

FOOD PLANNING

Recycling Coordinator

We, as Quakers, try to live in close harmony with the earth around us. This becomes more difficult at Annual Sessions when hundreds of people gather on the ILYM campus and are eating three meals a day plus snacks. There is no location near McNabb where recyclables can be easily taken. This makes it the responsibility of all participants to be part of the solution, so that we can truly walk more gently on the earth than we usually do.

Although it is not necessary for the Recycling Coordinator to be at site prep, the coordinator should have contact with the Site Prep Coordinator before site prep begins. By so doing, the Recycling Coordinator can have input into how the recycling and composting will be carried out during site prep. The pattern can then carry right over into Annual Sessions.

Make sure that recycling/composting is one of the areas for which attenders are encouraged to sign up as assistants. Two per meal is nice, but not necessary. The assistants (and you) should plan to eat early along with the other meal volunteers. Especially during the first few days as new people are arriving, they need to be shown where to scrape their dishes, etc. You also need to check the other containers to see that the contents are being prepared properly and segregated. For example, tin cans that come from the kitchen should be rinsed out, bottoms cut off (if possible) and flattened, to conserve space. They usually do most of this in the kitchen before the cans are brought out to be recycled, but sometimes they get too busy and it does not get done. It is up to you then, as the Recycling Coordinator to do it or see that it gets done. Another example is a plastic bottle with the lid still on. The bottle should be empty with the lid removed. A plastic lid should be discarded into the “real trash”. (Metal lids can go in with other metals.) Plastic lids are usually a different kind of plastic from the container itself. If they are left on they may cause a problem when the containers go into a bailer on their journey to be made again into something useful.

Compost

Here is what goes into the compost container: food scraps of all sorts, except for meat and bones (they go into the “real trash” container) and soiled paper napkins.

When the container is full, see that it is dumped into the compost bin outdoors. For many, many years and through most of 2009 we had been burying the compost in a ditch we dug running parallel to the cornfield out back, so using a compost bin should simplify our procedure. If you have to take the compost out in the middle of a meal, be sure to have a temporary container in place into which people can scrape their plates. At the end of supper, see that it gets emptied and/or put a lid on it for overnight.

“Real Trash”

When the plastic bag in the “real trash” barrel is full, see that it is removed, and a new plastic bag put in its place. Put the new bag in place right after the full one is taken out and before the full one is taken to the dumpster, or you’ll likely come back to a trash barrel with more stuff already in it. The full trash bag should be tied securely and someone should carefully place it in the dumpster out back.

Cardboard

Cardboard is bulky and accumulates quickly. It needs to be broken down into flat sections and tied in bundles. Rope and extra plastic bags are usually under the stairwell or on the plastic shelf unit. If it looks as if you will be running out of either, check with someone on Maintenance and Planning who probably can tell you where more is stored.

Bundled cardboard and tied bags of recyclables can be placed in the area under the stair (if available, but make sure they get removed at the end of Annual Sessions) and/or if the weather is cooperative, the bundles can be taken up the stairs, taken outside, and put along the wall in the area on the east side of the entrance.

Bottles, Cans, and Plastic Containers

In the early days of recycling at Annual Sessions, we separated these items one from the other, but in most areas co-mingling of the three items is now the practice. All bottles, cans, and plastic containers should be empty and rinsed (if necessary). What to do with lids is referred to in one of the first paragraphs. Plastic milk jugs, water bottles, and aluminum cans could/should be flattened to conserve space.

Since there is no curbside pickup of recyclables in McNabb, you will need to find people willing (and have the space in their vehicles) to take a bundle or bag (or two or three) home with them. There are plenty of people willing to do this, but you need to find them. Do not wait until Sunday to find people, because even someone who leaves early can take some of the bundles stored outside or under the stairs. Most people are in the recycling area three times a day—so there are plenty of opportunities to ask people ahead of time.

Being the Recycling Coordinator is truly a pleasure. You know you are doing something good for ILYM, the environment, and you get to meet and talk with lots of nice people! You are part of the solution and less a part of the problem, and what a great chance to teach! Enjoy!