

Sample Volunteer Responsibilities at a Waste Station



For events, you will be helping residents make the decision whether they can recycle something or not. To do this, you must be well-versed in what is recyclable and what is not. Unfortunately, vendors and organizations will not always buy the best products for customers to know whether they are recyclable, compostable or trash. When several people are unsure as to whether the item is recyclable or not, it is best to throw it out. A common mistake that recyclers make is wishing non-recyclable items are recyclable. Putting non-recyclable items in our recycling bin can lead to contamination of good, clean recyclables which decreases their value and increases the amount of recycling that is then sent to the landfill.

As a volunteer, make sure your reply to questions or concerns are friendly and respectful at all times. Using consistent language is important. Some residents will use the word “trash” when they mean “recycling”. It is important to remain consistent with our language to say “trash” for items that go to the landfill and “recycling” for items that can be remade into new materials. This will go a long way to get residents to start using the correct verbiage so we are all communicating correctly with one another. Go the extra step and end conversations with “Thank you for recycling!” This small acknowledgment is an incentive that someone else saw the resident do the right thing—recycle! A positive experience with recycling can lead to someone changing their behaviors to become a lifelong recycler.

As a volunteer your role will include:

- Talking/explaining to residents about what is recyclable and what is not.
 - Some residents will want to get in an in-depth conversation and sometimes get political or defensive.
- Sorting through the trash/recyclables for items that were wrongly discarded.

