



News of St. John

An Online Blog About the Daily Happenings of St. John, USVI



Recycling Made Easy on St. John

January 27, 2023 by Hillary Bonner

Good Morning, Good Morning! If you have been following along, you have probably realized that I am a strong and passionate supporter of the recycling and waste reduction programs here on St. John. When I moved here from Colorado in 2012, I was absolutely appalled at the wide range use of straws, disposable plastic cups and Styrofoam and even more put off by the lack of any type of recycling program on island! Well, here we are, a decade later, with a non-Reef Safe sunscreen ban, an incredible reduction in non-compostable plastic use on island AND an incredible recycling program right here on St. John! How far we have come...But, just like anything else in the world, if you don't have

the proper information on HOW to utilize the programs that are in place (or simply don't know that they are in place!) they probably won't be utilized. So, here's the 411 on how to recycle while you are on St. John!



Keep St. John, and our surrounding seas, free of plastic by recycling while you are visiting!

When we are on [Asante](#) with guests, I have a recycling bin ready to go! Every aluminum can and piece of plastic that gets used on the boat is rinsed thoroughly and placed in the bin. And it is super easy to dispose of the recyclables after a trip because we just take it with our trash to the Pine Peace dumpster where there is a recycling bin next to the general waste bins. It's literally so easy. But, most of our guests look at me like I have three heads when I say I'm going to recycle their Summer Ale can after the last refreshing swig. "Wait, there's recycling on St. John?"

YES. There is.



Ocean Bound Plastics Recycling Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at the Island Green Sustainable Living Center- February 2022

And, unfortunately, many of our guests who are not aware of recycling on St. John were flat out told by their lodging host or property manager that we don't have recycling on island. Well, I'm here to tell you that just isn't true. (Do better folks!)

On the flip side of that, I received a note from the manager of a lodging facility earlier this week who IS working with [Island Green Living Association](#) to promote recycling and make it easy on their guests to do so (Bravo!). She was having a hard time communicating to her guests about the proper way to recycle while visiting. Regardless of the info and how-to sheets in the villa, her staff often finds many non-recyclable items in the recycling bins which results in extra hours and

costs to the company for trash sorting. No one wants to do that But our recycling program on island is very different from what most of you experience in the states. So, this is how we do it!



Island Green President, Harith Wickrema, left, and (former) staff member CJ Scatliffe, right, show off the new bins, donated by PADNOS with pick up powered by fundraising dollars!

On Giff Hill, situated between Tony's Kitchen and the dump (behind the VITEMA building) is an amazing little compound fueled by the Island Green Living Association. Here, you will find the ReSource Depot and a very grass roots recycling operation that packs a punch against the plastic and aluminum waste on this island.

Island Green Living Association accepts the following items for recycling:

- **Aluminum Cans** (beer, soda, seltzer)



- **#1 Plastics**– Beverage bottles, Food bottles/jars (salad dressing, peanut butter, honey, etc.)> You'll also find that a lot of the restaurants and bars on island have switched over to this type of recyclable plastic cups from the nasty #7 translucent cups that used be widespread here on St. John.



Enjoyed at the Windmill Bar and now rinsed and ready to go in the recycling bin!

- **#2 Plastics-** Milk cartons, detergent bottles, hygiene products, household cleaners



Shampoo, conditioners and other cosmetic/hygiene products are likely #2



- **#5 Plastics-** Straws, bottle caps, prescription bottles, hot food containers, packaging tape, DVD/CD boxes, yogurt containers, disposable plates and cutlery, etc.



Always check the resin number on the bottom of your container or cup in order to see if it qualifies for recycling on STJ

Now, these are just a few examples of each type of plastic that the on-island recycling program accepts. Please see below for more of a breakdown.



A printable version of this infographic can be obtained from the Island Green Living Association

Additionally, ALL plastic and aluminum waste should be rinsed of their contents before being recycled. These folks, many of whom are volunteers, are out in the heat in an open-air recycling facility sorting through the contents of our recyclables. And, the contents of these containers can attract bees and other insects, putting them in harm's way. Additionally, I never want to think about anyone sorting through stale beer cans or rotten yogurt containers on my account. Oh, and please remove the tops from your plastic bottles. They can be included with the recycling but should be removed to ease the plastic crushing process.



Students sorting recyclables last spring on the Giff Hill gives back day

BUT we do not need to sort the contents of your recycling bin...They do that for us! Clean and commingled aluminum and plastics can be dropped off in one bag at any of the below locations if your lodging facility does not offer this service for you.

- **Pine Peace Dumpster:** Just across the street from EC Service Station
- **Giff Hill Dumpster:** Just past the upper campus of Giff Hill School if you are coming from Centerline Road
- **Coral Bay Dumpster:** Across from Love City Mini-Mart
- **Island Green ReSource Depot:** Just off Centerline on Giff Hill Road behind the VITEMA building.

Pine Peace, Giff Hill and Coral Bay are convenient locations to drop both your trash AND recycling. I love a good one-stop shop.



Look for these bins to dispose of your recyclables!

Also, I noticed last week that Cinnamon Bay has the recycling bins back in place just off the beach, across from the water sports rentals and food truck. While these bins shouldn't be utilized for bulk drop off, it sure does make the whole pack it in, pack it out concept a lot easier when enjoying the beach at Cinnamon Bay (they can also be found at Trunk Bay)!



In addition to Cinnamon Bay Beach and Campground, the following businesses are working with Island Green in order to recycle their cans and plastic waste. So, make sure to ask where you should place your Love City Seltzer (or other) cans when you are finished enjoying them!

- Maho Crossroads
- Lovango Resort + Beach Club
- Westin Resort
- The Windmill Bar
- Tap & Still
- Cruz Bay Landing
- Grande Bay Resort
- Trunk Bay Concessions
- The Hills
- Shambles
- Salty Mongoose
- Skinny Legs
- Gallows Point

Preserve Paradise - Please Recycle!

Yes

- All Plastic Bottles (Caps Off)
- All Aluminum Cans
- Plastic Cleaner Containers
- Plastic Jars & Food Containers (Rinse)
- Plastic Cups, Buckets

No

- No Glass Bottles/Containers
- No Styrofoam Containers
- No Plastic Bags or Sheet Wrapping
- No Steel Cans, No Red Cups
- No Aluminum Foil

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On St. John, we unfortunately do not (YET) have the capabilities of recycling the following:

- Glass
- #3, #4, #6 or #7 plastics
- Any type of plastic container that does NOT have a resin code on it
- Cardboard
- Styrofoam
- Compostable items
- Plastic Bags

So, please make it easy on the folks doing the sorting and place these items in your trash bin instead of the recycling bin.

In her message, the hospitality manager mentioned above also asked me to talk a bit about the pack it in, pack it out concept for visitors. It's not just for beaches anymore!



Snorkel gear at the ReSource Depot

If you are traveling with a cooler, floats, chairs, snorkel gear, extra luggage, etc. and do not have room to bring it home with you, take a few moments on your last day on island to swing by the [ReSource Depot](#)! You can drop off gently used items such as the ones listed above for them to re-sell and 100% of those profits go right back into keeping St. John beautiful and trash-free. And I always LOVE a good stop at this feel good, non-profit thrift store. The staff is AWESOME and you never know what incredible item you might find to commemorate your trip with. Maybe you'll find yourself a vintage St. John t-shirt or souvenir to take home with you (on the cheap!).



Drop off your gently used items or shop for new treasures at the ReSource Depot!

I hope this was all helpful for all of you visitors, residents and hospitality staff out there. It is so incredibly awesome that we have a PLASTIC recycling program on island...Let's use it!