



**Adapted from Keep America Beautiful Press Release for Keep Philadelphia Beautiful*

April 21, 2020 - Recycling is vitally important to our environment and economy, playing a critical role in supplying raw materials for manufacturing essential products to protect the health and welfare of the nation.

It is critical we keep frontline sanitation and recycling workers, and our community, safe, therefore whether it's the masks and gloves we wear to the grocery store, the hand sanitizer bottle we keep handy, or the wipes we use, these items belong in the trash and not on the ground. Helping to keep their workers, customers, and community safe, retailers are strongly encouraged to provide frequently serviced trash receptacles in highly accessible areas to prevent the littering of used PPE (Personal Protective Equipment).

Recycling regulations may be shifting in communities due to CDC guidelines. Many communities have suspended recycling programs because of worker safety and other limitations. As always — look up what you can recycle locally.

If you or someone in your home has tested positive for the coronavirus, do not recycle your regularly recyclable items; place them in a bag, securely close the bag, and discard the bag in your waste bin. This also applies to any used cleaning supplies, paper towels, tissues, or PPE generated within a home or business with someone who has tested positive. Your contaminated items should never be handled by other members of the household.

Health and Safety

Due to reports from global health services and a recent study published in the New England Journal of Medicine that the coronavirus (COVID-19) can [live on surfaces](#) for an extended period of time, such as up to 24 hours on cardboard and up to 2-3 days on plastic, we are advising everyone against picking up litter in groups in public places. If you can obtain PPE without compromising the stock that essential workers require, individual litter cleanups *may* be possible. However, to remain on the side of caution, we will not recommend or advocate that you pick up litter from public places on your own (especially until more is known about the virus) until further notice. Our primary concern and priority is the health and safety of our volunteers and all Americans. [#SafetyIsBeautiful](#)

Keeping hands clean through improved hand hygiene is one of the most important steps we can take in avoiding getting sick and spreading germs to others. This is an evolving situation, and we encourage you to closely monitor reports from your state and local health departments, the CDC, and WHO.