

Recycling Advocates Oppose “One Bin for All”

Houston Needs Source-Separated Recycling, Composting, a Long-Term Strategy and Community Participation

In order to protect natural resources, the climate, create jobs and beautify our great city, Houston needs to implement a long term Zero Waste Plan similar to those that have passed in Los Angeles, New York, Austin, Dallas and in San Antonio, as well as many cities around the world. A “One Bin for All” proposal would not only promote a lack of responsibility for our discards; it would utilize technologies that have been repeatedly proven to fail, pollute and create long-term risks.

“One Bin for All” technologies threaten air quality, recycling and community health:



Trash gasification is not recycling!

- ☑ “Mixed waste processing” ruins recyclable materials, especially paper, cardboard and metals
- ☑ “Trash-to-fuel” technologies like gasification, pyrolysis or catalytic conversion produce air pollution, toxic byproducts and destroy materials that could be reused or recycled
- ☑ Facility would likely be located at or near an existing landfill or transfer station, nearly all of which are near low income areas or communities of color, threatening environmental justice
- ☑ Organic food scraps that have been mixed with trash and hazardous waste cannot produce valuable compost
- ☑ Long-term contracts (15-35 years) prevent the City from innovating in waste reduction or recycling, threatening new and existing jobs
- ☑ Significant cost (up to five times more than landfilling costs) and financial risk (no proven track record), even if privately financed
- ☑ Loss of important environmental education behavior in the home, as well as eliminating incentive to reduce consumption and waste
- ☑ Facility in Montgomery, AL that the City pointed to as “state of the art” was forced to shut down due to high levels of contamination lowering recycling values. Indianapolis has stopped a similar plan.
- ☑ The proposal does not address the vast majority of trash in Houston. The City only collects 10% of our trash. What about apartments and businesses?

Groups and individuals who have contacted Mayor Parker and City Council Opposing “One Bin for All”:

National Recycling Coalition
NAACP Houston Branch
Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services (T.E.J.A.S.)
Teamsters Joint Council No. 58
Dr. Robert Bullard, Ph.D., Dean of the Barbara Jordan- Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs at Texas Southern University
Sierra Club Houston Regional Group
Michael Brune, CEO, Sierra Club
Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc.
Paper Recycling Coalition
Steel Recycling Institute
Houston Peace and Justice Center
San Jacinto River Coalition
Annie Leonard, Story of Stuff Project
Public Citizen TX
Sustainable Energy and Economic Development (SEED) Coalition
Hip Hop Caucus
5Gyres
Richard Anthony, Zero Waste Int. Alliance
Eco-Cycle International
Federal International, Inc. Recycling and Waste Solutions
Upstream
Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives
Energy Justice Network
Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE)
Center for a Competitive Waste Industry
Central Texas Zero Waste Alliance
Pratt Industries, Inc.
Strategic Materials
Nature’s Way Resources

Zero Waste Houston Coalition Proposes Real Solutions

- ☑ We thank Mayor Turner and City Council for voting to expand and continue the two-bin recycling program in 2015-2016!
- ☑ City of Houston should abandon the One Bin for All proposal.
- ☑ City of Houston should appoint a **board, task force or commission** with real neighborhood, environmental and environmental justice representation to help craft a long term waste reduction, recycling and composting plan for Houston.
- ☑ We need to have more **transparency** and **community involvement** throughout waste and recycling proposals. The City will not disclose what the \$1 million grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies was spent on, for example.
- ☑ We need a recycling plan for apartments and businesses. Other cities in Texas have passed **Universal Recycling Ordinances** or implemented **District Franchise Agreements**. Houston needs to do the same to prevent thousands of tons of trash from entering landfills every year.
- ☑ We need a pilot program for **curbside composting** to eliminate organic waste from landfills.
- ☑ We can **reduce wasteful products** like plastic bags that damage property and cost taxpayers millions for clean-up.
- ☑ We can encourage producers to be more responsible for the waste they create from packaging and difficult-to-recycle products such as batteries and light bulbs. Several cities have passed “**producer responsibility**” resolutions to support producer responsibility policies at the state level.

Defining Zero Waste: A goal that is ethical, economical, efficient and visionary, to guide people in changing their lifestyles and practices to emulate sustainable life cycles, where *all* discarded materials are designed to become resources for others to use.

-Zero Waste International Alliance



Visit our website below to read our full report, “It’s Smarter to Separate”

What can YOU do?

- ☑ Let our elected officials know you oppose “One Bin for All,” a.k.a. mixed waste processing, and you support a long-term Zero Waste Plan for Houston based on highest and best use for all discards!
- ☑ Reduce, Reuse, Recycle/Compost. Use your big, green bin and encourage your neighbors to do the same!

www.texasenvironment.org

www.zerowastehouston.org

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