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Island Green continues to reduce landfill waste with recycling

By SARA KIRKPATRICK Daily News Staff
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Above, Island Green recyclables ready for shipment in February, including 290,700 aluminum cans and 7,451 pounds of plastics. To the right, Island Green recycling crew members John Baker and CJ Scatliffe prepare ocean bound plastic for shipment.

Photos by ISLAND GREEN LIVING

Since February 2022 nonprofit Island Green Living has diverted plastic and aluminum from the landfill with their recycling program.

They recently reached a new milestone, by recycling over 5 million aluminum cans and more than 152,000 pounds of ocean-bound plastics.

Their first shipment of 2026, loaded the last week of February, included 290,700 aluminum cans and 7,451 pounds of No. 1, 2 and 5 plastics.



The pallets are on their way to partner PADNOS, where these items will be recycled, extending the productive lifecycle of the resources.

“We thank the island community for their diligence in separating out aluminum and No. 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,” Island Green Living President Harith Wickrema said in a press release. “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 they ask residents to 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.

Most commonly used plastics have a resin code listed somewhere on the material, typically on the bottom. Plastic items include water and soda bottles, some food containers, peanut butter jars, milk jugs, shampoo and 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.

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," Keryn Bryan, ReSource Depot Manager, said in the release.

Island Green also has an arrangement with hauling company YES! Waste Management to accept recyclables from several St. Thomas schools and locales, which they do as a community service.

For more information on Island Green Living's recycling visit www.islandgreenliving.org.