother Field are clean, dry and sorted first. He also said small changes can make a big difference moving forward — such as removing bottle caps, making sure there no Styrofoam is in the stream and trashing all bags whatsoever.

“Bags are probably the No. 1 enemy of recycling. They damage machines when we get the materials to the recycling facility in **Hutchinson**. That includes trash bags, grocery bags, cat or dog food bags, water bottle plastic wrap, etc.,” Mugler said.

The public is responsible for sorting materials before coming to the recycling center, unloading their own vehicles and placing the proper recycling materials in the designated labeled containers, in order to help to keep the flow of traffic moving efficiently. City staff will be on site to answer any questions.

ONLY clean, dry and sorted materials will be accepted at the center in the following categories:

- **Combined (#1 and #2) plastic bottles and containers** — including milk jugs, soda bottles, some food trays, laundry detergent containers, etc. **NO PLASTIC BOTTLE CAPS!**
- **Combined (#3, #4, #5, #6 and #7) plastic bottles and containers** — including some food trays, spray bottles, butter tubs & lids, medicine bottles, etc. **NO PLASTIC BOTTLE CAPS!**
- **Aluminum cans** — including soda and beer cans, etc.
- **Steel and tin cans** — including soup and vegetable cans, etc.

- **Mixed paper** — including newspapers, magazines, catalogs, hardcover and softcover books, phonebooks, junk mail, shredded paper (**put in paper bag first!**), office paper, etc.
- **Paperboard** — including cereal boxes, soda and beer boxes, packing paper, paperboard egg cartons only (**NO STYROFOAM**), paper bags, etc.
- **Corrugated cardboard** — including shipping boxes, pizza boxes (**free of food and grease**), moving boxes, etc.
- **Glass bottles, jugs and jars** (any color) — **NO LIDS!**

Unsorted/contaminated materials (food residues, yard waste, plastic bags, etc.) will **not** be accepted:

- **ABSOLUTELY NO PLASTIC BAGS!** — trash bags, grocery bags, cat or dog food bags, water bottle plastic wrap, etc.
- **ABSOLUTELY NO STYROFOAM!** — Styrofoam cups, Styrofoam food containers, Styrofoam packing peanuts, etc.
- **ABSOLUTELY NO CAPS, INSERTS OR AEROSOLS!** — plastic bottle caps, drinking straws, plastic spray bottle pumps, aerosol cans, etc.

###