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Island Green's First Shipment of 2026 Brings Total Recycling Figures to 5,025,660 Aluminum Cans and 152,335 lbs. of Ocean-Bound Plastics in US Virgin Islands Since Inception

Posted
March 9, 2026

With their first shipment in 2026, nonprofit Island Green Living has exceeded the recycling milestone of 5 million aluminum cans and more than 152,000 lbs. of ocean-bound plastics in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Shipment #16, loaded the last week of February, included 290,700 aluminum cans and 7,451 lbs of #1, 2 and 5 plastics. The pallets are on their way to partner PADNOS, where these items will be recycled, extending the productive life cycle of the resources.

“We thank the island community for their diligence in separating out aluminum and #1, 2 and 5 plastics from their trash and giving these materials a new lease on life while keeping our oceans, landfills and the environment free of litter,” said Harith Wickrema, president of Island Green Living. “Our stellar recycling team, headed by Akeino Williams, works hard to collect and sort the materials, with invaluable help from our volunteers. Please keep in mind that as a charity operation, managed independently from the municipality, we depend on financial contributions to keep the operation going. We received zero funds from the legislature’s last budget.”

Island Green emphasizes that although recycling is critical to sustainable waste management, the first step is to RETHINK and minimize consumption, especially of single-use plastic. At this time the nonprofit cannot accept glass and cardboard, so please keep these items out of the recycling bins. It is also vital that people do not dispose of needles and other medical waste with recyclables as they can cause serious injury risks to sorters.

Island Green Living picks up recyclables with their dedicated truck at several collection sites on St. John. The public can conveniently deposit their RINSED #1, 2 & 5 plastics and aluminum cans in Island Green's specially marked receptacles. The locations are as follows:

- Cruz Bay: Main VIWMA site across from EC Gas Station & Alfredo's Landscaping
- Cruz Bay: Bin at Caneel Bay Fuel Dock
- Gifft Hill Road: VIWMA site just past Gifft Hill School
- Coral Bay: Main VIWMA site across from Love City Mini Mart

Additionally the community can drop off at Island Green Living's ReSource Depot located behind VITEMA on Gifft Hill Road just off Centerline. Island Green also has an arrangement with hauling company YES! Waste Management to accept recyclables from several St. Thomas schools and locales. YES! Waste Management does this purely as a community service.

Most commonly used plastics have a resin code listed somewhere on the material, typically on the bottom. Island Green Living can accept #1, 2 and 5 plastics, which include items such as water & soda bottles, some food containers, peanut butter jars, milk jugs, shampoo & detergent bottles, yogurt containers, etc. Caps can be recycled but should be removed from containers. Styrofoam and items like plastic utensils, bags, etc. CANNOT be accepted.

Island Green Living has an esteemed history of sustainable programming and conservation in the US Virgin Islands. The organization's ReSource Depot thrift shop has kept more than a million pounds of building, household, clothing and other materials out of landfills. "Please consider donating items you no longer need but that are still in condition others would want to buy – we thank the community for their contributions," said Keryn Bryan, ReSource Depot Manager. The nonprofit has worked closely on banning plastic bags, straws and toxic sunscreen, "Ban the Burn" of vegetative debris and other environmental legislation as well as issues such as food security and greening education with Planet Green Force.

For more information, visit www.islandgreenliving.org.