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2024 “Blue Bin” Paper Recycling Trends & Tips Released in Time for Playoff and Super Bowl Mania

Fans Encouraged to Recycle Pizza Boxes and More by P+PB

McLean, Va. (January 16, 2024)—Football fans are gearing up for NFL playoff and Super Bowl Sunday with watch parties planned in homes and venues around the nation and one thing they have in common is lots of party-related paper and packaging. New themes in recycling paper are emerging that will make it easier to make these celebrations more environmentally friendly, according to a top 5 list of paper recycling trends pulled together by the [Paper and Packaging Board](#) (P+PB), which along with tips will help consumers get their paper into the blue recycling bins.

“With the New Year here, the next big celebrations are playoff games capped off by Super Bowl Sunday. The parties—full of paper products—are a chance to make the game a big win for the environment too. To help prepare, we have a list of recycling trends we expect to continue as well as some helpful tips to make the big event the start of a life-long recycling habit,” explained Mary Anne Hansan, president of P+PB.

2024’s Top 5 “Blue Bin” Recycling Trends

P+PB’s top 5 trends are part of the culture shift, resulting in more Americans choosing and then recycling paper products—making them [papertarians](#). That is someone who chooses and uses paper products because they know it is a smart choice for the environment and then recycles them to make further use of natural resources.

For all paper items, checking local guidelines first is important as recycling rules vary by community.

1. **Paper Cups** – Whether they hold coffee, soda, water, or something stronger, paper cups are a staple at parties. While not yet widely available for recycling, the good news is that more and more recycling operators are accepting these, and P+PB anticipates an even higher level of acceptance in the years to come.
2. **Pizza Boxes** – Recycling these boxes is gaining traction with consumers—a trend P+PB expects to continue as word gets out that [pizza boxes can be recycled](#) in most places. Football fans will eat nearly 13 million pizzas during the big game so understanding how to recycle them is key. According to a P+PB study released last year, Washington, DC and these 10 states—Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Vermont—shine as pizza box powerhouses where at least 90% of residents can recycle their pizza boxes.
3. **Cartons** – Many party drinks are served in cartons—single serve wine, juice boxes for kids, and even milk. These are increasingly being accepted by local recycling facilities and more consumers are learning about their recyclability. For the big game, consumers should check the label on the carton to see if it is recyclable.
4. **Paper Padded Mailers** – Consumers ordering party supplies from online retailers may receive their goods in a recent innovation—padded mailers made completely from paper that can be recycled. P+PB expects the use of paper padded mailers to increase as more companies aim to reduce their

plastic use. Some paper mailers may still be padded with bubble wrap. For these, pull the paper layer from the bubble wrap lining before recycling and throw away the bubble wrap. Stamps, tape, and labels do not need to be removed.

5. **Consumer Adoption** – In addition to more jurisdictions and recycling facilities accepting additional types of paper products, recycling is increasingly part of Americans' lives as they cement their recycling habits. In fact, the paper and packaging industry is investing nearly \$7 billion through 2025 in innovations that will do more and do it better so that consumers know that the paper products they buy remain part of the circular economy. Being regenerated though starts with paper and packaging products reaching the blue bin—even during parties.

Hansan added, "Recycling a resource that is renewable and reuseable makes sense for our planet. Currently, [68% of recyclable paper](#) materials are recycled. Changing habits takes time, but we have seen tremendous progress and expect even more this year through industry innovations and an increasingly informed public."

How a Papertarian Builds a Party: Recycling and Reuse Ideas

- Turn a box into a [snack stadium](#) to serve up food in sporty style.
- Draw football squares for guests on paper or from the sides of cardboard and post for all to see.
- Buy and use paper products whenever possible because they are made from a renewable resource, unlike some other product materials.
- Place blue bins next to trash cans around the house to help partygoers recycle and put a paper sign on the bin describing what can be placed into it.
- Empty and flatten boxes when you are finished with them, and then drop them in the recycling bin.
- Check local recycling guidelines in advance by [clicking here](#) to find out if a product can be recycled since rules vary by location.

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-eight U.S. manufacturers and importers collectively fund the national marketing campaign, www.howlifeunfolds.com.

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