Strategies for combatting contamination at ecomaine

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ecomaine consistently achieves an industry-leading 7% contamination on recycling.

Here’s how.
Who is ecomaine?

Handling one-third of Maine’s recycling and waste, operating a single-sort recycling facility and waste-to-energy power plant in Portland.
Key to contamination success

1. **Transparency** of the technology – opening our doors through tours

2. **Story-telling** – explaining the “why” behind the DOs and DON’Ts

1. **Printed reinforcement** (visual and written)
Transparency through tours

• ecomaine has full-time environmental educator
• Tours five days a week
• Annual Open House
• Tacit understanding of “the why”
“Be a superstar - recycle right”
Storytelling: case study

• Plastic bags are one of our top contaminants

• Last fall, we decided to stop taking them

• Led with “the why” and suggested other options
Visual storytelling: social media

Look who I found wandering around the ecomaine parking lot today. This little green guy must have fallen off a truck on its way to our waste-to-energy tipping floor.

Don’t forget the InstaHenry and reuse what you can in a reFreshBin. If you want to get rid of old toys, books, clothing etc., can you give them to Goodwill Industries of Northern New England? Personalize, reusable, play forward!

On this morning’s tour at our recycling facility, we found many old propane tanks that our staff manually pulled out of the tipping floor. These tanks pose serious fire hazards to our employees. DON’T put them in your recycling bin! They are being transferred to a transfer station. PLEASE SHARE and learn more at http://www.ecomaine.org/recycling-end-use/!

Will it recycle? Ever since we announced that we’re no longer accepting plastic shopping bags in your single-sort recycling bin, we’ve been getting a common question about whether or not shredded paper can still be contained in a clear plastic bag. The answer is YES! This is the exception to the rule because our hand sorters are able to easily spot the shredded paper through the clear plastic and can add it in at the very end of the sorting process to ensure the little bits of paper don’t fall through our mechanical sorters. Do you have an item you’re unsure about placing in our recycling bin? Use our “Will it Recycle?” form and our experts will put you in touch with us!

http://www.ecomaine.org/recycling-guide/
Measurement

- Recycling residue rates (contamination)
- Website traffic
- Social media views and shares
- Mail chimp email opens
- Track tours, presentations & events
- Earned media
What’s next at ecomaine?

- Food waste recycling
- Searchable waste wizard

Feed ME food scraps!
ecomaine.org

YES

✔ bread, pasta, rice, grains
✔ coffee grounds & filters
✔ compostable serverware
✔ dairy products
✔ eggshells, seashells & bones
✔ fats, oils, greases
✔ fruit & veggie scraps
✔ meat & fish scraps
✔ paper napkin & wooden stirrers
✔ tea bags

NO

✘ baby & hand wipes
✘ cat litter
✘ diapers
✘ glass
✘ medicines
✘ pet waste
✘ polystyrene/styrofoam
✘ rubber bands
✘ yard waste

This list pertains to ecomaine community food waste recycling programs.

Waste Wizard

My Schedule

Waste Wizard

Need help?

Type the name of an item and we’ll tell you how to recycle or dispose of it.

Search

List of Materials

Terms of Service

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Keep in touch!

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