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CARTON AND PAPER RECYCLING HELPS ENVIRONMENT AND LOCAL MANUFACTURING IN MICHIGAN

Local paper mills need recyclable materials to keep up with increase in demand for products

CHEBOYGAN, Michigan – When Michigan residents recycle, they aren't only helping the environment, they are also helping manufacturing in the state. Great Lakes Tissue, located in Cheboygan, as well as other paper mills throughout North America are encouraging consumers to continue recycling to provide the feedstock needed to keep up with the increase in demand for certain products brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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. Paper products, like toilet paper, tissues, and paper towels, have continued to be in short supply across the country with many manufacturers struggling to keep up.

Once cartons are collected, paper mills like Great Lakes Tissue use a hydropulper (a piece of equipment that resembles a giant kitchen blender) to extract and separate the fiber from the cartons. The pulp that comes out is used to make new paper products.

"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 coming 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."

By continuing to recycle food and beverage cartons that package products like milk, juice, soup, broth, and wine, among other accepted recyclable paper materials, Michigan residents can help to avoid shortages of the pulp needed to manufacture essential items.

"We are thankful for all of the front-line personnel working to keep this valuable service going and ensure the recycling supply chain keeps functioning," said Jason Pelz, Vice President of Recycling Projects for the Carton Council of North America. "Not only does recycling paper help save natural resources, but it helps local manufacturing, benefiting the environment, the economy, and meeting consumer demand all at once."

Though recycling is helping to fill the paper shortages void, a national survey conducted in May by the Carton Council shows that many consumers are not making the connection. When asked how much impact recycling at home has on helping with paper shortages, 33% of consumers reported they thought recycling might have some impact on helping with the shortage, but they weren't sure how much it helped. While 18% felt that recycling had no impact at all on alleviating paper product

shortages, 13% were unsure and had not thought about the connection. To help improve awareness of recycling's role in making new paper products, the Carton Council has launched a new digital campaign in Wisconsin.

Nationwide, some recycling programs have had to temporarily stop or slow service due to the pandemic. Residents should check with their local municipality to confirm the overall status of their recycling program and if cartons are accepted where they live. Deemed an essential service in many communities, recycling facilities, haulers, and local governments have been working hard to continue providing recycling to residents.

ABOUT THE CARTON COUNCIL

The Carton Council is composed of four leading carton manufacturers, Elopak, Evergreen Packaging, SIG Combibloc, 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 [RecycleCartons.com](https://www.RecycleCartons.com).

ABOUT THE DIGITAL CAMPAIGN

The campaign is aimed at informing consumers of the valuable role they play in funneling a steady stream of recycled cartons to recyclers and manufacturers in this great time of need. The campaign will reach consumers and sustainability professionals with a steady stream of information across digital platforms, including [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#), to encourage them to #RecycleYourCartons and explain how cartons make the transformation into in demand paper products like toilet paper.

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. Made mostly from paper, a renewable resource, cartons have become popular container choice for food and beverage products as they are lightweight and compact, with a low carbon footprint. When recycled, they are used to make office and writing paper, tissues, paper towels, and even sustainable building and construction materials.

ABOUT GREAT LAKES TISSUE

Great Lakes Tissue Company is a manufacturer of 100% recycled tissue and towel products located in Cheboygan, MI. Our parent rolls and converted products are catered to the away from home market with an emphasis on consistent quality, timely delivery, and excellent value. In addition to being manufactured from pre- and post-consumer content materials, we generate much of our own power through our in-house hydroelectric generators. All our products exceed the Environmental Protection Agency's recommended guidelines for recycled towel and tissue products.

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