



## Plastics with Recycling Symbols #3 – #7 No Longer Accepted in Ponoka's Curbside Program

(May 9, 2018 – Ponoka, Alberta) – Due to stringent market restrictions recently implemented by China, Ponoka residents are being asked to no longer place the following items at the curb for recycling:

- **Low-grade plastics with the recycling symbols #3, #4, #5, #6 and #7.** This includes non-rigid plastics such as plastic bags; some plastic clamshell containers for fruit; and some yogurt and margarine containers. If you turn the plastic container over and find the number 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7 inside a triangular recycling symbol on the container, the product cannot be recycled.
- **Paper cups, paper plates, paper napkins and pizza boxes soiled with food residue.** Many paper cups are lined with plastic, making them unacceptable for recycling. This includes many coffee and beverage cups from fast-food restaurants.

The Town's waste management contractor, Green for Life (GFL) reports it can no longer find viable markets for these low-grade plastics and contaminated paper products following market restrictions put in place by China over the past year. These restrictions are now being adopted by other international markets. This includes a strict ban on the import of mixed plastic materials.

### Majority of Recyclables Still Accepted

The majority of recyclable materials that Ponoka households currently place at the curb for recycling can STILL be recycled. Up to 95 per cent (by weight) of recyclables currently collected through the Town's curbside program are still accepted for recycling. All plastics with the recycling symbol #1 and #2 can still be recycled.



### Recyclable items that you can continue placing at the curb in Ponoka include:

- All plastics with the recycling symbol #1 and #2
- All deposit beverage containers
- Steel/tin/aluminum cans
- Cardboard
- Boxboard (cereal boxes – please no liner; tissue boxes, etc.)
- Paper (including newspaper, office paper, magazines, mailed paper and envelopes, flyers, etc.)

Please make sure all items are rinsed and clean. Labels do not have to be removed from steel/tin/aluminum food cans.

A complete list of items accepted for recycling through the Town's curbside program is posted on the Town website at [www.ponoka.ca/community/recycling-and-disposal/residential-recycling](http://www.ponoka.ca/community/recycling-and-disposal/residential-recycling) and copies can be picked up at the Town Office (C, 4900 – 54 St.). Glass and Styrofoam continue to be on the list of products that are currently not recyclable due to a lack of viable markets for these products.



## **Keep Recycling**

Citizens are encouraged to keep recycling and composting as much of their household waste as possible. Recycling and composting helps divert waste from the landfill, which reduces the production of harmful greenhouse gases (methane) and helps protect the environment for future generations.

Before Ponoka implemented its current three-stream curbside Waste and Recycling Program in 2016, the Town estimates the community was diverting less than 10 per cent of its household waste. Today, Ponoka citizens are diverting approximately 35 per cent of their household waste thanks to steadily increasing participation in the Town's curbside recycling and green cart program for compostable yard waste.

If Ponoka citizens continue the current trend of increasing participation rates in the curbside Waste and Recycling Program, the community can minimize the impact of these latest market restrictions and continue to work toward increasing the amount of waste diverted from the landfill.

## **Program Review**

Ponoka citizens are invited to offer input on the Town's Waste and Recycling Program at a Public Open House being held Thursday, May 10 at the Kinsmen Community Centre. The Open House is part of a program review the Town is currently conducting to gauge citizen satisfaction with the curbside Waste and Recycling Program, and to explore and evaluate possible changes to the Program for 2019.

Members of the public are invited to drop in anytime from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. The Open House will be an opportunity for citizens to:

- Browse information displays about the current Waste and Recycling Program and the program review currently underway;
- Fill out a Citizen Input Survey that asks residents to share their thoughts on the current program and what changes they may like to see.
- Ask questions, share comments, and have one-on-one discussions with members of Town Council, Administration, the Recycling Council of Alberta, and the Ponoka Rising Sun Clubhouse.

## **Online Survey Posted on Town Website**

You can also fill out the Waste & Recycling Program Citizen Input Survey on the Town's website at [www.ponoka.ca](http://www.ponoka.ca) until May 20, 2018. Copies of the survey are also available at the Open House on May 10 and at the Town Office (C, 4900-54 St.).

## **For media inquiries:**

Sandra Smith  
Communications Manager  
Town of Ponoka  
403-783-0158