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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Eco-Cycle and the city of Boulder Celebrate America Recycles Day by  
Unveiling a New Material for Recycling at the CHaRM:  
Big, Durable #2 Plastics**

Boulder, CO (Nov. 10)—What do plastic laundry baskets, lawn furniture, and five-gallon buckets have in common? They're big, they're hard plastic, and they're some of the last holdouts in your trash can without a recycling option. That is, until now. As of November 15<sup>th</sup>, America Recycles Day, the Eco-Cycle/city of Boulder Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM) will start accepting the big stuff you hate to throw away: Durable plastics with a #2. That's the most descriptive term we can think of to cover the diverse group of goods made out of high-density polyethylene (HDPE or #2).

For each of the past five years on this date, the CHaRM has added a new material to help our community get to Zero Waste. Years past have seen the addition of materials like electronics, books, #2 and #4 plastic bags, clothing and textiles, #6 white block foam and other non-traditional, hard-to-recycle materials.

This year's material really lives up to its name as a 'hard-to-recycle' material," said Dan Matsch, Eco-Cycle CHaRM Manager. "There are some complicated guidelines, but we're sure our dedicated recyclers can handle it."

**What Counts as Big, Durable #2 Plastics?**

Unlike plastic beverage containers, many of these durable goods don't necessarily have the #2 stamped inside the familiar "chasing arrows" symbol that you can use for verification, so we'll need your help to read these descriptions carefully to make sure you're bringing us materials we can accept.

**Your plastic item qualifies if it meets ALL of the following conditions:**

**Opaque** – You can't see through durable #2 plastics.

**Matte finish** – It has a matte finish like a Big Wheel rather than a glossy finish like a CD jewel case.

**Large size with a simple design** – These products are usually one large plastic piece made in a plastic mold.

**Has a seam** – You can often find a raised seam dividing the item in half, evidence of the two halves of the mold that were used to form the item when it was manufactured.

**Durable** – This plastic is built to last, so it is quite durable and bending it does not cause it to crack. It's different from your #2 yogurt and dairy tubs in that it was designed for long-term use, not single use.

**1/8" thick** – Durable #2 plastic is typically no more than 1/8" thick. If it is a closed shape, it is hollow and never solid plastic.

## **YES**

Examples of items that can be recycled in this category are plastic lawn toys like a slide, plastic lawn furniture, Big Wheels, plastic watering cans with a #2, laundry baskets, #2 plastic buckets, crates, rigid backyard kiddie pools and plastic trash containers.

## **NO**

Some examples of items that would NOT be in this category are CD jewel cases, some small plastic toys and action figures, flower pots without a #2, chaise lounge chairs with a metal frame and plastic webbing (this type of chair can be recycled with scrap metal), inflatable wading pools, inflatable pool toys, or water beds (all of these materials still have to go to the landfill). One-time use #2 plastics, such as motor oil bottles, also do not fall in this category. Plastic toys with many parts and materials other than plastic do not qualify either.

### **Please remove non-plastic parts.**

Small amounts of metal such as bucket handles or Big Wheel axles are okay, but if you can easily remove any part that clearly is not #2 plastic (including metal) from the item you want to recycle, you will help us ensure we'll have a viable market for durable #2 plastics for the long term.

### **Your plastics will save virgin lumber and prevent creosote use.**

The durable #2 plastic you bring to the CHaRM will be baled and sent to a company in Texas that grinds it all up to make recycled plastic railroad ties. We're especially excited about working with this company because not only do they keep plastic out of the landfill and make a very durable, long-lasting product out of it, but there's also an environmental benefit. Plastic railroad ties can be used in place of virgin hardwood lumber railroad ties injected with creosote. Hardwood lumber takes a very long time to renew and creosote contains several toxic and carcinogenic chemicals, which can leach into the environment through contact with soil or water.

“As far as we're aware, ours is the only program in the country to accept this hard-to-recycle material for a domestic market,” said Matsch. “We're proud of this one-of-a-kind facility and its mission of adding at least one new material each year, and we're proud of our careful recyclers who make it work.”

This new recycling opportunity is available only at the CHaRM, open from Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The CHaRM is located at 5030 "old" Pearl St. There will be no charge for these plastics. For a map and a list of other materials accepted at the CHaRM and the fees for some materials, visit [www.ecocycle.org](http://www.ecocycle.org).

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