## **SWALCO REO Grant**

**Recycling Cart Tag Program Overview** 



cityofwaukegan



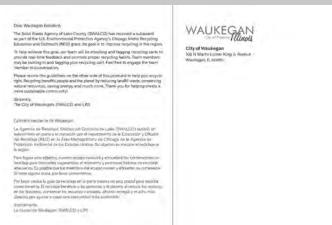
cityofwaukegan Recycling awareness is making an impact in Waukegan and Zion. Three weeks into the...



### What is a Recycling Cart Tagging Program?

The goal of a recycling cart tagging program is to clean up the recycling waste stream by educating residents on recycling guidelines in their communities. The program utilizes educational materials, including mailed postcards and cart tags placed on recycling bins, to inform residents about what can and cannot be recycled. Ideally, this program creates a shift in recycling habits that reduces contamination levels in residential recycling.







## Cart Tag Protocol

#### 1. Review Previous Data When Avalable

 SWALCO and the waste hauler review and select municipal routes with reported contamination rates and inspect those routes for four consecutive weeks while providing educational materials and feedback to the homeowner

#### 2. Education

- SWALCO, along with the municipality, and hauler mail an introductory postcard to each home on the selected routes that contains recycling guidelines and notification about the cart tag program
- Cart tags with information and personalized feedback are then

#### 3. On the Street

 A SWALCO street team monitors carts for four weeks in a row, tagging bins, and collecting data on the contamination and compliance rates



This is Pete, a recycling expert on the SWALCO team, he is holding a cart tag marked with a thumbs up for good recycling!

# SWALCO Findings

Soft-approach (meaning no reward or punishment for compliance with program) educational campaign can be successful in lowering the contamination rate in residential recycling over four weeks (supporting data in next slide).



The cost to implement the cart tagging program consists of three main things: cart tags, postcards, and team members. For this specific program of 1000 households, the cost per household for all the services listed above will be \$4.50.





A team of two people can inspect approximately 50 homes per hour or 400 homes in an 8-hour day.





### **Data Review**

We compared the contamination rate of each route week by week to see the overall behavior change.

	Waukegan
Week 1	60% Contamination Rate
Week 2	40% Contamination Rate
Week 3	30% Contamination Rate

Recycling Cart Weekly Setout Rate 80%

	Zion
Week 1	50% Contamination Rate
Week 2	40% Contamination Rate
Week 3	30% Contamination Rate

Recycling Cart Weekly Setout Rate 65%



The Good: We found an overall decrease in contamination rates from week 1 to week 3, indicating that the educational campaign was successful in reducing contamination in residential recycling.



The Bad: Contamination persists in some carts despite the education efforts. This can be attributed to multiple household residents not receiving the feedback needed to change behavior, and to the limited capacity for waste in the regular trash cart. In these instances, a punitive approach will be used with the recycling cart being removed.

### **SWALCO Recommendations**

Based on the data, SWALCO suggests that more disciplinary actions may be needed, such as requiring contaminated carts to be serviced only after cleaning or levying a fine for contaminated carts to ensure long-term change in contamination in the recycling waste stream.

