



DART CONTAINER CORPORATION

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NEW YORK CITY CHOOSES LANDFILLING OVER RECYCLING

Despite acknowledging foam and #6 rigid plastics can be successfully collected curbside, the City turned down an offer to recycle tons of foam #6.

Mason, MI – In an economic and environmental defeat for New York City taxpayers and businesses, New York City officials announced this week that they would implement a city-wide ban on polystyrene foam foodservice containers. By doing so they refused an offer that would have recycled 100% of the City’s foam and rigid polystyrene. The decision to ban foam foodservice products, which comprise only a small percentage of polystyrene foam material, will send the remaining majority of it to landfills at NYC taxpayers’ expense.

“For a city that’s known to be a leader, we just don’t understand why NYC officials rejected such an environmentally progressive recycling option,” said Michael Westerfield, Dart’s Corporate Director of Recycling Programs. “We’ve been recycling foam in numerous states for years. In Michigan, Dart has built a comprehensive infrastructure for recycling foam products since 1990 and currently have more than 40 recycling drop-off locations, including more than a dozen in the greater Lansing area.

“We work with hundreds of public schools, five state universities and the State of Michigan to recycle all types of foam polystyrene products,” Westerfield continued. “Why New York City wants to be known as promoting landfill use simply makes no sense to us. The City really struck out on what could have been a home run.”

In the year since the ban was first proposed, foam manufacturers like Dart Container Corporation were given an opportunity to prove that foam foodservice items could be economically and logistically recycled within the City’s five boroughs. Dart conducted real world tests that unequivocally proved this feasibility. Sanitation Commissioner Kathryn Garcia acknowledged that foam can be collected in NYC’s existing residential recycling program but nevertheless chose landfilling over recycling.

Westerfield said, “The offer that was made was a win for taxpayers, small businesses, and the environment. As a result of the Commissioner’s decision, taxpayers will continue to pay to landfill foam and solid polystyrene. It also prevents these recyclable materials from being used in the manufacture of new products. As we have repeatedly demonstrated to the Commissioner, there is a strong, existing market for recycled polystyrene.”

The Coalition to Put a Lid on It NYC expressed deep disappointment in Commissioner Garcia, who has claimed to be forward-thinking on the topic of recycling and environmental activism. Coalition leaders noted that the proposal would save millions of dollars for city businesses and – more importantly – make New York City the largest city in the country to have a comprehensive recycling program for expanded polystyrene and #6 rigid plastics.

Despite the setback, Dart and the Coalition to Put a Lid on It NYC will continue to attempt to engage the Department of Sanitation and Commissioner Garcia in talks to advance the City’s recycling program.

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