



*Let's Recycle Better, Together.*

A horizontal banner with a light green background. On the left is a circular logo with a megaphone and the text "ASK AN EXPERT!" on a green ribbon, with "PRESENTED BY GREEN THINKING WEBINAR SERIES" below it. In the center, the text "ABOUT BIN LABELS &amp; SIGNAGE" is written in large, bold, dark green letters. On the right, a dark green arrow points left, containing the text "WEDNESDAY MARCH 1ST 1:00 - 2:15PM EDT". The background of the banner shows a person's hands placing a green recycling bin with a label into a recycling bin.

# Coming Up Next:

**ORGANICS COLLECTION  
FROM INDOOR SETTINGS**

This program is a partnership of:

 

**THURSDAY APRIL 6TH 1:00 P.M. ET.**

MIXED RECYCLABLES  
ORGANICS  
WASTE

# Online Resources

## Archived Webinars

- Recycling in Parks & Streetscapes
- Standardizing Bin Design
- Venues & Stadiums
- Healthcare
- K-12
- Hospitality

## *Advancing Recycling* Blog Series

### *Relevant Posts:*

- Signs above bins
- Using Words v. Images
- Rebuilding the Recycling Brand
- Specs for Outdoor Bins

**Visit: [buschsystems.com/blog](https://buschsystems.com/blog)**

# Above-Bin Signage

## 2019 University of Georgia research\*

- 18% less recyclables in trash; 14% less contamination

## 2012 Western Michigan Univ. research\*\*

- Resulted in “significant” improvement

## 1993 University of Florida research\*\*\*

- 54% increase in quantity of recyclables recovered

*Read blog about research:*

<https://www.buschsystems.com/blog/advancing-recycling/signage-above-bins-improves-recycling/>



# Database of Bin & Signage-Related Studies

1	Academic Studies About Impact of Bin Designs, Placement & Signage on Recycling Behavior						
2	Focus #1	Focus #2	Focus #3	Title	Authors	Year Published	Inst
3	<i>Note: This database is intended to catalog studies, surveys and other research projects related to recycling / waste signage and bin design. We encourage anyone familiar with relevant studies to contribute to the database.</i>						
4	Signage			<i>Comparative Analysis of Visual Triggers in Waste Management</i>	Ahmed, Khanani & Koshy	2016	Uni
5	Words v images	Non-recycling		<i>Distance-dependent processing of pictures and words.</i>	Amit, Algom & Trope	2009	
6	Convenience			<i>Recycling in Multifamily Dwellings: Does Convenience Matter?</i>	Ando, A.W., and A.Y. Gosselin	2005	
7	Bin Design	Signage	Color	<i>Citizen Centred Services: New Forms in Public Space Recycling</i>	Andreas Eiken	2015	Met
8	Bin Design	Signage	Placement	<i>Comparison of recycling outcomes in three types of recycling collection unit</i>	Andrews, Gregoire, Rasmussen, & Wito	2013	
9	Other recycling			<i>Solid waste characterization and recycling potential for a university campus</i>	Armijo de Vega et al., 2008	2008	
10	Bin design			<i>The relationship between receptacle design, normative conduct, environme</i>	Arnold, M.	2015	
11	Signage			<i>Increasing recycling in office environments: The effects of specific, informat</i>	Austin, J., Hatfield, D., Grindle, A., & Bai	1993	Flor
12	Other recycling			<i>Campus Community Responses on Waste Recycling Activity Towards Sustair</i>	Azahar, Md Nor	2012	
13	Signage - not rec	Standardization		<i>Ergonomic Guidelines for Traffic Sign Design Increase Sign Comprehension</i>	Ben-Bassat & Shinar, 2006	2006	

Access database at: <https://tinyurl.com/38w6kty2>

# What Leads to Contamination / Recycling in Trash?

- Behavior:
  - Ambivalence
  - Lack of convenient alternative
  - Confusion / Lack of knowledge
  - Lack of attention



# On-the-Go Situations

Objective of bin signage is not to educate, but guide greatest possible # of people to make correct impulse-level sorting decision.

**Golden Rule: Keep it Simple & Consistent**

Purpose of labels & signage to:

1. Communicate they have a choice to make
2. Identify the available options (streams)
3. Brand the collection streams
4. Call out typical and/ or easily-confused items



# General Principles





# Words vs Images



Read blog series on research about words vs. images:

<https://www.buschsystems.com/blog/signage-conversations-with-brenda-pulley/images-vs-words-signage-convos-pt-1/>

# Icons vs Photographs



# 3-D Shadow Boxes



# Distracting information





Motivational messages can be counterproductive if they distract people from deciding which bin to use



Unrelated messaging on the side avoids distracting people trying to understand which bin is for which stream

# Alternative Messaging







Small decals at knee height are less likely to be noticed



People approaching from the left will use the blue bin before they realize there is a separate choice.

Labels on the top of the bin may not get seen until it's too late





People tune out signs w/ too much information that requires concentration causes

The visual presentation of signs is important. Crowded display, ambiguous images or wording that require concentration to comprehend are less impactful





Don't confuse people with conflicting, redundant or unrelated wording.

Essential. Information. Only.