

# Springfield Reporter

Continuing a Century-Old Hometown Tradition

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## Rotarians Collecting Waste Plastic to Lessen Pollution, Earn a Bench

The Springfield Rotary Club has undertaken a project to remove plastic from the waste stream, and at the same time earn a bench for the community. The club is working with Trex, a company that makes outdoor items from recycled materials, which first rolled out its recycling challenge to schools and communities in 2006.

The initiative gives communities a six-month period to collect 500 pounds (or more) of plastic bags and film - also known as polyethylene films or plastic that can be stretched - and if that goal is met, the community receives an earth-friendly Trex bench, according to the company. Springfield Rotarians have until the end of June to secure their free bench made from recycled materials.

Each year, Americans buy enough plastic film to shrink-wrap Texas, according to National Geographic. Thin plastic film, including plastic bags, newspaper sleeves, dry-cleaning bags and produce bags, cannot be recycled at home in curbside bins because they clog recycling machines and will release toxic chemicals if they end up in landfills or incinerators, according to the World Health Organization.

Besides being an initiative that could get them a new, shiny bench, Rotary's plastic waste project is also making residents aware of the plastic they use every day and how it can be recycled by collaborating with Springfield Town Library. Residents wishing to contribute their eligible waste plastic can bring it to collection receptacle inside the Town Library.

Additionally, the club reached out to McGee Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram Fiat of Springfield and Springfield Auto Mart, and both agreed to donate the leftover plastic seat coverings that are used when shipping their new cars, instead of throwing it away. Business wins by providing an environmentally responsible way to dispose of plastic waste, according to Rotarian Marty Cohn, who spearheaded the plastics collections project. "These materials are not normally accepted in curbside programs because they can get caught in the machines that sort other valuable recyclables like paper, cans, and bottles. And bags are generally too dirty after their trip in the back of the recycling truck to be recycled, even if they are collected at the recycling facility," Cohn said.

"When a business removes plastic scrap from its waste stream, it will immediately save money and reduce the cost of hauling trash to the disposal site," Cohn continued. "Trex wins by collecting a key ingredient to make its products. And, ultimately, we all

win by keeping tons of single-use and packaging plastic from ending up in landfills."

Rotary Club members will bring the plastic to Shaw's, one of Trex's partner companies. From there, the plastic is shipped to Trex in Virginia for recycling.

# Springfield Rotary Effort will Reduce Plastic Waste, and Earn a Bench

Join the Springfield Rotary in their project to remove plastic bags from the waste stream, and at the same time earn a bench for the community. The club is working with Trex, a company that makes outdoor items from recycled materials. If we collect 500 pounds of plastic by the end of June, Trex will send us a free bench made from recycled materials.

Residents can help by bringing eligible plastic to the community collection site inside the Springfield Town Library.

Businesses: If you have larger volumes of eligible plastics, the Rotary Club can arrange for periodic pick-up, possibly saving you a lot of money in disposal fees. For further information, contact Rotarian Marty Cohn at 802-490-4434 or [www.cohnpr.com](http://www.cohnpr.com).

## RECYCLE BEYOND THE BAG

Recycle your household bags & wrap into Trex's Earth-friendly composite decking and railing!



### FROM THE STORE

- ✓ Produce bags
- ✓ Store bags
- ✓ Ice bags



### FROM YOUR PANTRY

- ✓ Ziploc® & other reclosable bags
- ✓ Cereal box liners
- ✓ Case overwrap
- ✓ Bread bags



### FROM YOUR FRONT DOOR

- ✓ Newspaper sleeves
- ✓ Dry cleaning bags
- ✓ Bubble wrap
- ✓ Plastic e-commerce mailers

Plastics must be clean, dry and free of food and organic residue



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