

Partnership Brings Recycling Receptacles to St. John Bin Sites

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Island Green Living Board President Harith Wickrema, left, and staff member C.J. Scatliffe with one of the new recycling bins placed at trash collection sites on St. John. (Photo courtesy of Island Green Living)

For the first time, popular trash collection sites around St. John will feature specially marked receptacles for island residents to deposit their rinsed recyclable No. 1, 2 and 5 plastics and aluminum when they drop off their garbage. Convenient new recycling stations are thanks to

a collaboration between the nonprofit Island Green Living and the V.I. Waste Management Authority, according to a press release announcing the effort.

In addition to aluminum cans, items that can be recycled at the marked receptacles include water and soda bottles, detergent and milk jugs, many food containers and jars, etc. Island Green Living has installed the recycle bins and commenced pickups with their dedicated truck, the release stated. Partner PADNOS, a Michigan-based recycling company, supplied the bins, contributed to the truck and provided a self-contained bailer, it said.

The VIWMA sites that feature Island Green Living recycle bins are as follows:

Cruz Bay: Main VIWMA site across from EC Gas Station & Alfredo's Landscaping

Advertising ([skip](#))

Advertising ([skip](#))

Advertising ([skip](#))

Giff Hill Road: VIWMA site just past Giff Hill School

Coral Bay: Main VIWMA site across from Love City Mini Mart

The community can also continue to drop off their recyclable plastics and aluminum cans at Island Green Living's ReSource Depot located behind VITEMA on Giff Hill Road just off Centerline, the release stated. Those in Cruz Bay will find a bin for recyclables conveniently located at Connections as well, it said.

"We are grateful to WMA for their support and collaboration as well as to Conner Buttermore and David Baum of St. John Concrete for donating slabs to install our recycling containers," said Harith Wickrema, president of Island Green Living. "This initiative would not be possible without generous donations from the community, the partnership of PADNOS and the dedication of our staff and volunteers."



Operations Manager Anthony Novelli, right, and staff member C.J. Scatliffe with one of the new recycling bins. (Photo courtesy of Island Green Living)

“Among the plethora of donors, Dr. George Rapier, president of RapierMed, LLC, became the single largest donor who made it possible to secure the \$100K matching donation from the Island Green Living president,” said Akhil Deshwal, board secretary. “As an ongoing operation, Island Green Living will continue to welcome donations to keep plastic and aluminum away from the ocean and landfill. We are hoping cardboard and glass can be next. It takes a whole village, meaning a whole island, to preserve our environment.”

Island Green Living emphasizes that it is always best to avoid single-use plastics. Once they are part of the waste system, however, the program ensures ocean-bound plastics are reclaimed and used in recycled products rather than polluting waterways and choking landfills, according to the release. In this way, the usefulness of the material can be extended and the mining for new resources curtailed, it said.

“We are trying to make recycling as easy as possible for the community to maximize participation,” said Kelly McKinney, executive director of Island Green Living.

The community should lightly rinse and sort plastic recyclables and aluminum cans from their other trash and bag plastic and aluminum together. Rinsed recyclables and caps, removed from bottles, should be placed in the bag. Most commonly used plastics have a resin code listed somewhere on the material, typically on the bottom. Island Green Living can accept

No. 1, 2 and 5 plastics which include items such as water and soda bottles, some food containers, peanut butter jars, milk jugs, shampoo, detergent bottles, yogurt containers and other items. Styrofoam and items like plastic utensils, bags, etc. cannot be accepted, it said.

Once collected, aluminum cans and ocean-bound recyclable plastics will be sorted and baled and then shipped to PADNOS where these raw materials will gain a new lease on life. PADNOS has committed to purchasing and transporting (on deadheaded shipping containers, meaning containers that otherwise would have returned empty, when possible to limit the carbon footprint) all aluminum and plastics collected by Island Green Living. Island Green Living launched the groundbreaking Ocean-Bound Plastics Recycling Program, the first on the island, in February. Since that time, approximately 3,700 pounds of recyclables have been collected, the press release stated.

The organization is also offering a paid pick-up service to local bars, restaurants and businesses. For more information, interested parties can contact Executive Director Kelly McKinney at kelly@islandgreenliving.org.

As one of the architects of the territory's bans on plastic bags, straws, and toxic sunscreen, working closely with the governor and Legislature on education and advocacy, Island Green Living is staunchly committed to eliminating plastic and other pollutants from the environment, the release stated.

To learn more, visit www.islandgreenliving.org.