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EDITOR'S PICK TOPICAL

# Cardboard ban begins April 1 in Lincoln; residents urged to 'Take it to the Bin'

NANCY HICKS Lincoln Journal Star Feb 22, 2018 Updated 1 hr ago



Lincoln Mayor Chris Beutler is surrounded by bales of cardboard at Mid America Recycling during a press conference Thursday to kick off the city's education campaign ahead of the April 1 ban on cardboard going to the landfill.

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ERIC GREGORY, Journal Star

Beginning April 1, corrugated cardboard — three layers of paper with a ripple in the middle — will be banned from Lincoln's city landfill.

Mayor Chris Beutler stood in front of a small mountain of folded and stacked cardboard Thursday as he offered the opening lesson in a campaign encouraging Lincolniters to recycle corrugated cardboard.

The landfill ban means all residents and businesses will have to recycle corrugated cardboard, either by using a service offered by one of the city's garbage haulers or a recycling company, or by taking the cardboard to one of 28 free public recycling sites.

Cardboard is the single most recyclable material that we throw away, Beutler said. In fact, about 9.5 percent of the material going to the city landfill — about 39 million pounds a year — is cardboard, he said at the news conference held at Mid America Recycling.

The city pays to bury 19,000 tons of cardboard that is in high demand by paper mills, he said.

The corrugated cardboard ban is expected to raise Lincoln's recycling rate from 21 to 31 percent, Beutler said. And Lincoln "will be the first community in Nebraska to take this major step toward a more sustainable future," he said.

The city is not going to fine offenders during these early days, Beutler said. The focus is on the educational effort to remind homeowners of the ban and to help businesses set up effective recycling programs.

Information for residents and businesses is available at the city's recycling website: [recycle.lincoln.ne.gov](http://recycle.lincoln.ne.gov).

That website provides instructional videos and resources for single-family households, apartment managers and dwellers and business owners.

The educational campaign, "Take it to the Bin," will include public service announcements, advertising in traditional media and on social media, and community presentations.

About half the waste taken to the landfill comes from Lincoln's commercial and institutional buildings, Beutler said.

As the cardboard ban approaches, the city is offering incentives for businesses that include a waste reduction and recycling assistance program (WRRAP), which offers up to \$750 in rebates for new or expanded commercial recycling or composting programs.

The ban, passed by the Lincoln City Council last year, applies to waste haulers. The new ordinance also requires garbage collectors to offer curbside recycling services.

Garbage collectors may charge additional fees to people who put recyclable cardboard in their garbage, Beutler said.

Cardboard joins a list of items banned at the landfill, including tires, vehicle batteries and appliances, and yard waste during the spring and summer.

Scott Niederhaus, with Niederhaus Refuse and Recycling and representing Lincoln's Solid Waste and Recycling Association, suggested residents and businesses contact their provider to set up a service, based on specific needs.

“Remember, change is never easy but once it becomes a habit it is no longer a burden,” he said.

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- Three-year recycling education contract reduced to one year
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## Nancy Hicks

Reporter

Nancy Hicks reports on Lincoln city government, but she's been following the leaders of local and state government for more than 40 years.

