

RECYCLING @ Tri-C

The abundance of blue containers students, faculty, staff and visitors will notice beginning Thursday at Cuyahoga Community College isn't just for aesthetics. Instead, it's part of a long-range plan to make Tri-C a "greener" community.

Tri-C, as part of its ongoing commitment to developing a Sustainability Plan, recently applied for and received a \$50,000 grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to assist with the implementation of an expanded recycling effort. Phase I of the expansion will take place at the College's three main campuses, Unified Technologies Center, and District Administration building. The two Corporate College locations will be included shortly after the initial launch.

"This (expansion) is symbolic of our commitment to a Sustainability Plan and being environmentally conscious," said Dr. Craig Foltin, Executive Vice President of administration and finance at Cuyahoga Community College.

The College's current recycling effort includes paper and cardboard. With the expansion, aluminum, glass and plastic will be added to the list of recyclable materials. In addition, recycling bins will increase from the current 65 College-wide bins to approximately 1,700. These bins will be strategically placed at desk sides, common working areas and common eating areas, so students, faculty, staff and visitors have easy access to them.

Tri-C is partnering with Oberlin-based Allied Waste Industries for the expanded recycling effort. Even though the Allied Waste Material Recovery Facility is in Lorain County, the employees and trucks collecting the recyclables are employed in and dispatched from Cuyahoga County.

The College's expanded plan will utilize single-streamed recycling, also known as "fully commingled." With this method, all paper products and containers are mixed together in a collection truck instead of being sorted and handled separately by the user throughout the collection process. The five recyclable materials at Tri-C – paper, cardboard, aluminum, glass and plastic – will be sorted out at the Material Recovery Facility.

"In the long run, our increased recycling efforts will net the College a few bucks," noted Dr. Foltin. "Our recyclables have a value. Instead of sending them to a landfill, they'll be reusable. There's a monetary value in that."

Phase II of the plan is slated to follow and build on the foundation being put in place during the initial phase. Tri-C currently participates in and will continue to work on expanding recycling efforts for fluorescent light bulbs, computers, batteries and tires among other recyclable materials.

"The second phase could involve buying balers for cardboard boxes, or additional equipment to move away from single-stream recycling," said Dr. Foltin, pointing to the cost-benefit of single stream as the College's key reason for choosing that system in Phase I. "We're also going to be hiring a sustainability manager who will oversee all of our sustainability efforts, including recycling."

