

# Recycling Awareness in Taiwan

Publicity is crucial for promulgation of recycling-associated policies and the success of recycling programs. This handout provides a review of methods by which Environmental Protection Administration Taiwan (EPAT) has promoted recycling to Taiwan residents over the past two to three decades.

## Background

Thirty years ago, Taiwan residents lacked knowledge of recycling and did not know how to separate wastes. Since 1990, to encourage recycling, EPAT and local Environmental Protection Bureaus (EPBs) installed recycling bins of four categories (paper, plastic, glass and metal) in neighborhoods, local convenience stores, and public places. However, recycling did not increase significantly. In order to make recycling easier for citizens, EPAT held a recycling logo design contest and has required the logo to be placed on new recyclable products since 1989 (Figure 1). The logo has been registered as a trademark and rules for the use of the logo have been delineated by law.



**Figure 1** Recycling logo (*left*) and marks at recycling spots (*middle*) and on containers (*right*).

## Outreach and public information resources on recycling

EPAT provides information on recycling and associated policies through multiple channels and also conducts outreach and publicity to increase recycling awareness.

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### (1) Recycling toll-free line and website

#### a. Toll-free line (0800-085-717)

EPAT has maintained a dedicated recycling service toll-free line since 1998. The line functions as a communication channel among the public, collectors and EPAT, and provides immediate responses to recycling-associated questions, issues and suggestions. It has become an efficient tool for communication between EPAT and the public, as evidenced by the 138,187 calls received in 2011.

#### b. Website (<http://recycle.epa.gov.tw>)

The website contents are categorized for kids, concerned citizens, responsible enterprises, and recyclers. Recycling news, laws and regulations, statistics, audio and videos, and FAQ are maintained for online viewing as well as for downloading. At the end of 2011, the web browsing counts were about 2,290,000.

### (2) Recycling Outreach

#### a. Periodicals

EPAT began publishing periodicals about recycling in August 1998; subscriptions were available to the public. 38 issues focusing on recyclable items, the recycling logo, and recycling channels were published. However, in January 2002, EPAT developed its recycling website in order to share more information with more people and stopped publishing the paper periodicals.

#### b. E-Newsletter

Since May 2008, EPAT has published an “E-newsletter for Manufacturers and Importers of RRW” to assist manufacturers and importers of RRW with their reporting requirements and with recycling fee payments. The newsletter provides updates on the newest regulations and information. In July 2008, it was renamed as “R-PAPER” and added new columns, such as an experts’ forum and a recycling achievements section, in order to appeal to more readers. At the end of 2011, there were 13,144 subscriptions to this e-newsletter.

#### c. Outreach

EPAT has produced a variety of outreach materials to draw public attention to specific recycling-associated policies and regulated RRW, including recycling manuals, leaflets, posters, stickers, and CD-ROMs.

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EPAT has also conducted recycling awareness campaigns, such as its waste battery collection campaign, during which recycling bins were placed in prominent public places including, convenient stores, schools, and communities.

EPAT has also developed recycling promotion films to explain key concepts and goals to the public and to regulated enterprises. From 1999-2005, films were primarily introductions to 4-in-1 Recycling Program and RRW. Since 2006, films have been made for specific promotional purposes. For example, an adapted Green's fairy tale was used as a film script to describe the full recycling system in Taiwan, as well as to share the program achievements and explain regulations.

### **Expositions, Competitions, and Local Conventions**

In addition to the outreach materials and information resources described above, EPAT has developed participatory activities to encourage residents to recycle. There have been three main types of activities: expositions/conferences, competitions, and activities associated with local festivals or religious ceremonies.

- **Exposition/Conference**  
In 2005, EPAT held a National Exposition of Environmental Protection Originality with the theme of "Healthy Taiwan and a Sustainable Environment." In 2007, EPAT organized a recycling conference with local governments and invited experts, university students and the general public to join. During these conferences, EPAT shared information on recycling, and experts, business and university students presented new recycling technology and research.
- **Competitions**  
EPAT has successfully transformed the subject of recycling into a popular topic through several competitions since 2006. EPAT has held a competition every year and the prizes are based on the competition scale. One of the most impressive competitions is the Recycling Rap Contest, in which youth perform rap songs about social morality and environmental protection. In 2007, EPAT organized a Recycling Essay Competition for students, and also organized a College Debate Competition on recycling as a way to involve students in proposing novel recycling policy ideas, which can be used to inform future policies.
- **Festivals**

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Recycling has been well incorporated into two customary activities: (1) National Dragon Boat Race with Environmental Protection Originality (Figure 2). From 1997-2006, EPAT has successfully incorporated recycling subjects into the race. Participants could create boats with recycled materials to join in the race, making it both fun and meaningful to practice recycling in a festival every year. (2) A Clean Mazu Procession Ceremony (Figure 3). Mazu Procession is very famous annual religious ceremony in Taiwan. Many people would walk and follow Mazu Procession town by town to show how pious they are but they would generate tons of trash and wastes during the ceremony. EPAT has promoted garbage reduction and resource recycling at the event since 2008, so that the participants learn the concepts and methods of resource recycling.



**Figure 2 National Dragon Boat Race**

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**Figure 3 Clean Mazu Procession Ceremony**

### **Promotion in Community and Global Conferences**

- Promoting recycling in communities  
EPAT also collaborates with citizen groups to conduct recycling education in communities. Since 1999, EPAT has supported the formation of recycling groups in communities to promote household waste sorting. Afterwards, EPAT has implemented a “Community Image Rising Plan” to clean the environment of recycling spot; the community would get neater and tidier. From 2009, EPAT further collaborated with community markets and business parks to promote recycling. EPAT decorated the recycling spot with beautiful patterns and educated not only residents but also visitors on recycling awareness. The revenue generated by communities, businesses and others from selling the RRW can be used to fund community or local infrastructure.
- Global collaboration and conferences  
The purpose of collaboration and conferences is to share information on EPAT’s recycling programs and achievements, as well as to learn from others’ recycling experiences. EPAT has conducted global recycling conferences every year since 2007; the subjects have included policies, regulations, economics, and industries, providing discussion platforms for recycling programs and new technologies. In addition, EPAT has given grants to citizen groups to host the 11<sup>th</sup> Conference for East Asia Resource Recycling Technologies in 2012. EPAT also organizes global dialogues on WEEE management with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.