

Access to Recycling:  
Foam Polystyrene Food Service Items

Access to Recycling & Composting:  
Paper Food Service Items

50 most populous US Cities &  
50 most populous CA Cities

June 2013\*

\*This report was revised November 2015 to reflect accurate terminology, replacing "expanded polystyrene" or "EPS" with "foam polystyrene" or "Foam PS", as appropriate.

# Access to Recycling: Foam Polystyrene Food Service Items

Prepared by Moore Recycling Associates Inc. for the  
American Chemistry Council

## **Purpose**

This project documents access to foam polystyrene (Foam PS) and paper food service recycling or composting for the fifty largest communities in the United States (US) and the fifty largest communities in California (CA).

## **Methodology**

Moore Recycling researched access to recycling or composting for Foam PS and paper food service. For this project Moore Recycling modified our survey instrument to allow the unique categorizations indicated below. We then performed the research and analyzed the results. The appendix has a list of the 50 most populous cities in the US and California, as well as compiled collection details

For Foam PS we categorized each community's outreach effort as one of the following:

- Specifically state that Foam PS food service is accepted for recycling collection
- Language could lead resident to include Foam PS food service in recycling collection
- Specifically exclude Foam PS food service from recycling collection
- Specifically exclude all Foam PS from recycling collection
- Foam PS food service is not addressed for recycling collection

For paper food service items we categorized each community's outreach effort as one of the following:

- Specifically state that paper food service is accepted for recycling collection
- Language could lead resident to include paper food service in recycling collection

- Specifically exclude paper food service from recycling collection
- Paper food service is not addressed for recycling collection
- Specifically state that paper food service is accepted for compost collection
- Language could lead resident to include paper food service in compost collection
- Specifically exclude paper food service from compost collection
- Paper food service is not addressed for compost collection

## Findings

We found that far fewer communities let citizens know whether or not to include food service paper in the recycling collection program: 27 of 50 US and 38 of 50 CA communities did not address it. In comparison, all but 5 of the 100 communities surveyed addressed Foam PS food service recycling either directly or indirectly. It is also clear that California is a leader in addressing food service recycling, especially Foam PS recycling: 50% of the population of major cities has direct or indirect access to Foam PS recycling, compared to 16% of the US. In comparison, only 10% of the population of major US cities and 15% of California's largest cities has direct or indirect access to recycling or composting paper food service items.

## 50 Largest Cities in USA

Food Service Products						
	Foam PS			Paper		
	# of Cities	Population	% of Population	# of Cities	Population	% of Population
<b>Collect for Recycling or Composting</b>	7	7,683,799	16%	7	4,907,016	10%
<b>Dispose</b>	43	39,111,298	84%	43	41,888,081	90%

<b>Foam PS - Recycling</b>			
	<b>Cities</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>% of Population</b>
<b>Specifically Ask For</b>	3	5,941,812	13%
<b>Indirectly Ask For</b>	4	1,741,987	4%
<b>Specifically Exclude</b>	41	37,880,653	81%
<b>Did Not Address</b>	2	1,230,645	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>46,795,097</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Paper Food Service - Recycling</b>			
	<b>Cities</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>% of Population</b>
<b>Specifically Ask For</b>	2	1,174,832	3%
<b>Indirectly Ask For</b>	2	1,208,818	3%
<b>Specifically Exclude</b>	19	22,895,617	49%
<b>Did Not Address</b>	27	21,515,830	46%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>46,795,097</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Paper Food Service - Composting</b>			
	<b>Cities</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>% of Population</b>
<b>Specifically Ask For</b>	4	3,132,026	7%
<b>Indirectly Ask For</b>	-	-	0%
<b>Specifically Exclude</b>	1	583,776	1%
<b>Did Not Address Food Service</b>	45	43,079,295	92%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>46,795,097</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 50 Largest Cities in CA

Food Service Products						
	Foam PS			Paper		
	# of Cities	Population	% of Population	# of Cities	Population	% of Population
<b>Collect for Recycling or Composting</b>	21	8,123,418	50%	9	2,460,897	15%
<b>Dispose</b>	29	8,068,696	50%	41	13,731,217	85%

Foam PS - Recycling			
	Cities	Population	% of Population
<b>Specifically Ask For</b>	10	5,368,782	33%
<b>Indirectly Ask For</b>	11	2,754,636	17%
<b>Specifically Exclude</b>	26	7,474,557	46%
<b>Did Not Address</b>	3	594,139	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>16,192,114</b>	<b>100%</b>

Paper Food Service - Recycling			
	Cities	Population	% of Population
<b>Specifically Ask For</b>	1	145,438	1%
<b>Indirectly Ask For</b>	1	143,911	1%
<b>Specifically Exclude</b>	10	7,226,791	45%
<b>Did Not Address Food Service</b>	38	8,675,974	54%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>16,192,114</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Paper Food Service - Composting</b>			
	<b>Cities</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>% of Population</b>
<b>Specifically Ask For</b>	7	2,171,548	13%
<b>Indirectly Ask For</b>	0	-	0%
<b>Specifically Exclude</b>	1	116,468	1%
<b>Did Not Address Food</b>	42	13,904,098	86%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>16,192,114</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Appendix

## Detail 50 most populous US Cities

**Top 50 US Cities**

**DETAIL**

Total 2010 Population	46,795,097		Specifically ask for EPS food service		Exclude All EPS		Specifically excludes EPS Foodservice*		Indirectly takes EPS, with no exclusion		Do not address EPS	
	# of cities	Population	# of cities	Population	# of cities	Population	# of cities	Population	# of cities	Population	# of cities	Population
All Plastics	3	4,721,366	1	3,792,621	0		0		2	928,745	0	0
All Rigid Plastic	14	17,882,833	0	-	7	4,939,479	7	12,943,354	0	0	0	0
All Bottles & Containers	26	20,380,959	2	2,149,191	12	9,114,148	10	8,304,378	2	813,242	0	0
All Bottles	2	1,186,490	0	-	2	1,186,490	0				0	0
PET & HDPE Bottles	5	2,623,449	0	-	3	1,392,604	0				0	0
	50	46,795,097	3	5,941,812	24	16,632,921	17	21,247,732	4	1,741,987	2	123,0645

\* also exclude all EPS

Cities	Population
Specifically state that Paper Food Service is accepted for RECYCLING	2
Language could lead resident to include paper food service in RECYCLING	2
Specifically exclude paper food service from RECYCLING	19
Paper Food Service is not addressed for RECYCLING	27
Specifically state that Paper Food Service is accepted for COMPOST collection	4
Language could lead resident to include paper food service in RECYCLING	0
Specifically exclude paper food service from COMPOST collection	1
Paper Food Service is not addressed for COMPOST collection	45

## Detail 50 most populous CA Cities

### Top 50 US Cities

#### DETAIL

Total 2010 Population	46,795,097		Specifically ask for EPS food service		Exclude All EPS		Specifically excludes EPS Foodservice*		Indirectly takes EPS, with no exclusion		Do not address EPS	
	# of cities	Population	# of cities	Population	# of cities	Population	# of cities	Population	# of cities	Population	# of cities	Population
All Plastics	14	4,721,366	0	3,792,621	0	0	7	12,943,354	2	928,745	0	0
All Rigid Plastic	14	17,882,833	0	3,792,621	7	4,939,479	7	12,943,354	0	0	0	0
All Bottles & Containers	26	20,380,959	2	2,149,191	12	9,114,148	10	8,304,378	2	813,242	0	0
All Bottles	2	1,186,490	0	-	2	1,186,490	0	0	0	0	0	0
PET & HDPE Bottles	5	2,623,449	0	-	3	1,392,804	0	0	0	0	2	1,230,645
<b>50</b>	<b>46,795,097</b>	<b>46,795,097</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5,941,812</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16,632,921</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>21,247,732</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1,741,987</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1,230,645</b>

\* also exclude all EPS

Cities	Population
Specifically state that Paper Food Service is accepted for RECYCLING	2
Language could lead resident to include paper food service in RECYCLING	2
Specifically exclude paper food service from RECYCLING	19
Paper Food Service is not addressed for RECYCLING	27
Specifically state that Paper Food Service is accepted for COMPOST collection	4
Language could lead resident to include paper food service in COMPOST collection	0
Specifically exclude paper food service from COMPOST collection	1
Paper Food Service is not addressed for COMPOST collection	45



## Plastic Collection Program Definitions

Plastic Collection Program	Definition
<b>All Plastic</b>	All bottles and caps, All non-bottle rigid containers (includes cups, trays, boxes, clamshells, tubs, pots, lids, deli containers, carton, blister), All bulky rigid plastic (includes carts, crates, buckets, baskets, toys, lawn furniture) Includes film (bags, wraps) and Foam PS
<b>All Rigid Plastic</b>	All bottles and caps, All non-bottle rigid containers (includes cups, trays, boxes, clamshells, tubs, pots, lids, deli containers, carton, blister) May also include film or Foam PS All bulky rigid plastic (includes carts, crates, buckets, baskets, toys, lawn furniture)
<b>All Bottles and Non-Bottle Rigid Containers</b>	All bottles and caps, All non-bottle rigid containers (includes cups, trays, boxes, clamshells, tubs, pots, lids, deli containers, carton, blister) May also include specific plastics such as Foam PS
<b>All Bottles</b>	All bottles with a narrow neck or screw top and their caps May also include specific plastics such as Foam PS
<b>CRV Only</b>	California Redemption Value (CRV) plastic beverage containers May also include specific non-CRV plastics such as Foam PS
<b>PET &amp; HDPE Bottles Only</b>	PET & HDPE bottles and caps May also include specific plastics such as Foam PS

## 50 most populous US Cities

City	State	2010 Population
New York	NY	8,175,133
Los Angeles	CA	3,792,621
Chicago	IL	2,695,598
Houston	TX	2,099,451
Philadelphia	PA	1,526,006
Phoenix	AZ	1,445,632
San Antonio	TX	1,327,407
San Diego	CA	1,307,402
Dallas	TX	1,197,816
San Jose	CA	945,942
Jacksonville	FL	821,784
Indianapolis	IN	820,445
San Francisco	CA	805,235
Austin	TX	790,390
Columbus	OH	787,033
Fort Worth	TX	741,206
Charlotte	NC	731,424
Detroit	MI	713,777
El Paso	TX	649,121
Memphis	TN	646,889
Baltimore	MD	620,961
Boston	MA	617,594
Seattle	WA	608,660
Washington	DC	601,723
Nashville	TN	601,222
Denver	CO	600,158
Louisville	KY	597,337
Milwaukee	WI	594,833
Portland	OR	583,776
Las Vegas	NV	583,756
Oklahoma City	OK	579,999
Albuquerque	NM	545,852
Tucson	AZ	520,116
Fresno	CA	494,665
Sacramento	CA	466,488
Long Beach	CA	462,257

City	State	2010 Population
Kansas City	MO	459,787
Mesa	AZ	439,041
Virginia Beach	VA	437,994
Atlanta	GA	420,003
Colorado Springs	CO	416,427
Omaha	NE	408,958
Raleigh	NC	403,892
Miami	FL	399,457
Cleveland	OH	396,815
Tulsa	OK	391,906
Oakland	CA	390,724
Minneapolis	MN	382,578
Wichita	KS	382,368
Arlington	TX	365,438

## 50 most populous CA Cities

City	State	2010 Population
Los Angeles	CA	3,792,621
San Diego	CA	1,307,402
San Jose	CA	945,942
San Francisco	CA	805,235
Fresno	CA	494,665
Sacramento	CA	466,488
Long Beach	CA	462,257
Oakland	CA	390,724
Bakersfield	CA	347,483
Anaheim	CA	336,265
Santa Ana	CA	324,528
Riverside	CA	303,871
Stockton	CA	291,707
Chula Vista	CA	243,916
Fremont	CA	214,089
Irvine	CA	212,375
San Bernardino	CA	209,924
Modesto	CA	201,165
Oxnard	CA	197,899
Fontana	CA	196,069

City	State	2010 Population
Moreno Valley	CA	193,365
Glendale	CA	191,719
Huntington Beach	CA	189,992
Santa Clarita	CA	176,320
Garden Grove	CA	170,883
Santa Rosa	CA	167,815
Oceanside	CA	167,086
Rancho Cucamonga	CA	165,269
Ontario	CA	163,924
Lancaster	CA	156,633
Elk Grove	CA	153,015
Palmdale	CA	152,750
Corona	CA	152,374
Salinas	CA	150,441
Pomona	CA	149,058
Torrance	CA	145,438
Hayward	CA	144,186
Escondido	CA	143,911
Sunnyvale	CA	140,081
Pasadena	CA	137,122
Orange	CA	136,416
Fullerton	CA	135,161
Thousand Oaks	CA	126,683
Visalia	CA	124,442
Simi Valley	CA	124,237
Concord	CA	122,067
Roseville	CA	118,788
Santa Clara	CA	116,468
Vallejo	CA	115,942
Victorville	CA	115,903