



For Immediate Release

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CARTON RECYCLING CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF PROGRESS AND LOOKS FORWARD TO 2025

DENTON, Texas – As recycling enthusiasts celebrate America Recycles Day this November 15, the Carton Council of North America will also be celebrating 10 years of carton recycling. Formed in 2009, the group has worked with countless stakeholders to grow household access to food and beverage carton recycling to nearly 61%, representing a 238% increase in 10 years.

Back in 2009, only 18% of U.S. households had access to carton recycling. Now, carton recycling programs exist in 49 states, with more than 71 million U.S. homes able to recycle cartons in curbside or drop-off programs. With a look ahead, the Carton Council has set its ambitions for the future. This includes increasing household access to 75% and raising the carton recycling rate to 25% by 2025. The curbside carton recycling rate for cartons currently sits around 16%, which is a 166% increase from 2009 when the rate stood at just 6%.

“Since forming, we’ve seen a big increase in products being packaged in cartons,” said Jason Pelz, VP of Recycling Projects for the Carton Council. “This means more cartons have the potential to enter the recycling stream. We’re hard at work to ensure those cartons do not end up in landfills and can be turned into new products.”

Progress has been achieved in large part due to the public-private relationships established at all levels throughout the recycling supply chain. Additionally, the Carton Council recognizes that recycling happens at the local level and is especially grateful to those who recognize the value in carton recycling. Some carton recycling champion communities include Napa City and Napa County, CA; the City of San Diego and San Diego County, CA; Fort Collins, CO; Brookfield, CT; Central Virginia, which includes 13 localities in the Richmond area; Northern Cook County, IL; Anoka County, MN; Becker County, MN; Minneapolis, MN; and New York, NY.

“As product packaging changes, the recycling market needs to adapt to fit growing needs,” said Lydia Campbell, Recycling Program Specialist, Anoka County Public Health & Environmental Services. “The work that the Carton Council has done accomplishes just that. Cartons are a popular packaging style, and incorporating them into curbside recycling programs is an obvious choice. It’s a substantial material stream, and our residents are happy that they can participate and keep more resources out of landfills.”

Look for more information from the Carton Council in 2020 on plans for working toward the new 2025 recycling targets.

ABOUT THE CARTON COUNCIL

The Carton Council is composed of four leading carton manufacturers, Elopak, SIG Combibloc, Evergreen Packaging and Tetra Pak. Formed in 2009, the Carton Council works to deliver long-term collaborative solutions in order to divert valuable cartons from the landfill. Through a united effort,

the Carton Council is committed to building a sustainable infrastructure for carton recycling nationwide and works toward their continual goal of adding access to carton recycling throughout the U.S. For more information, visit CartonOpportunities.org.

ABOUT FOOD AND BEVERAGE CARTONS

Food and beverage cartons are highly recyclable materials that come in two kinds: refrigerated cartons that store, milk, juice and egg substitutes; and shelf-stable cartons that are packaged for broths, milks, juices, soups and even wine. When sorted by themselves at materials recovery facilities (MRFs), cartons are a valuable material in high demand, even at a time when other recyclable materials are struggling to find end markets where they are processed into new products. They are made mostly from paper, a renewable resource, and have become popular containers for food and beverage products as they are lightweight and compact, with a low carbon footprint. They are used to package things like milk, juice, water, soups, wine and beans. When recycled, they are used to make office and writing paper, tissues, paper towels, and even sustainable building and construction materials. For more information about carton recycling, visit RecycleCartons.com.

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