

August 4, 2017
Amelia County Department of Environmental Management

Check out the handsome new Trex bench in front of the Circuit Court building. Amelia County received the bench made from recycled plastic lumber as a reward for recycling over 500# of plastic bags during the last 6 months. We initially began offering a plastic bag recycling program in 2011 at the Maplewood landfill, the Pleasant Grove convenience center and the Epps Lane convenience center. We later expanded the program to include the convenience centers at Mannboro and Ponton's Store.

Food Lion graciously allows the county to add our recycled plastic bags to their existing plastic bag recycling program. The recycled plastic bags ultimately end up at Trex in Winchester, VA. Trex produces plastic lumber made from 95% recycled materials, including reclaimed wood and sawdust as well as recycled plastic from many common household items, such as the plastic overwrap on packaging for paper towels and toilet paper, dry cleaner bags, newspaper bags, grocery and shopping bags. Trex annually salvages and keeps more than 400 million pounds of plastic and wood scrap out of landfills. That makes Trex one of the largest plastic film recyclers in the U.S. In fact, the average 500-square-foot composite Trex deck contains 140,000 recycled plastic bags.

We track the poundage of plastic film recycled by Amelia County citizens and report it to Trex on a monthly basis. For every 6 months that we recycle over 500# of plastic film, Amelia County receives a free bench made from Trex recycled plastic lumber. The bench in front of the Circuit Court is the 4th bench that Amelia has received since Trex began their incentive program.

Many of you bring your recycled materials to the landfill and convenience centers in a plastic bag, but plastic bags should not be put in the regular recycling bins. These bags cause problems with the sorting machines at the recycling plant. Therefore, if you dump your recycled materials out of the plastic bag, you can then place your plastic bags in the plastic bag recycling bin located beside the regular recycling bin.

Preferably, bags should be dry when placed in the plastic bag recycling bins. Almost any kind of plastic bag or wrapper can be placed in these bins for recycling – plastic shopping bags, produce bags,

Plastic bag recycling
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plastic shrink wrap from cases of water bottles, bread bags, clean trash bags, bubble wrap, plastic wrapping from paper towels and toilet paper and dry cleaning bags.

We are excited that this recycling program has turned into a win-win-win situation. By recycling plastic bags we reduce litter, we keep the plastic bags out of the regular recycling stream where they cause problems and we receive free benches for our efforts! Way to go Amelia citizens! Keep up the good work! Please call 561-3004 or 561-3039 if you have any questions about the county's recycling programs.

