



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Powerhouse States for Pizza Box Recycling Named by Paper and Packaging Board

Big Game Day Fans Encouraged to Recycle as Pizza Dominates Menu



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BOARD

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McLean, Va. (February 1, 2023)—Football fans will eat nearly [13 million](#) pizzas during the Big Game in February, but the big winners are the areas that make it easy for fans to recycle those pizza boxes. According to a [Paper and Packaging Board](#) (P+PB) analysis produced by Resource Recycling Systems, 10 states and the District of Columbia shine as pizza box powerhouses where at least 90% of residents can recycle their pizza boxes.

“Although a majority of communities accept corrugated pizza boxes for recycling, there’s been a lot of consumer confusion,” explained Mary Anne Hansan, president of P+PB. “This massive pizza eating occasion is a great time to clarify that pizza boxes are made to be recycled, but you should check your local guidelines to see if they take them.”

The new analysis produced for P+PB’s [How Life Unfolds® campaign](#) included examining over 7,500 recycling program guidelines representing 90% of the population to determine which jurisdictions accept pizza boxes for recycling. The top jurisdictions where 90% or more of residents can recycle pizza boxes are (in alphabetical order):

- Alaska
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Maine
- Nebraska
- New Hampshire
- New York
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- Vermont

The data is important since only [57% of Americans realize pizza boxes can be recycled](#) at all, even though a majority of people have access to pizza box recycling. Since U.S. residents use about [3 billion pizza boxes](#) a year, amounting to 600,000 tons of cardboard material that can be recycled and kept out of landfills, that represents a big opportunity for consumers and the environment.

Hansan added, “Inconsistencies around local recycling program implementation, the influence of regional waste management operators, commodity export considerations and state-level policies are some factors that contribute to regional variability.”



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“The paper industry is communicating with recycling centers across the U.S. to encourage them to update their recycling guidelines. We know that paper mills across the country are using recycled pizza boxes, even ones with grease stains and a little stuck on cheese, to make the products that we use and rely on every day,” said Hansan.

How to Recycle Pizza Boxes

For consumers, recycling a pizza box is as simple as these three easy steps: **Empty, Flatten and Recycle** the box.

- Empty the box
- Flatten it
- Drop it in the recycling bin or take it to the recycling center

Recycling rules vary based on location. Consumers can check local guidelines by inputting their zip code at [BeRecycled.org](https://www.be-recycled.org).

Other resources:

P+PB’s [What to do with Paper, Cardboard and More WestRock study](#) on pizza boxes with grease and stuck on cheese
[American Forest and Paper Association recycling study](#)

About the Paper and Packaging Board

The Paper and Packaging Board promotes the use of paper products and paper-based packaging by highlighting how their sustainable nature, the industry’s practices and recycling help contribute to a healthier planet. Forty-seven U.S. manufacturers and importers collectively fund the national marketing campaign, www.howlifeunfolds.com.

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