



For Immediate Release

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**RECYCLING MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER THIS EARTH DAY TO PROVIDE FEEDSTOCK FOR
NEW PRODUCTS AND KEEP RECYCLING SUPPLY CHAIN HEALTHY**

Paper mills need recyclable materials to keep up with increase in demand

DENTON, Texas – While the nation celebrates the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, the ways people can participate have significantly shifted due to the coronavirus. With some recycling programs across the country having to scale back services or halt collection completely as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, recyclers are in a challenging situation trying to find the feedstock needed to keep up with an increase in demand for certain products.

On the other hand, paper products, like toilet paper, tissues, and paper towels, have been flying off the shelves, and many manufacturers are struggling to keep up. Food and beverage cartons, made mainly of paper, are an example of a recyclable material that provides the needed feedstock for paper mills to create new products.

“First and foremost, we are thankful to all in the industry who are working hard to help keep the recycling supply chain operating during these challenging times,” said Jason Pelz, Vice President of Recycling Projects for the Carton Council of North America. “We’ve heard from numerous people about the increase in demand for feedstock, especially fiber, and want to encourage mills to consider materials like food and beverage cartons that can be recycled to make many of these paper products.”

“Recycled food and beverage cartons continue to be a very important source of paper fiber for our mills,” said Michele Bartolini, Senior Marketing Director for Sustana. “People are consuming a larger quantity of paper products in their homes right now, like toilet paper, tissues, and paper towels, as well as food and beverage products. It is important for consumers to recycle their food and beverage cartons because the fibers in cartons are clean and of excellent quality to be used to produce the pulp needed to manufacture those essential items. Cartons miss the opportunity at a second life if they are sent to landfill. Recycling your cartons is a small act that can have a big impact!”

“Recycling programs are extremely important for our facility. We use 100% recycled raw material to the tune of over 2,100 tons per month, with over half of that being directly from post-consumer recycling operations across the U.S. and Canada,” said Tori Beckett, Vice President at Great Lakes Tissue. “With all the toilet paper shortages across the country, our operations are still at maximum-capacity production and need all of the cartons we can get our hands on. We only keep a couple of weeks’ supply on hand and if the collections stop, we do fear we will not be able to keep a sustainable operation running.”

This year, celebrating Earth Day has an expanded meaning, as consumers realize that their act of recycling has a real impact, not only on the long-term health of the planet, but on the here and now, as recycling provides the much-needed feedstock to manufacture products needed every day.

“As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, our world is in an unprecedented situation, yet we are seeing that recycling is more important than ever,” said Pelz. “We hope that everyone continues to see that recycling helps ensure the recycling supply chain keeps functioning, benefiting the environment and the economy all at once,” said Pelz.

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.

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