



RAVEN RECYCLING

Our Commitment is the Environment

This column originally appeared in the July 23rd, 2004, edition of the Yukon News

STRYROFOAM NO LONGER RECYCLED HERE

The Raven Recycling Society has, until now, been collecting Styrofoam.

But no longer.

Our regular user of Styrofoam has finished his project and no longer requires anymore.

Until Raven can secure another user of Styrofoam we will not be accepting it.

The only exception to this rule is the small Styrofoam packing kernels, known as foam chips or foam peanuts.

Raven will accept these chips but they must be inside a sealed bag or box.

The drop-off container for these bags and boxes is inside the Raven bottle depot.

Ask the cashier for assistance when dropping off sealed bags or boxes of foam chips.

There is a local company, Far North Fibreglass, that uses the small foam chips.

They do not use any other form of Styrofoam.

They cannot use the large solid pieces that are typically used to package televisions or computers.

They also cannot use the Styrofoam trays that supermarkets sell meat on.

Raven will only be collecting the small foam chips for them from now on.

All other forms of Styrofoam are, regrettably, garbage.

The solution to avoiding this form of garbage is to avoid purchasing it in the first place

Don't buy items packed in Styrofoam packaging.

Look for packaging alternatives, such as bubble plastic.

Bubble plastic is not recyclable, but it is much more reusable than solid Styrofoam chunks.

Bubble plastic conforms to multiple shapes when used as packaging, unlike large Styrofoam chunks.



RAVEN RECYCLING

Our Commitment is the Environment

The large chunks are typically moulded or cut to fit specific products. They can only be used for those products.

Bubble wrap has uses other than for packaging.

It is also most gratifying to pop the bubbles, one bubble at a time.

Do this out of listening distance of anyone else. It is apparently, or so the author of this column has been informed, extremely annoying to others.

Most households generate Styrofoam waste when meat is purchased from grocery stores. This meat is packaged on small Styrofoam trays

When purchasing meat, consider buying in bulk from local suppliers.

A lot of this meat comes wrapped in butchers' paper, and not on Styrofoam containers.

Some types of modern butchers' paper are not compostable so it, like Styrofoam, is garbage.

However, paper takes up a lot less volume than Styrofoam. That means the landfill doesn't fill up as quickly.

Consumers must try to make choices not only based on the item they are purchasing, but the packaging that the product is in.

Excess packaging could mean a lot of Styrofoam going into Yukon landfills.

If Yukoners are selective in purchasing items with low packaging the amount of Styrofoam can be reduced.

It will be difficult to avoid Styrofoam packaging altogether.

Remember that the small chips can be used locally but the large pieces are waste.

Should someone in the Whitehorse area have a use for Styrofoam, please contact the Raven Recycling Society.

If Raven can find a local user of large amounts of Styrofoam, we could start collecting it again.

Until then, please only drop off the small chips in sealed bags or boxes.

Lewis Rifkind is an employee of the Raven Recycling Society.