



Press Release

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Small Propane Cylinders Pose Hazards to Recycling Facility Workers

Waukesha, WI - Workers at the Waukesha County Materials Recycling Facility removed over 100 small propane cylinders from the recyclables the first week of April and there are concerns that this problem will continue to increase throughout the summer months. Waukesha County and the recycling facility operator, ReCommunity Recycling, ask residents to not place propane cylinders in their household blue recycling bin.

Propane cylinders pose a very serious risk to workers because during the baling process materials are compressed under hundreds of pounds of pressure in order to form large bales for shipping. Even when the cylinders are empty, they remain pressurized and can explode when compacted. In 2011, one compressed propane cylinder did explode at the facility and caused a small fire although, there were no injuries.

“The operator strives to maintain a safe working environment for all employees at the recycling facility. We want residents to understand that certain items such as propane cylinders cannot be recycled in their blue bins due to the potential hazard to workers and equipment. They need to be specially handled by companies that sell these products,” stated Rebecca Mattano, Waukesha County Recycling and Solid Waste Supervisor.

Propane tank/cylinder manufacturers recommend that consumers return unusable propane tanks to a local distributor. Please check for the 'manufacturer's tag' as a source of contact/disposal information. Alternatively, many local scrap metal collections will accept empty propane cylinders for recycling. Please visit waukeshacounty.gov/recycling to find propane tank dealers in Waukesha County that will safely dispose of used or unwanted propane tanks.

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