

# TOGETHER

Transforming Recycling For Good



LOOKING BACK  
TO MOVE FORWARD

**mrc**  
michiganrecyclingcoalition

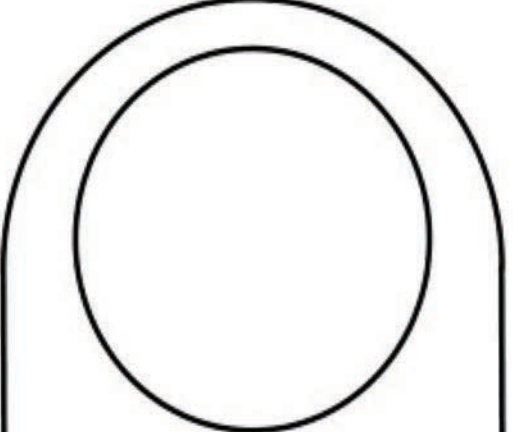
**DEQ**

37TH ANNUAL  
**RECYCLING  
CONFERENCE**

MAY 14 - 16, 2019  
ANN ARBOR SHERATON



Rachel Kipar  
[rkipar@recyclingpartnership.org](mailto:rkipar@recyclingpartnership.org)

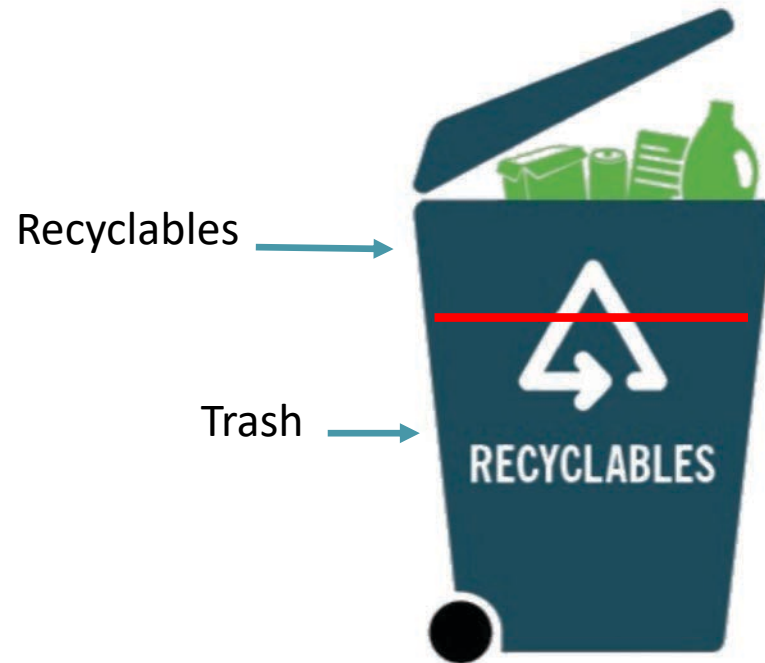


**FEET ON THE  
STREET:**

**KNOW  
WHAT TO  
THROW!**

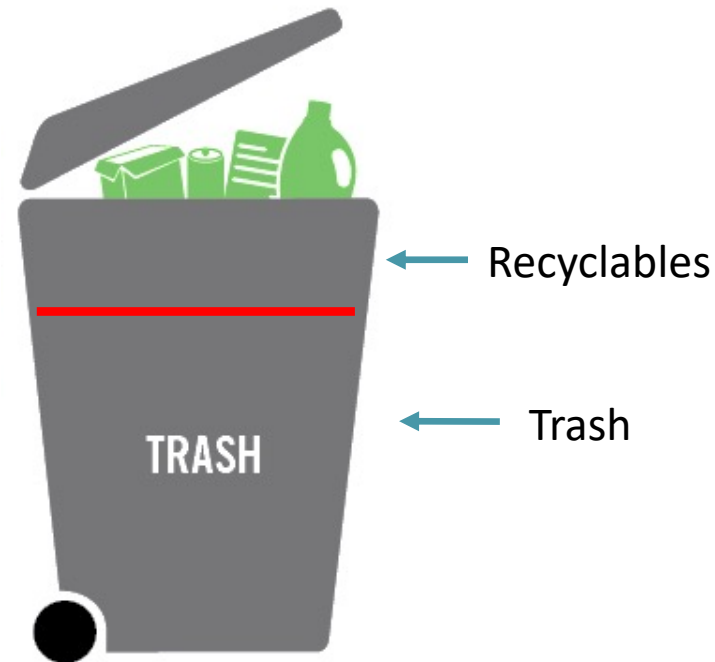


# Twin Challenges: Trash in Recycling and Recycling in Trash



## Trash in the Recycling:

- ASSESS through **capture studies** and/or by **talking to MRF**
- ADDRESS through smart, targeted outreach



## Recycling in the Trash:

- ASSESS through **capture studies**
- ADDRESS through smart, targeted outreach



## THE OPPORTUNITY

**800 pounds**  
of recyclables  
available in HH

### GAPS



#### No Curbside

800 lbs lost



#### Curbside Opt-In

800 lbs lost  
in most homes



#### Curbside in Bins

600 lbs lost



#### Curbside in Carts, No Education

400 lbs lost



#### Curbside in Carts, Good Education

200 lbs lost

### SOLUTIONS

- Establish Services
- Encourage Participation

- Create Universal Automatic Access

- Convert to Carts
- Increase ACCESS to DROP-OFF

- Invest in Education
- Use Multiple Outreach Tools

- Analyze Opportunities
- Target Outreach



# Added Challenge: Contamination





# Top Issue: Bags and Plastic Film





**+20%**

**contamination rates**  
cost the system **money & time,**  
and **safety hazards**  
**for workers.**

*The Recycling Partnership*



working  
toward  
solutions

<10%

**contamination rates**

exist as well – Denver, CO

SOCRRA, MI

Outagamie County, WI

*Recycling Partnership*



# Directly Addressing Contamination at the Curb



# Bringing it all Together: Contamination Minimization Plan

Cart Tagging Training Video  
<https://tinyurl.com/TRPCartTagging>



**OUTAGAMIE COUNTY**  
**RECYCLE MORE OF THESE!**

**CANS**  
Aluminum and Steel  
 empty and rinse

**CARTONS**  
Food and Beverage  
 empty and rinse

**GLASS**  
Bottles and Jars  
 empty and rinse

**PAPER**  
Mail, Boxes, and Cardboard  
 flatten

**PLASTICS**  
Kitchen, Laundry, and Bath: Bottles and Containers  
 empty and remove cap

Questions about Collection:  
 Inland Service Corp.  
**888-759-0501**

Questions about Recycling:  
 Outagamie County Recycling & Solid Waste  
**920-832-5277**  
 email: recycle@outagamie.org

[www.RecycleMoreOutagamie.org](http://www.RecycleMoreOutagamie.org)

**OOPS!**

**NO** bagged recyclable or trash

**NO** plastic bags, bubble wrap or plastic wrap

**NO** sharps, knives or propane tanks

**NO** hoses, ropes or textiles

**CORRECT THIS COLLECT**

**THE RECYCLING PARTNERSHIP**  
 recyclingpartnership.org  
 cmarshall@recyclingpartnership.org

**ACCEPTABLE MATERIALS WORKSHEET**

MRF: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

Please go through each item on the list and check whether the item is acceptable or not acceptable. This document will be used to get the local governments and the MRF on the same page. It can set the framework for front line staff (employees answering the phone or driving the collection vehicles) to better inform the community. It also provides the framework to start building educational materials that are consistent throughout the community.

You will see two categories under the "Do Not Accept" column. Here is how they are defined:  
**Not Dangerous:** items that are not sent to a market for recycling, but do not cause any major problems if found in the stream.  
**Dangerous:** items that can shut down or damage equipment, harm employees, and/or degrade the value of material.

PAPER PRODUCT	ACCEPT	DO NOT ACCEPT		DO NOT WANT ON LIST BUT ACCEPT
		NOT DANGEROUS	DANGEROUS	
OCC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pizza Boxes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspaper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hard Cover Books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paperback Books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Office Paper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ink Mail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cartons (gable top containers like milk, orange juice, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shredded Paper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Directions on how to Prepare	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Round Cans (fiber body, metal bottom)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gold Cups (e.g. paper foam drink cup)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hot Cups (e.g. coffee cup)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**MRF MATERIAL TRACKING FORM** Date: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Hauler: \_\_\_\_\_

Truck Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Container Number (if drop-off): \_\_\_\_\_

Route Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Container Material (if drop-off): \_\_\_\_\_  
 (e.g. bottles/cans, cardboard, paper)

**QUALITY GRADE** (circle one)

**A** Quality is acceptable. Less than 10% of material is contaminated.

**B** Quality is poor. 10% to 20% of material is contaminated.

**C** Quality is bad. Over 20% of material is contaminated.

Grade B or C?  Recyclables in Bags  Refuse in Bags  Loose bags/film  Scrap Metal

contaminant:  Wood Waste  Large bulky/heavy Items  Hazardous Waste  Tanglers  Textiles

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Photographed?  Quality Inspection Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

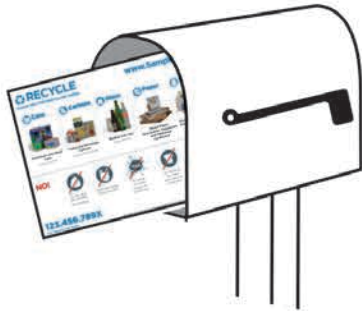
Driver Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Resources to Overcome Contamination  
<https://recyclingpartnership.org/for-communities>



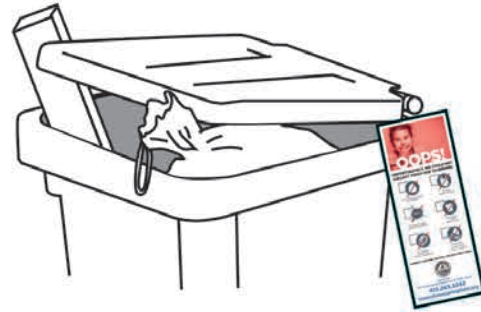
# From plan...

## 1 INFORM AND TRIGGER



Annual Info Card Mailer

## 2 PERSONALIZED FEEDBACK



Curbside Feedback

## 3 ISSUE SPECIFIC COMMUNICATIONS



Top Issue Mailer



Top Issue Signage



# ... to action

## RECYCLE

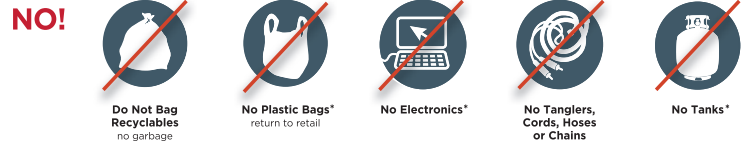


**Bottles and Jars\***  
empty and rinse

**Aluminum and Steel Cans**  
empty and rinse

**Cartons, Mixed Paper, Newspaper and Magazines**  
flattened cardboard

**Bottles and Containers**  
empty and replace cap



FOR MORE INFO  
[www.atlantaga.gov/recycling](http://www.atlantaga.gov/recycling)

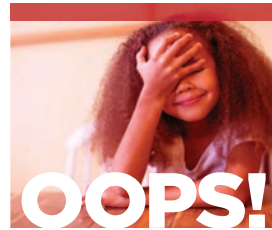
\*Also consider recycling at CHaRM Center.

**ATL 311** Call 311 or go online at [AtI311.com](http://AtI311.com) for questions and concerns.

Graphics provided by The Recycling Partnership

Containers should be placed on curb by 7 p.m. the previous day and removed (from the curb) by 7 p.m. on collection day.

### General Info



PLEASE LEAVE THESE ITEMS OUT!



**CORRECT THIS AND WE WILL COLLECT NEXT TIME.**



**ATL 311** 311 is for service related questions and concerns. Call 311 or go online at [AtI311.com](http://AtI311.com).

[www.atlantaga.gov/recycling](http://www.atlantaga.gov/recycling)

### Direct Engagement

**Join your neighbors in RECYCLING!**

**Step 1:** Fill your blue cart with bottles, cans, and cardboard

**Step 2:** Roll out and place blue cart next to garbage on collection day.

**CARTLANTA**  
*recycling. get into it.*

Questions? Need a cart?  
[www.atlantaga.gov/recycling](http://www.atlantaga.gov/recycling) or call 311.



**NO PLASTIC BAGS IN THE CART**

**DO NOT BAG Recyclables**

Loose and clean recyclables only

RETURN bags and other plastic wrap to retail or CHaRM.

[www.atlantaga.gov/recycling](http://www.atlantaga.gov/recycling)

### Supporting Campaign

### Contaminant Specific



OPERATIONS

EDUCATION



# It's Tagging Time!

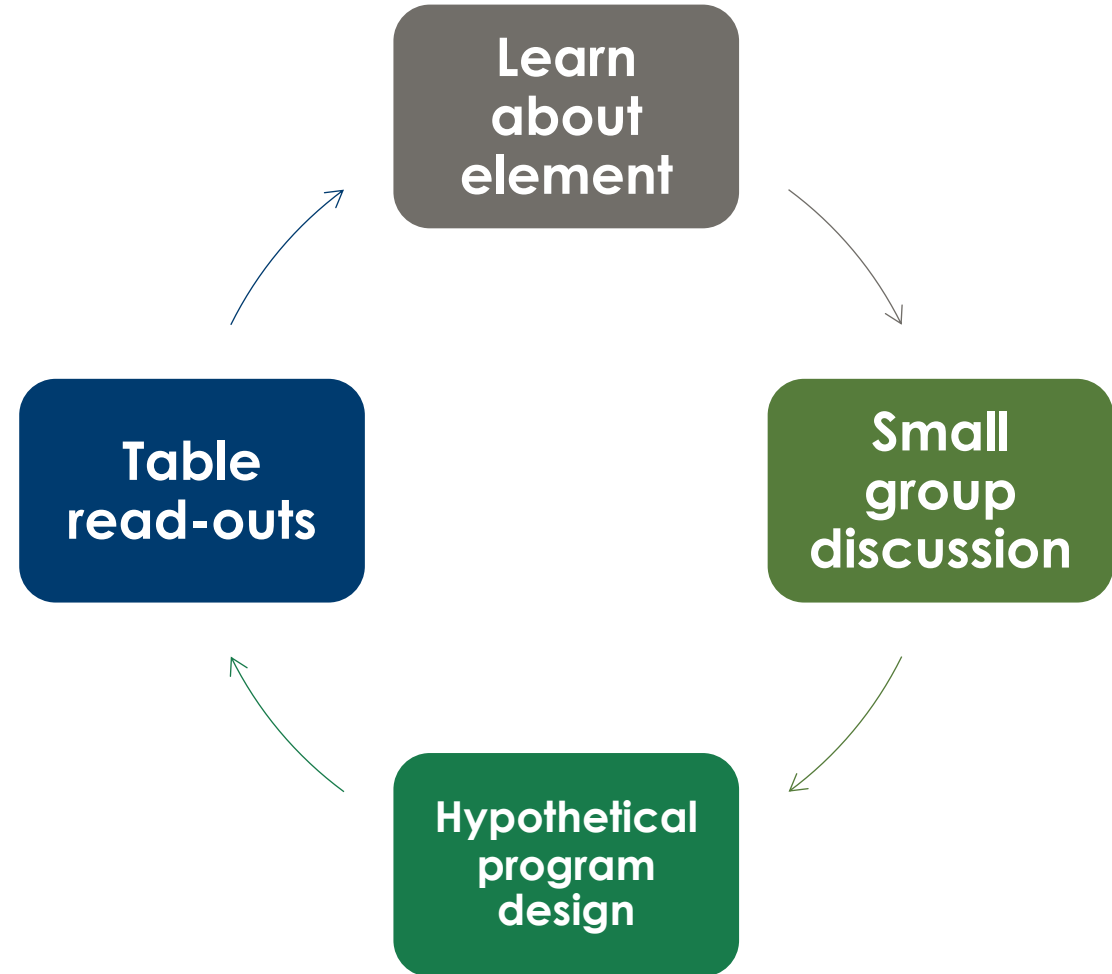
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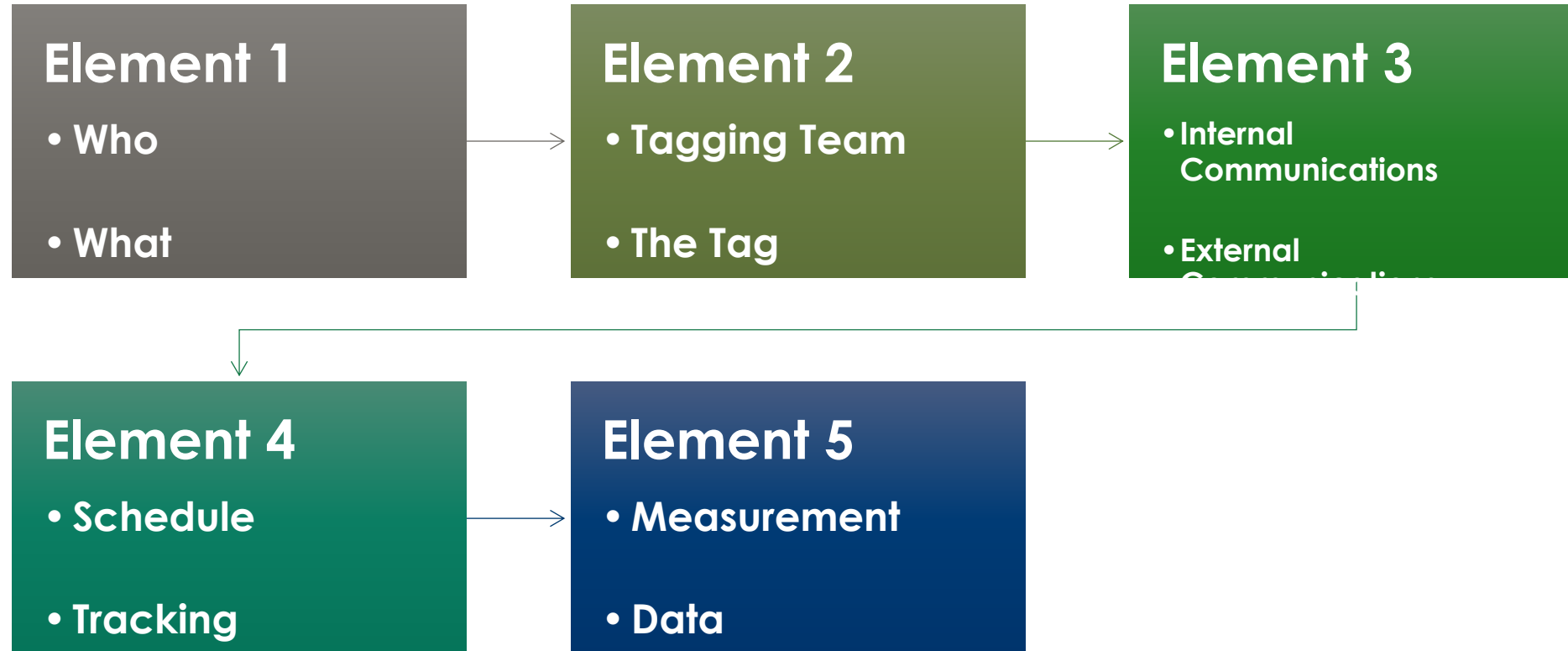


# It's Tagging Time!

**TASK:**  
Create a brand new tagging program with peers at your table.



# Tagging Program Elements



# Building a Tagging Program

## Element 1

- *Who* should be involved?
- *What* type of program will you create?

### WHO:

#### Consider ALL of your stakeholders

- City council, county commission, mayor, city or county manager
- Is formal approval needed?

#### Internal staff

- Department staff, drivers, customer service reps, enforcement staff

#### Education team

- Internal or external

### WHAT:

#### Length of tagging campaign

- Weather
- Daylight Savings Time

#### Tagging with enforcement

- Strike system
- Cart removal or rejection

#### Education only approach

- Thank you or warning tags



# Approach & Learnings: Massachusetts

**45%**

tagging decrease  
in Dartmouth



**22%**

tagging decrease  
in New Bedford

# Approach & Learnings: Denver, CO



# Approach & Learnings: Denver, CO

**73%**

or residents  
remembered  
being tagged



**25%**

increase in  
capture



# Building a Tagging Program

## Element 2

- Tagging Team
- The Tag

### Building your tagging team

- Internal staff
- External staff (i.e. hauler/driver)
- Temporary staff
- Volunteers (consider consistency)

### The Tag

- What's it made of?
- Hanging or stickers?
- Reinforced openings?
- Multi-lingual needs

### Training your tagging team

#### Checking in with team

- Do routes match with original plan?
- Is data being recorded properly?
- Is your team on schedule?

# Set a standard and train well



# Design: Tags of all Shapes and Sizes



## OOPS!

-  **NO** bagged recyclable or trash
-  **NO** plastic bags, bubble wrap or plastic wrap
-  **NO** sharps, knives or propane tanks
-  **NO** hoses, ropes or textiles

**CORRECT THIS AND WE WILL COLLECT NEXT TIME.**

 Recycling must be placed curbside in your rollcart.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_



## OOPS!

PLEASE LEAVE THESE ITEMS OUT!

-  Do not Bag Recyclables (no garbage)
-  No Bags (return to retail)
-  **YUCK!**  
No Food or Liquid (empty all containers)
-  No Clothing or Linens (drop-off only)
-  No Tangles, Cords, Hoses, Chains or Electronics
-  No Big Items (wood, plastic, furniture, or metal)

**NEXT TIME WE WON'T BE ABLE TO COLLECT YOUR CART IF WE SEE THESE ITEMS.**



Questions?  
Call W.Springfield Department of Public Works  
**413.263.3242**  
[townofwestspringfield.org](http://townofwestspringfield.org)



## OOPS!

PLEASE LEAVE THESE ITEMS OUT!

-  Do not Bag Recyclables (no garbage)
-  No Bags
-  No Food or Liquid (empty all containers)
-  No Clothing or Linens (drop-off only)
-  No Tangles, Cords, Hoses or Chains
-  No Tanks, Wood, Plastic Furniture or Metal

**CORRECT THIS AND WE WILL COLLECT NEXT TIME.**



Questions or Service Requests?  
Call 311 or Visit [RecycleByCity.com/Chicago](http://RecycleByCity.com/Chicago)

## NO PLASTIC BAGS!

# DO NOT BAG

## Recyclables

Collecting recyclables in a bag?  
Empty the contents into the cart.



Questions or Service Requests?  
Call 311 or Visit [RecycleByCity.com/Chicago](http://RecycleByCity.com/Chicago)



# Approach & Learnings: El Paso, TX



**NO PLASTIC BAGS IN THE CART**  
NO COLOQUE EN BOLSAS LOS RECICLABLES

## DO NOT BAG Recyclables

Collecting recyclables in a bag? Empty the contents into the cart.

Return plastic bags to retailers.  
Devuélvalas a la tienda.

El Paso Environmental Services Division  
DIAL 3-1-1 OR (915) 212-6000  
recyclerightEP.com ESD

## OOPS!

**PLEASE LEAVE THESE ITEMS OUT!**  
¡UPS! ¡POR FAVOR OMITA ESTAS COSAS!

- Do Not Bag Recyclables** no garbage  
*No coloque en bolsas los reciclables ni tire basura*
- No Plastic Bags** return to retail  
*No tire bolsas de plástico devuélvalas a la tienda*
- No Yard Waste** no wood, leaves, or compost  
*Desperdicios de jardín ni líquidos sin madera, hojas o compost*
- No Food or Liquid** empty all containers  
*No tire comida ni líquidos vaciar todos los contenedores*
- No Tangles** no hoses, wires, chains, or electronics  
*No tire objetos que se puedan enredar mangueras, electrónicos, cadenas, o alambres*

**Place cart in proper direction and leave five foot spacing between other objects.**  
Coloque el carrito de reciclaje en la dirección correcta y colóquelo a cinco pies de distancia entre otros objetos.

- Place cart in proper direction
- Cart too close to object
- Overfilled cart

**recyclerightEP.com**

**El Paso**

**RECYCLE MORE OF THESE:**  
RECICLE MÁS DE LO SIGUIENTE:


- Paper** Papel  
Mixed Paper, Newspaper, and Magazines
- Cardboard** El cartón  
Cardboard, Cereal and Dry Food Boxes empty and flatten
- Plastic** Plásticos  
Kitchen, Laundry, and Bath Bottles and Containers empty and rinse
- Cans** Latas de metal  
Aluminum and Steel Cans empty and rinse

**Questions? ¿PREGUNTAS?**  
VISIT **recyclerightEP.com**,  
DIAL 3-1-1 or CALL (915) 212-6000

# Thanks for Trying?

**THANK YOU**  
for supporting our recycling program  
and placing your cart at the curb.

**GOOD TRY!**



Items in your cart were mostly recyclable,  
except these few:

- DO NOT bag recyclables  
Leaves items loose
- NO plastic bags
- NO food or liquid  
(empty all containers)
- NO pizza boxes
- NO cards, hoses,  
chains or electronics
- NO clothing  
or linens

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please leave these materials  
out of your cart.

[www.ocfl.net/Recycles](http://www.ocfl.net/Recycles)  
Questions about your curbside recycling service?  
407-836-6601

**WHEN IN DOUBT, LEAVE IT OUT!**

RECYCLE SMART  
NO BAGS  
IN THE CART

RECYCLED

ORANGE COUNTY  
UTILITIES  
DEPARTMENT

**Albuquerque**

**RECYCLE MORE OF THESE:**  
RECICLE MÁS DE LO SIGUIENTE:

- Paper**  
Papal  
Mixed Paper, Newspaper,  
and Magazines
- Carton**  
Cartón  
Cardboard, Cereal  
and Dry Food Boxes  
empty and flatten
- Plastic**  
Plástico  
Kitchen, Laundry, and Bath  
Bottles and Containers  
empty and replace cap
- Cans**  
Latas/Botes  
Aluminum and Steel Cans  
empty and rinse

**Questions?**  
¿PREGUNTAS?  
Dial **3-1-1** or visit  
[recyclerightABQ.com](http://recyclerightABQ.com)



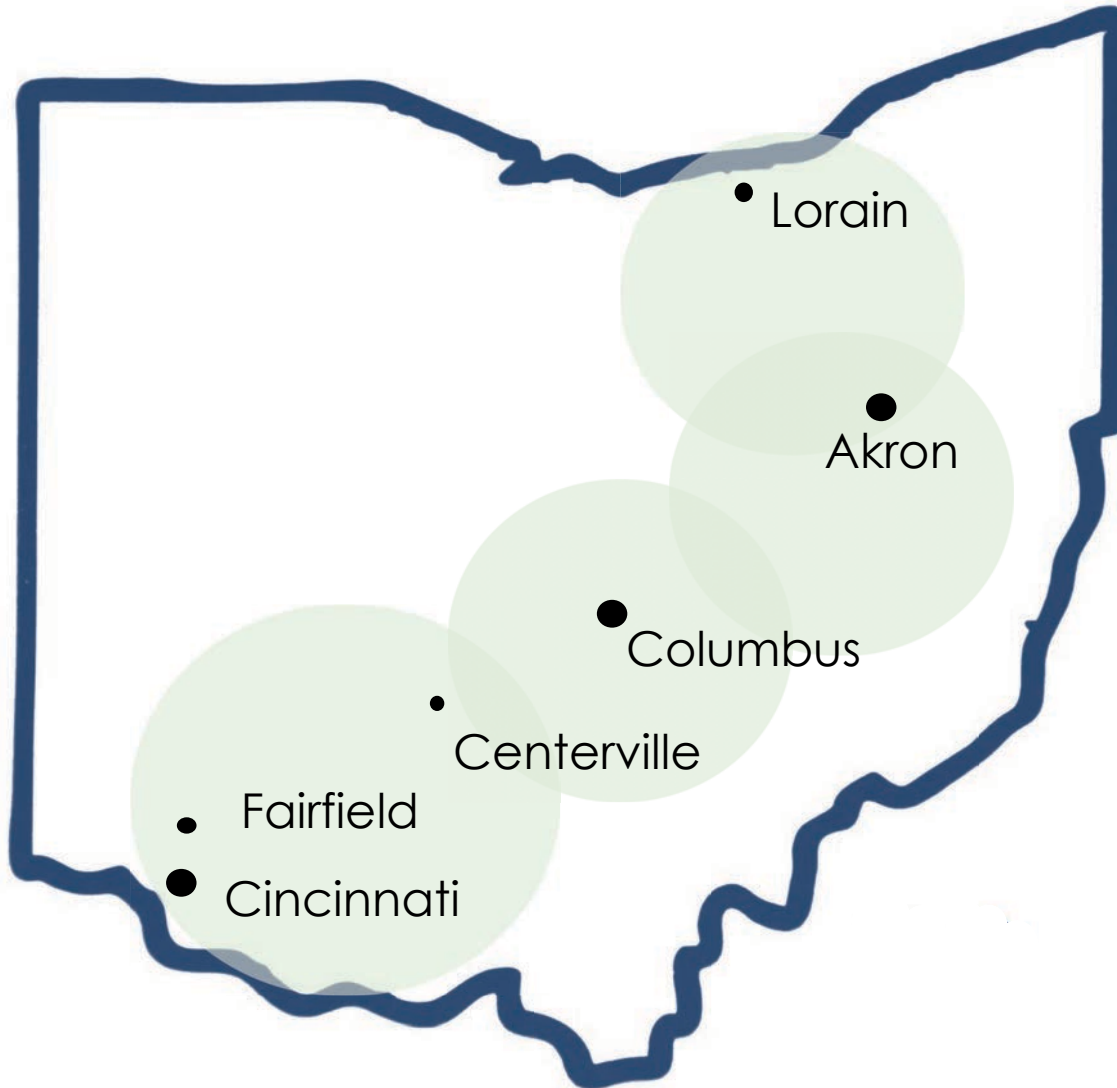
## Considerations

- Increased time for tagging
- Increased print cost
- How will you measure
- May cause more confusion and lead to
- May increase customer service call volume
- Thank you/Good Try tags are optional

## Recommendations

- General thank you to the community
- Halfway point may be a good time
- Social Media
- Nextdoor.com
- Newspaper ad
- Participation in local events

# Approach & Learnings: Ohio



## Regional Tagging Approach & Collaboration

- State Recycling Office
- Solid Waste Districts
- MRFs
- Cities



# Building a Tagging Program



## How much time and staff typically needed?

Determine pros and cons for the various staff available.

- Can internal staff duties be shifted during the program?
- Can tagging be conducted by hauler/drivers
- Temp staff incur inflated hourly expenses
- Volunteers may help keep cost down, but may yield in consistency



## Average staff and labor time needed daily

- Number of staff: 3-4
- Hours per day: 4
- Day per week: 4-5
- Approx. homes tagged per hour per staff: 60-100



# Lets Play

## How Contaminated is this Cart?

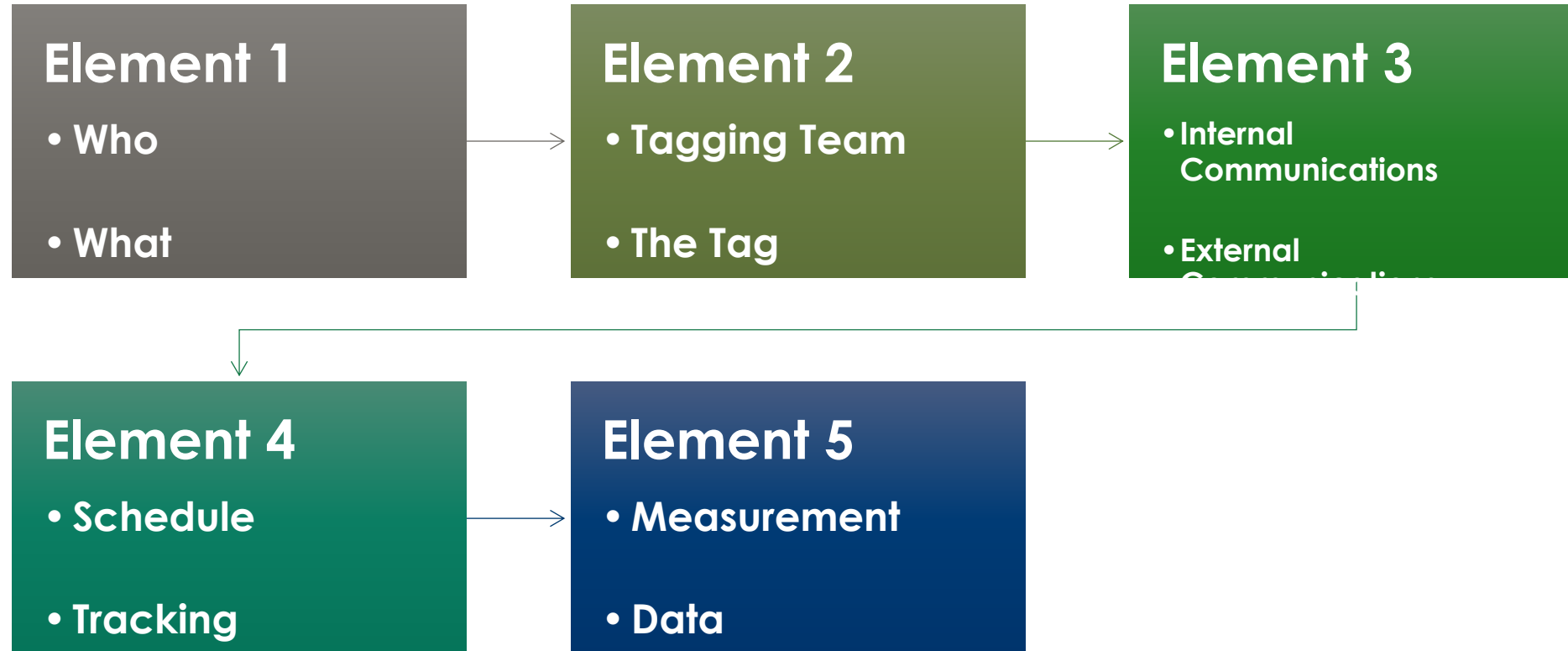


Oops Tag?

Good Try tag?

No action?

# Tagging Program Elements



# It's Tagging Time!

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# Building a Tagging Program

## Element 3

- Internal Communications
- External Communications

### Internal Communications

- Customer service staff
- Tagging staff
- Inspectors or enforcement staff
- Drivers, etc.
- City council or county commission, mayor, city or county managers office
  - FAQs/white paper

### External Communications

- Develop a plan of how to address questions and/or complaints
- General announcement 2-4 weeks prior to launch
  - Direct mail, utility bill notifications
  - Social media
  - Website
  - Word of mouth



# ENGAGE MULTIPLE AUDIENCES

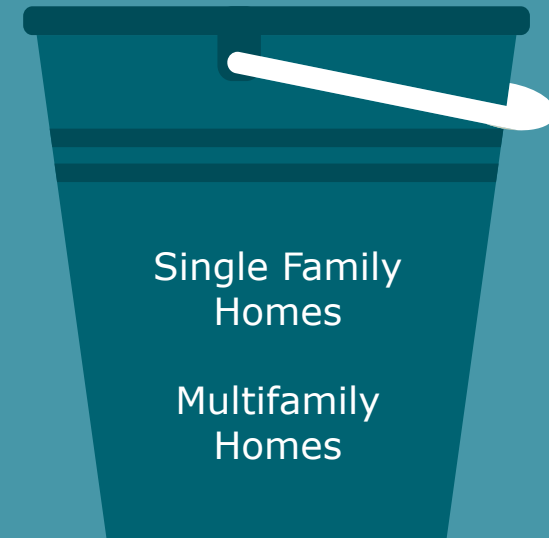
## DECISION MAKERS



## FRONT LINE STAFF



## YOUR RESIDENTS



# Develop the Message

- ✓ Consistent communication
- ✓ Focus on key contaminants
- ✓ Work with MRF to determine key contaminant

**Contamination**  
costs the system  
**money & time**, and leads to  
**safety hazards for workers.**



*bags &  
plastic film*

# Approach & Learnings: Atlanta, GA

Homes with bagged  
recyclables fell from  
52% to 22%



BEFORE



AFTER



# Key Outcomes in Atlanta

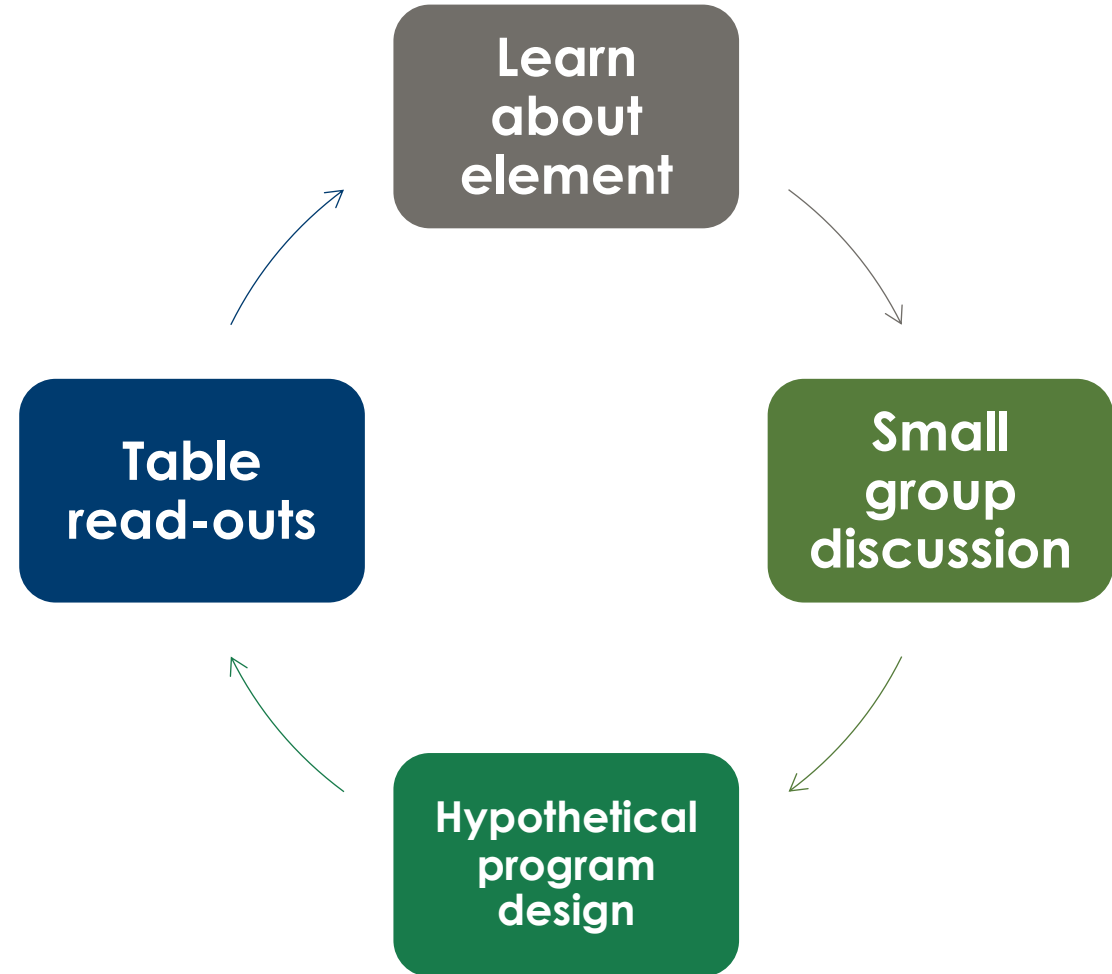
## SAMPLE DATA OF REJECTION AND PARTICIPATION RATES

- ✓ Overall capture rate increased **27%**
- ✓ Overall contamination decreased **57%**
- ✓ Overall bagged recyclables decreased **62%**

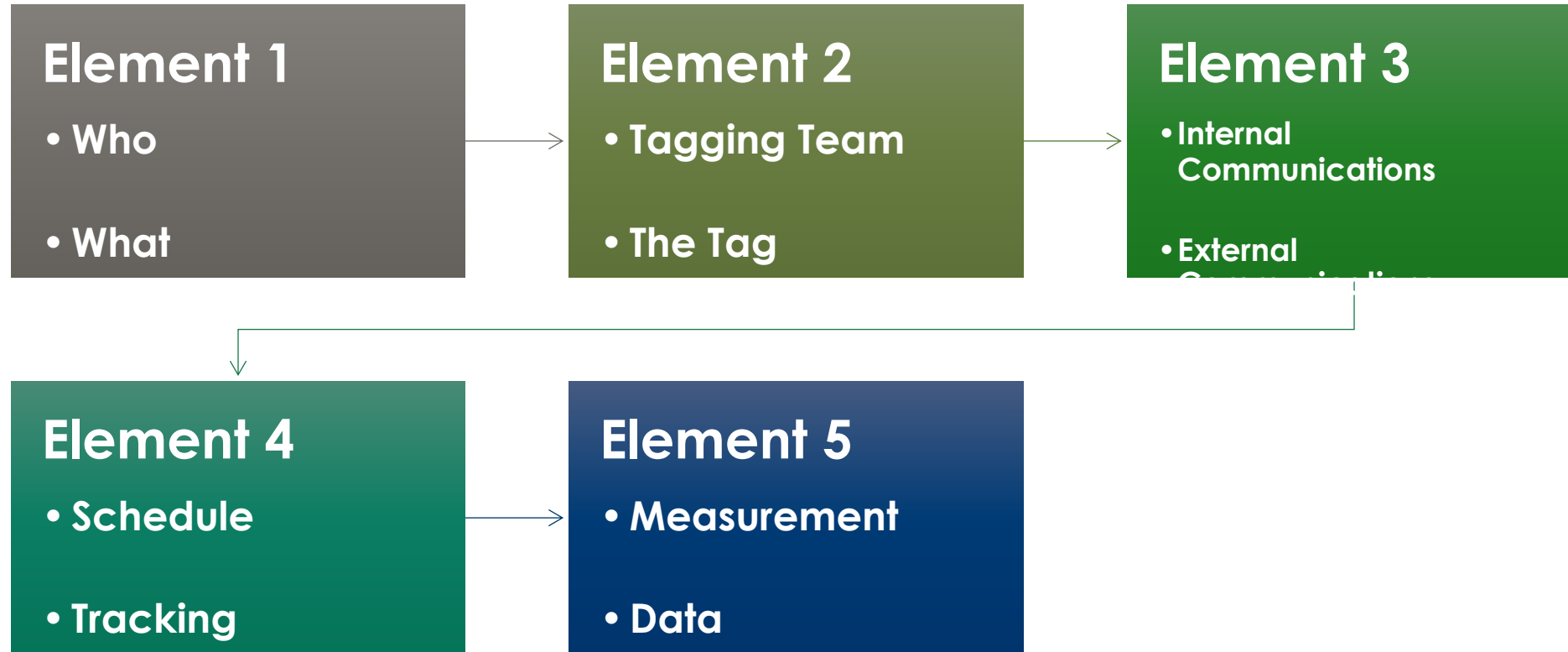


# It's Tagging Time!

**TASK:**  
Create a brand new tagging program with peers at your table.



# Tagging Program Elements



# Building a Tagging Program

## Element 4

- Schedule
- Tracking

### Scheduling

- How long will you be tagging?
- Routes determined before work starts
- Ensuring team is on schedule throughout
- Adjusting schedule if necessary
  - Holidays
  - Inclement weather
  - Daylight Savings Time

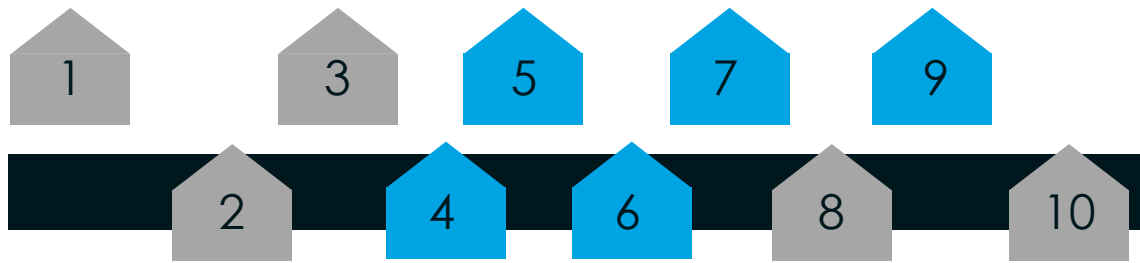
### Tracking

- Technology (apps) vs. pen & paper
- Saving data in Excel or other database
- Ensuring trends and results are showing behavior changes by residents as schedule progresses
- Various statuses



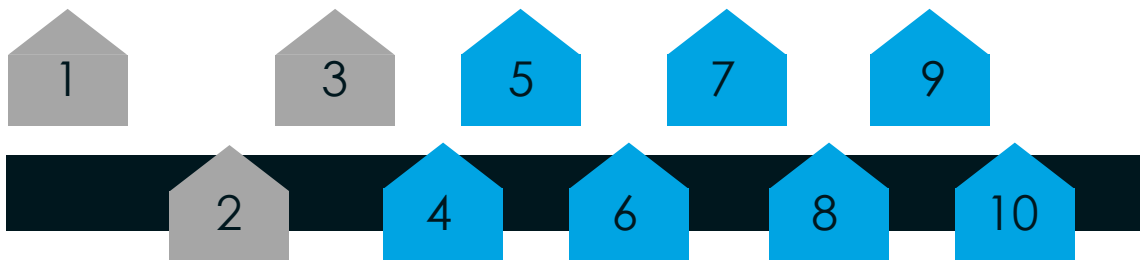
# Element 4 - Set Out and Participation Rates

*Week 1 Collection Cycle*



**Set-out Rate = 50%**  
*5 out of 10 homes  
on average*

*Week 2 Collection Cycle*



**Set-out Rate = 70%**  
*7 out of 10 homes  
on average*

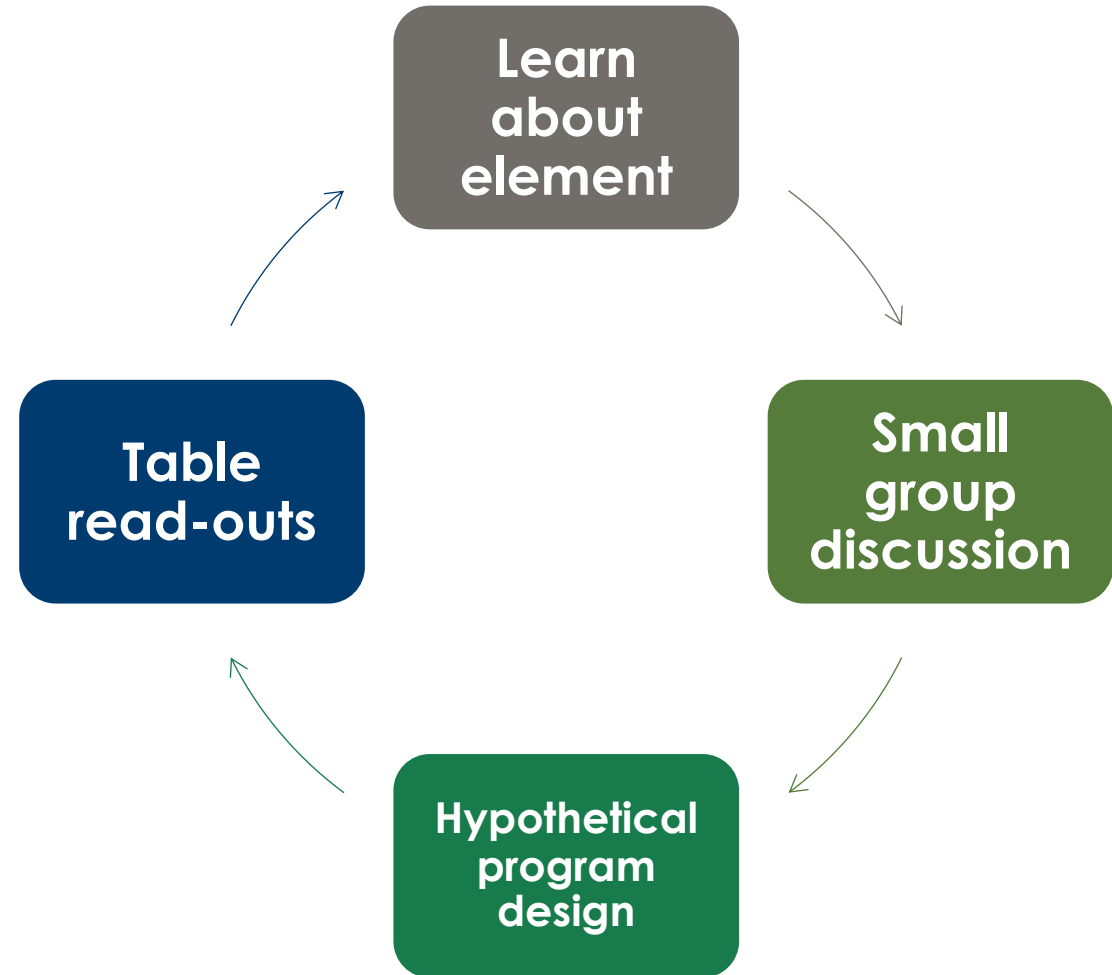
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# It's Tagging Time!

**TASK:**  
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# Building a Tagging Program

## Element 5

- Measurement
- Data

### Measurement

- Is your measurement in line with MRF or hauler language
- Pre- and post-intervention audits

### Data

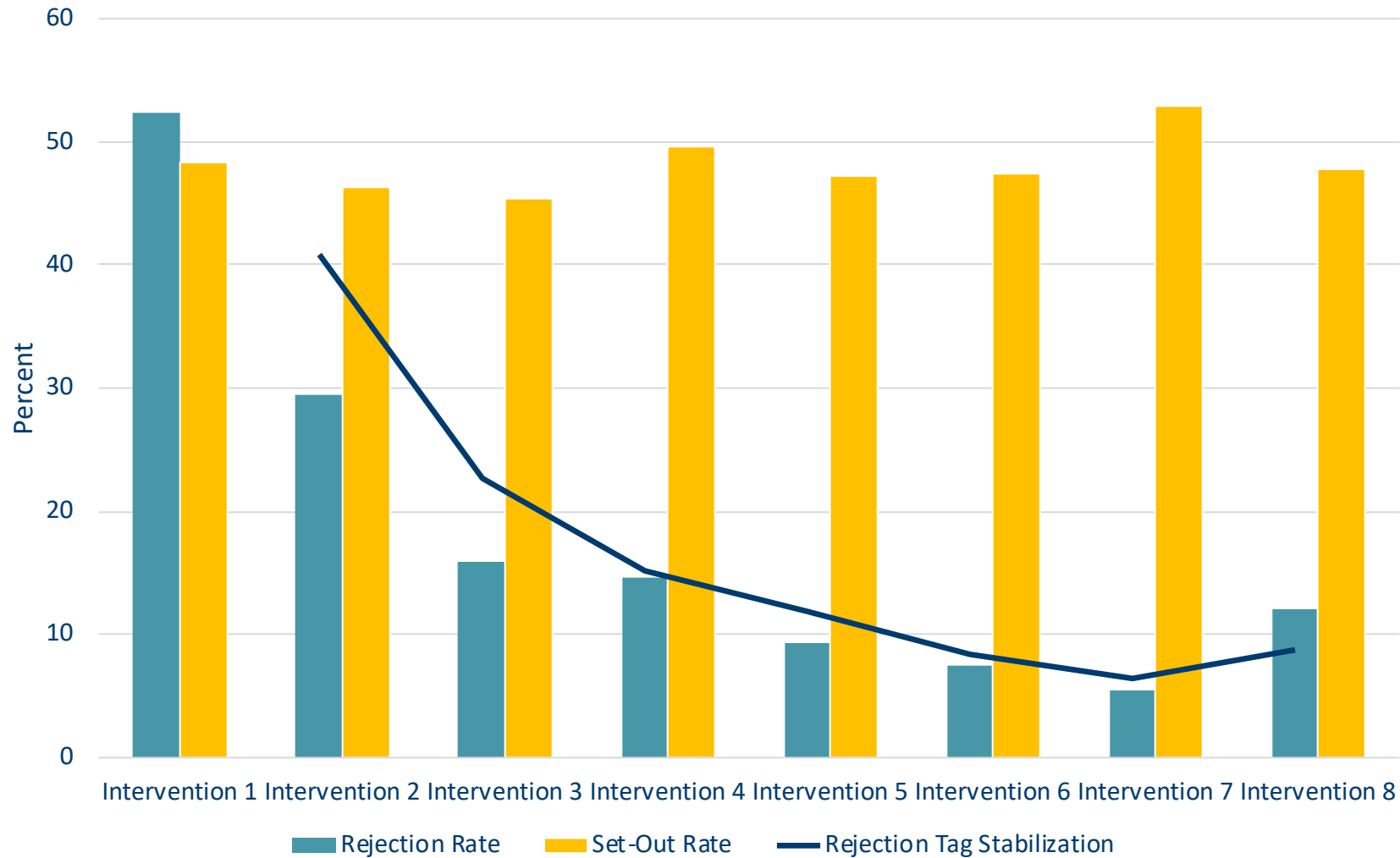
- Saving data in Excel or other database
- Ensuring trends and results are showing behavior changes by residents as schedule progresses





# Measuring

# Rejection & Set-out Rates in Lowell, MA pilot 2016





MUNICIPAL MEASUREMENT PROGRAM

# The Path to Strong Program Metrics

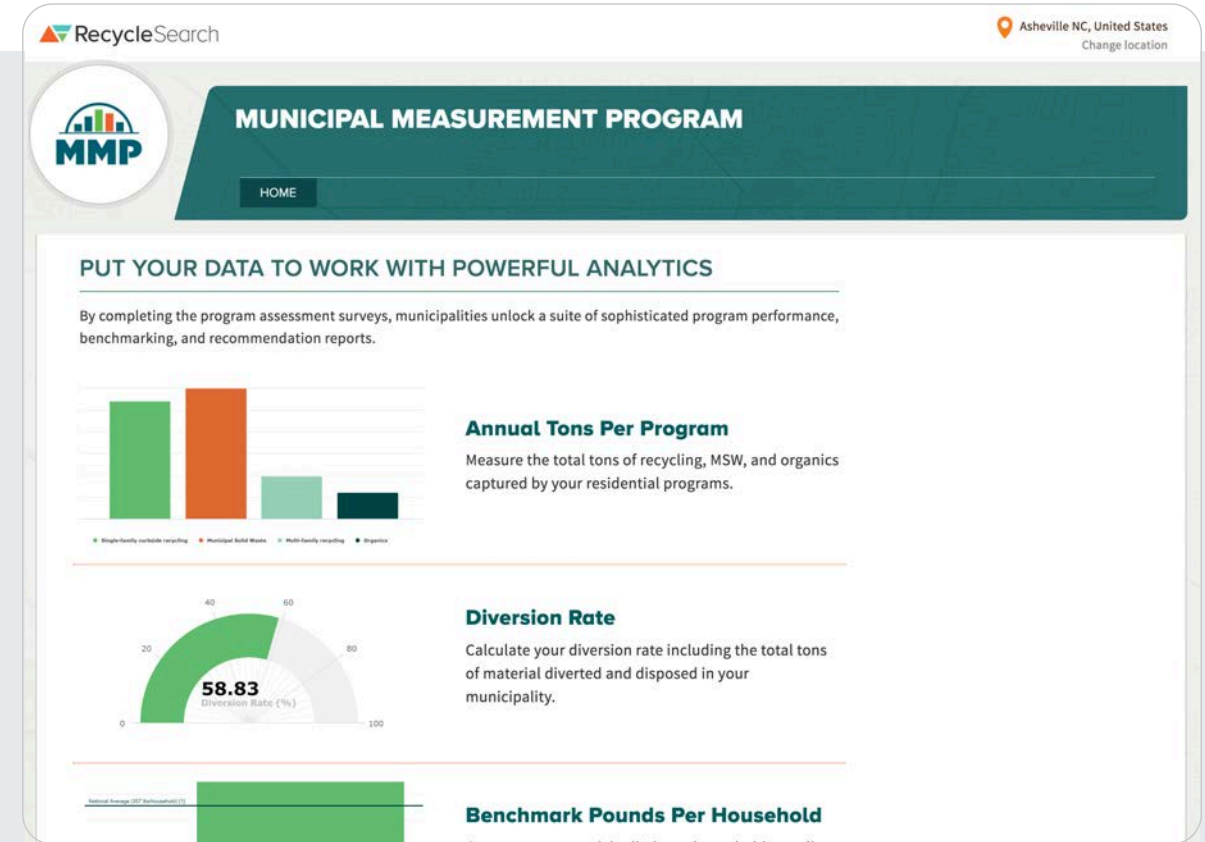
## FREE state of the art tool for tracking:

- Curbside recycling
- Drop-off recycling
- Multifamily Recycling
- Organics

## Customized recommendations and solutions for your program

Build powerful **year over year data**

Quickly calculate and **report key metrics**



GET STARTED: <https://recyclesearch.com/profile/mmp>



# Free Tools for Social Media & Tackling Contamination

## Anti-Contamination Recycling Kit

Improving Quality in Your Recycling Program



If you are looking to clean up your residential recycling stream, this kit might be for you. As you will see, the approach is well tested and the results are both immediate and noteworthy.

This kit has been designed to provide steps, tools, and resources to help you improve the quality of your recycling program. It will require resources, planning, and time on your end, as well as a partnership with your MRF and hauler, but the benefits are many. Increasing the quality of the recycling stream can save on disposal fees, improve resident satisfaction with your program, and ensures the success and sustainability of the recycling system.

To get started, use this [ASSESSMENT TOOL](#) to make sure your community is ready to take on this challenge. Before starting this project you'll need to assess your budget, present your case to decision makers, and get buy-in from your city/town officials, your hauler and your MRF. Lastly, take advantage of what others have learned by reviewing this [PRO TIPS PAGE](#).

**This toolkit includes:**

- Guidance to help you broach this subject with your MRF and hauler
- Visual instructions and tools for targeted messages
- Tips to help you get the best results
- Tools to help you track and report results



This Kit was developed in collaboration with Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection



## OOPS!

PLEASE LEAVE THESE ITEMS OUT!



No Bag Recyclables (no garbage)



No Plastic Bags



No Food or Liquid (except at curbside)



No Clothing or Linens (except at curbside)



No Tires, Coils, Hoses or Chains



No Tanks, Wood, Pallets, Furniture or Metal

CORRECT THIS AND WE WILL COLLECT NEXT TIME.



Questions about your curbside recycling service?  
(123) 456-7890

### RECYCLE

THANK YOU FOR RECYCLING THESE:

Cans

Cartons

Glass

Paper

Plastic

Aluminum and Steel Cans

Food and Beverage Cartons

Bottles and Jars

Recycled Paper

Aluminum, Laundry, Bath Bottles and Containers

NO!

No Bag Recyclables

No Plastic Bags

No Food or Liquid

No Clothing or Linens

No Tires

[\(123\) 456-7890](tel:1234567890)

[SampleUrl.org](#)

## AVOID WISHCYCLING

(putting things in your recycling cart that don't belong)





# Summary

- Messaging as close to the behavior is key – tags on carts!
- Tag with recipe of messaging
- 4 to 8 interventions is the sweet spot
- Reject with tag, warnings not as successful
- Consistent tagging
- Thank you tags impactful only to re-enforce the action of a corrected cart
- Please measure and share success





**Thank you!**

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