



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**  
April, 2021

**Contact:** Mike Nowlin  
Cell: 989-450-0855

### **Portland Township launching major new communitywide campaign to improve household recycling in 2021**

*Program to begin in April, helped by \$2,484 grant from Michigan EGLE & The Recycling Partnership*

**PORTLAND TOWNSHIP, Mich.** — Portland Township is teaming with the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) and national nonprofit The Recycling Partnership (TRP) to introduce a first-of-its-kind communitywide project aimed at improving the quality of materials residents recycle in their drop-off program during 2021.

Portland Township will launch a drop-off recycling campaign in April with awareness and outreach activities to continue through the spring and summer across the community.

Michigan's recycling quality improvement efforts with The Recycling Partnership rolled out last fall and will continue through the end of 2021. Portland Township is among more than 100 Michigan communities representing 300,000-plus households statewide that requested funding support from EGLE totaling \$800,000 in individual grants, including \$2,484 to Portland Township.

It's a new effort by Portland Township to improve the quality of recycling in roll-off recycling containers by providing its approximately 828 households with personalized and real-time recycling education and feedback. Recycling for Portland Township residents can be dropped off at Municipal Supply (1 Industrial Dr. Portland, east off Lyons Rd), the 4th Saturday and Sunday of each month from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

"Recycling is not only the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do – and this program represents a major step forward for recycling in our community," said Portland Township Supervisor Christian Jensen.

"Recycling properly not only saves our taxpayers money by reducing the cost of processing at the materials recovery facility but supports jobs and improves the health of the environment," Jensen said. "We know Portland Township residents want to recycle the right way. Through this campaign, we are providing them customized feedback to do just that."

The program is intended to increase participation in the drop off recycling program as well as increase the quality of recyclables so that items are guaranteed to make their way back into new products or packaging while also reducing the amount of nonrecyclables in recycling bins.

Developed by The Recycling Partnership, the program helps communities achieve economically efficient recycling programs, reduces the number of new resources used in packaging by providing more recycled content for new products and improves the cleanliness of communities.

Included in the program is a comprehensive education and outreach strategy that involves a team of community-based observers – essentially a squad of “recycling detectives” – who will monitor the Portland Township recycling drop-off containers and provide tailored feedback directly to residents on how to improve items that make it into them.

In addition, the education campaign will provide Portland Township households with direct mail pieces and social media messaging, as well as concentrated feedback efforts that address contamination.

Recipients of print informational fliers will be encouraged to recycle paper and cartons, cardboard, metal items such as cans, glass bottles and jars and plastic bottles, jars and jugs. Residents are also urged not to bag their recyclables and not to recycle such items as plastic bags or plastic wrap; “tanglers” such as cords, hoses or chains; household hazardous waste; scrap metal and food or liquids.

The flier will direct Portland Township recipients seeking more information to visit [www.portlandtownship.org](http://www.portlandtownship.org) or call 517-647-6643.

“The program works by giving residents feedback on what is and is not recyclable,” said Jill Martin, director of community programs at The Recycling Partnership.

“Through this personalized feedback loop, we are going to help Portland Township capture more quality recyclables that can then be transformed into new materials, creating and supporting jobs, a less wasteful planet and stronger, healthier communities,” Martin said.

Matt Flechter, recycling market development specialist with EGLE, said materials aren't truly recycled until they are transformed into a new product for use. Those uses, he said, save energy, reduce water consumption, decrease greenhouse gases and conserve resources while creating jobs and growing the economy.

“To ensure recyclables can be transformed into new products or packaging, recyclables should be empty and dry and recycling containers should only contain materials accepted in Portland Township,” Flechter said.

The goal of the project will be to reduce the percentage of non-recyclables and educate residents on how to recycle correctly.

Now, more than ever, Michigan residents view recycling as an essential public service. And during a time of social distancing when the offices of many nonessential employers are closed and commercial recycling is near an all-time low, producers see residential recycling programs as a critical supplier of manufacturing feedstock so they can make their products from recycled content instead of new materials.

“Portland Township is excited about this project and sees this as a great opportunity to help improve the recycling resource stream through much-needed public education on the benefits of recycling correctly,” Jensen said.

The Recycling Partnership has implemented the educational program in many communities across the country, resulting in average 27% increases in the overall capture of quality recyclables, with some communities seeing as much as a 57% decrease of nonrecyclables in their recycling stream.

The Recycling Partnership initiative aligns with EGLE’s “Know It Before You Throw It” recycling education campaign featuring the [Recycling Raccoon Squad](#). The campaign is promoting best practices and emphasizes that recycling materials saves energy, reduces water use, decreases greenhouse gases, conserves resources and translates into local jobs.

“We are looking forward to partnering with Michigan communities and The Recycling Partnership on this data-driven approach,” said Liz Browne, director of EGLE’s Materials Management Division. “It’s more important than ever to communicate with the public in order to improve the quality of materials being recycled. We all have a role to play in helping businesses get materials to make the essential products Michigan needs for our economic recovery from COVID-19, such as toilet paper, food containers and shipping boxes.”

**About The Recycling Partnership**

The Recycling Partnership is a national nonprofit organization that leverages corporate partner funding to transform recycling for good in states, cities and communities nationwide. As the only organization in the country that engages the full recycling supply chain from the corporations that manufacture products and packaging to local governments charged with recycling to industry end markets, haulers, material recovery facilities and converters. Since 2014, the nonprofit change agent diverted 230 million pounds of new recyclables from landfills, saved 465 million gallons of water, avoided more than 250,000 metric tons of greenhouse gases and drove significant reductions in targeted contamination rates. Learn more at [www.recyclingpartnership.org](http://www.recyclingpartnership.org)