**RATTLESNAKE GUTTER TRUST**

**RECYCLING INSTRUCTIONS**

Below you will find an updated version of instructions for the operation of the RGT Recycling Shed.

In this time of Covid 19 we have been given permission by Leverett’s Board of Health to reopen adhering to the following procedures designed guard the safety of all who use our facility. Volunteers must wear a mask and gloves at all times and rigorously maintain a 6’ social distance. Only one volunteer is allowed to be at the shed at one time. Politely deny anyone not wearing a mask to enter the incubation tent and have only one person in the tent at a time. As a volunteer on Sat + Sun please arrive by 10 am and stay until 1 pm. There are signs on the top shelf of the shed to inform users of the procedure: please set these up. Also, there is a yellow stand with hand wash and water to be set up in front of the tent. Please put these back in the shed at the end of the day since the signs will disintegrate if they get rained on. Upon leaving, place the “Closed on Wednesday” sign across the tent’s entrance and remove all the bins to the back of the shed.

**The collection process**. You should not handle the returnables. Instead, as people enter the tent they will place recyclables in one of three bins: aluminum cans, glass bottles, and plastic bottles. All containers or bags should be removed in order to improve aeration. As the bins fill up take them to behind the shed where they are stored without lids for 3-4 days. Larger bins, especially with glass can become quite heavy and a dolly is available to assist. We should have enough collection bins to cover the flow volume but should you run out climb up the plastic waste dumpster behind the sheds and select something suitable. Should the sorters on Wed +Thurs not be able to finish there will be cans and bottles to sort in addition to monitoring users of the collection tent. These presumably safe recyclables will be left in the shed so as not to be confused with the fresh material in the back of the shed.

**The sorting process**. Sorting takes place on Wed +Thurs of the following week. This can be done at any time of day although the Transfer Station is open from 4-6 pm when the gate is open. Keys to the main gate and shed are available if you plan to come at other times. Sorry for the complexity of these instructions but it is important that we rigorously sort and deliver recyclables to the redemption center in the manner they expect. Since they trust that our bags and boxes are properly counted and sorted we do not have wait in line or stuff bottles into a machine.

Recyclables in bins and stored behind the shed need to be brought to the front of the shed. The table is set up in front of the shed and cans and bottles are dumped into a big cardboard box on the table for sorting. Volunteers sort by type of container type and size. The three basic categories are: 1) plastic bottles, 2) aluminum cans, and 3) glass bottles. All must have a “MA deposit” label indicated somewhere on the lid or label. Recyclables without a brand identification or crushed are not acceptable. Any hard cider (e.g. Angry Apple) or hard pumpkin cider (Harpoon) is **not** acceptable, however hard lemonade and mango are recyclable. Bottled water also cannot be accepted unless it is carbonated. If time permits remove aluminum tabs on can lids and place them in the small bucket. However, if the sorter is overloaded this step can be by-passed. Since tab removal in the winter can be quite finger numbing w/o gloves a pair of pliers is in the shed.

**Plastic Bottles**. Pepsi and Coke plastic bottled products (see list on side of tall cardboard boxes) are put in separate, size graded (20 oz., 1 liter, 2 liter) tall cardboard boxes on the back wall. All other brands of plastic bottles go into the boxes labeled “Other.” On the front of each box is a circled number indicating the number of bottles of that size to be re-packaged into a new, large plastic bag. Here’s how it works. When a large box bin is full take a clear, plastic bag from the box on the back wall, insert it into the empty large cardboard box in the back room and transfer the indicated number of bottles from the first into the second box. When complete tie off the new bag and place it either outside the shed or in the back room well away from the heater. Eventually these tied up bags will be stored in the shed next to the shed. Whole Foods and Trader Joe’s are not accepted at the redemption center. Place these in a bag under the entry table and Martin or Mary will return them.

**Beer and Soda Cans.** These are collected in cardboard flats (24/flat). Tall cans are placed in separate flats and piled separately. Really large sized cans are placed in a box under the new bag shelf to the right of the stacked flats. Likewise, small or linear cans are placed in the same odd size box to be recycled separately.

Unlike our old system when beer and soda cans had to be sorted into brand categories all cans can be put together in a flat. This makes to process considerably easier. Full flats of 24 cans are stacked on the left hand wall (disregard the brand designations). When a stack reaches 9 flats high dump these cans into a new plastic bag following the same procedure as for plastic bottles. Emptied flats are placed on the high shelf in the front of the back room for reuse.

**Glass Bottles**. These are placed into reused beer boxes (24/box) and stacked on the right wall. Some of the boxes are broken down and will need to be assembled using the clear tape dispenser on entry shelf; more tape rolls are on the high flats shelf in back room. If the box bottom is not secure add a strip of cardboard so the load won’t spill out. Use beer boxes since wine boxes are of various sizes and don’t stack well. To avoid an avalanche don’t stack boxes more than eight boxes high. Oversized bottles are placed in larger wine boxes stacked to the right of the entry usually 12 or 15/box, or placed on the shelfs. Bottles with snap down caps are not accepted even if they have a 5 cent refundable label. Hard lemonade bottles are accepted while hard cider and hard pumpkin are not

**Out of Time: Help!**

If only a single sorter is on duty it is likely that s/he may not be able to keep up with the flow. When the dump is about to close leave the unsorted recyclables in a container or garbage can inside the shed and they will be sorted by the next person.

**Heat in a Frozen World.** Yes, it does get cold working in the shed in winter so wear long johns, warm socks, and bring gloves. We do have a propane heater to add to your comfort. To light turn on the two valves and touch a match to the screen. Be careful not to stand or put flammable items close-by: it really does burn a hole in jackets. Be sure to turn off both valves when leaving!

**Closing-up the shed.** Five minutes before closing time empty the two wastepaper baskets of trash and non-recyclables, put the table and chairs away, and shut down the heater and radio. The left shed door sticks and has to be lifted or kicked in order to close tightly. Throw the steel bar across the doors and lockup. Check to make sure the keys are not in the shed. If any group of recyclables reaches the point where they have to be transported to a redemption center (e.g. beer boxes piled more than 8 high, or storage shed full) call Brooke (548-9281) and if not available Rocky (549-0635).

**Expenses.** Earnings from refunds should be given to Mary Barnett or Brooke. Any expenses incurred such as gas money, coffee on the return trip, or items purchased for the operation should be taken out of earnings and accounted for. You will be reimbursed but check with Brooke first. Likewise, if you use your own money for a purchase either take the amount out of money collected or ask for a reimbursement.

**Keys.** Keys to the main gate and the shed may be needed if a transporter wants to sort or pick up containers other than dump hours. Brooke or Rocky will have these. There is a key to open the shed on the bulletin board. Please do not loan the keys to non-volunteers since in the past this got out of hand and locks had to be changed.The Transfer Station attendants also have a set of keys.

**THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING!**