

Winnetka's Styrofoam Recycling Program

Winnetka has year-round Styrofoam recycling! This program is offered through a partnership between the Winnetka Public Works, the Winnetka Environmental and Forestry Commission, Go Green Winnetka-Northfield, and Dart Container Corporation. To participate, simply drop off any Styrofoam at the Winnetka Public Works Yards, 1390 Willow Road, weekdays from 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM. Neighboring communities are welcome to participate.

Winnetka first collected Styrofoam late in 2012 in the two weeks after Christmas. In those two weeks, about twenty-three 55-gallon bags of block Styrofoam were collected. The Styrofoam collected went to Abt Electronics in Glenview who generously offered to recycle it.

The 2012 program was so successful that the 2013 program was expanded to six weeks beginning at Thanksgiving in 2013. In just six weeks, more than sixty-six 55 - gallon bags of block Styrofoam were collected. With the increased volume we sought and achieved a partnership relationship with Dart Container Corporation to arrange for a bi-monthly pick up of the Styrofoam opening the opportunity to both expanded and year around collection.

Beginning April 2014 we will both collect year round and expand the acceptable materials. In addition to the block-style Styrofoam that comes with appliances, electronics, etc. We now may collect clean foam meat trays (e.g., from grocery stores), foam cups, take-out containers/clamshells, and foam ice chests/coolers.

All accepted materials collected are processed by Dart container Corporation with a special machine called a hydraulic densifier that compacts the materials into 35-40K lbs, blocks. These blocks are in turn shipped to regional manufacturer that will further processes the material and create consumer goods such as premium picture frames.

Winnetka is pleased to be able to divert this Styrofoam from landfill space, which is at a premium in the Chicagoland area and throughout Illinois.

Instructions for Styrofoam recycling:

- make sure your styrofoam has the ♻ symbol
- place packaging foam and foodservice foam in separate bags
- foodservice containers MUST be clean and rinsed
- no straws, lids, plastic wrap, or trash
- no packaging peanuts (but UPS will take them)
- no foam insulation