

A photograph of a blue recycling bin filled with various items, illustrating contamination. The bin is overflowing with a mix of materials, including a black coffee maker with a glass carafe, a pizza box with the 'RICH'S' logo, a blue patterned bag, a silver foil container, a pink brush, and a green and yellow object. The items are piled together, showing that they are not all appropriate for recycling. The text 'Blue Cart Contamination' is overlaid in white on the image.

Blue Cart Contamination

Why does contamination happen?



It's more
complicated
than that...
st
nt?



Example: order something online

Kraft paper plus (cardboard box) - ✓
(twine - -✗)



Cardboard box - ✓

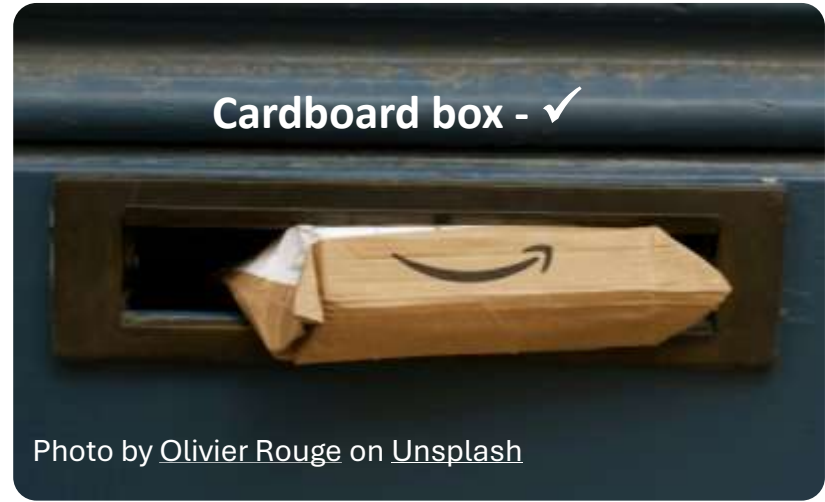


Photo by Olivier Rouge on [Unsplash](#)

Paper envelope with plastic bubbles inside - ✗



Plastic envelope with bubbles inside - ✗



But wait, there's more! So much more ...



SASKATCHEWAN
WASTE
REDUCTION
COUNCIL



The Upstream Problem

- None of the decisions that led to the **plethora** of packaging types were made by us or near us
- This problem is not created by consumers, but by producers (upstream)
- Looking for ways to bring feedback to producers and insisting on fewer packaging types should always be one of our priorities

The recycling system



- Single, large cart
- Everything mixed together
- Good for wish-cycling

Reducing Contamination – a Process

- Investigation
 - ride along, check carts, check recycling centre, talk to your staff, talk to your residents
- Prioritize
 - Choose one or two items/behaviours to focus on
 - If you know what neighbourhoods/routes have the most issues, you can start there
- Design
 - Select tools (next slide) and implement
 - Measure results

Tools for Reducing Contamination

- Education – constant
- Clear instructions (if possible)
- Tagging programs (Human, AI)
- Enforcement
- Offset cost of reducing contamination levels

Messages

- Clear, vivid, focused
- Test your messages
- **Why** is more effective than **what** (PR – 23% less with why vs 11% less with what)
- Feedback – ASAP
- Remember our attention spans
- Humour can help

Using Humour



Using Humour



Types of Contamination



- Not even close
 - Textiles, small appliances, propane tanks, garden hoses, plastic furniture ...
- Close, but not what we asked for
 - Styrofoam, black plastic, plastic bags ...
- What we wanted, just not handled right
 - Bagged materials, food residue, nested packages ...

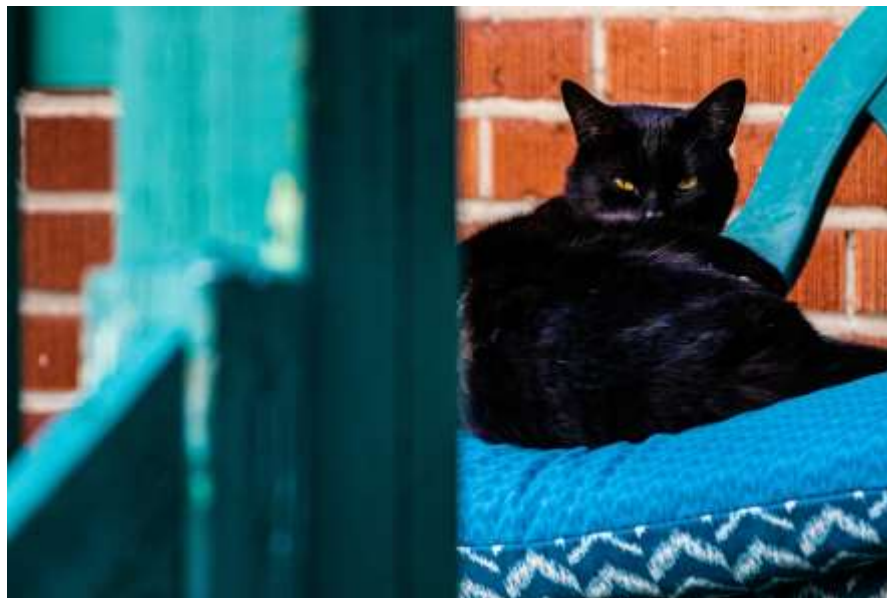
Types of Recyclers

(Jo's classification 😊)

- The Keen
- The Willing
- The Grumpy



Questions?



Thank you!

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